

Bible Fellowship Teaching Plan for John 13:21-35 (July 19, 2026)
From Betrayal to Glory

Central Truth: Jesus remained sovereign, loving, and purposeful even in the face of betrayal, revealing that genuine discipleship is marked by sacrificial love that reflects His glory.

John's purpose (20:31): "These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

Key passage (34-35): A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Opening question: Have you ever experienced betrayal by someone you deeply trusted? How did that experience affect your ability to trust, forgive, or love others?

Lesson objective: to be able to 1) explain how Judas' betrayal fulfilled God's sovereign plan, 2) explain why Jesus viewed the Cross as His glorification rather than His defeat, and 3) be obedient to follow the Lord's command to love one another as He loved us as the defining characteristic of authentic discipleship.

Background: Jesus is eating the Passover meal with His disciples in the Upper Room. He has washed the disciples' feet and told them they are to do the same as a mark of selfless service.

I. Jesus Reveals the One Who Would Betray Him (21-26)

- A. The sorrow of a loving Savior: Jesus was “troubled in His spirit”
- B. Divine foreknowledge never diminished His genuine compassion.
- C. The disciples examine themselves: “Is it I?”
- D. Judas repeatedly rejects the offers of grace. Jesus
 - 1. Washed Judas’ feet.
 - 2. Allowed him to remain at the table even seated next to Him.
 - 3. Honored him with the morsel.
 - 4. Gave him opportunity after opportunity to repent.
 - 5. Yet Judas hardened his heart.
 - 6. James 1:14-15: when sin grows progressively it results in death.

Application: Small compromises that go unchecked eventually become life-altering destiny. Sin rarely begins with some dramatic rebellion.

II. God's Sovereignty in the Face of Human Betrayal (27–30)

- A. Jesus tells Judas, “What you are going to do, do quickly.”
 - 1. This was not permission for him to do evil.
 - 2. It demonstrated the fact that
 - a. Christ remained in complete control.
 - b. Judas carried out his choice of his own making.
 - c. At some point in Judas’ treachery, Satan came to “own” him.
- B. God’s redemptive plan could not be stopped. Even Satan could only accomplish what ultimately fulfilled God's purposes.
- C. “And it was night.”
 - 1. More than an atmospheric description.
 - 2. It symbolized
 - a. A rejection of the Light of the world.
 - b. The intentional choice to walk in moral darkness.

III. The Cross Revealed God’s Glory (31-32)

- A. The departure of Judas allows the Lord to speak more openly to His disciples.
- B. The cross reveals
 - 1. The glorification of the Son of Man
 - a. The very lowest point of His shame and humiliation and the very highest point of His glory
 - b. The revelation of His heart of love and the throne of His sovereign power
 - 2. The glorification of God in the Son of Man
 - a. The greatest revelation and personal expression of the very nature of God Himself
 - b. “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” 2 Cor 5:19
 - 3. God’s glorification of the Son of Man in Himself
 - a. As the Son of God returns to His place at the right hand of His Father, “God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:9)
 - b. “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8)
- C. At Calvary we see
 - 1. Justice satisfied.
 - 2. Mercy extended.
 - 3. Holiness preserved.
 - 4. Grace overflowing.
 - 5. No other event reveals God's character more completely than the cross of Calvary.

IV. Jesus Prepares His Disciples (33)

- A. Jesus tenderly addresses them as “little children”
- B. Although He is leaving physically, His relationship with them remains one of loving care.

C. They cannot yet follow Him to the cross, for only Jesus can purchase redemption.

Application: Our salvation rests entirely upon His finished work alone.

V. The New Commandment (34-35)

A. The Old Testament commanded love for one's neighbor, but Jesus raises the standard.

B. "Love one another as I have loved you"--love is now measured by Christ

C. His love was

1. Humble
2. Sacrificial
3. Selfless
4. Forgiving
5. Patient
6. Undeserved
7. Unconditional
8. Active rather than just emotional
9. So much more

D. People will know they and you are truly His disciples "if you have love for one another;" love becomes the visible evidence of an otherwise invisible faith.

Questions for reflection:

1. Are there areas where God has repeatedly warned you, yet you continue to resist Him?
2. Is there someone you find difficult to love as Christ loves? What do you need to do to love him or her as Christ has loved you?
3. What practical evidence would convince those around you that you truly belong to Jesus?

Personal applications

1. Guard your heart early: Judas didn't choose to betray the Lord on the spur of the moment. Unchecked desires often became settled rebellion.
2. Ask God to expose small compromises before they become entrenched sins.
3. Never mistake God's patience for His approval. Every opportunity to repent is evidence of God's mercy. Respond while His invitation is still open.
4. View difficult circumstances in your life through the lens of God's sovereignty. Even the Lord's betrayal could not derail God's plan; in fact, it contributed to it.
5. Make Christlike love your highest priority. Ask yourself, "Who needs encouragement?" "Who needs forgiveness?" "Who needs a helping hand?" "To whom do I need to be reconciled?" Love becomes visible through action.
6. Show the love of Christ so others recognize Him. People may never read a Bible before they read our lives. Our love for one another either strengthens or weakens our witness.

Closing Challenge: This passage presents two very different responses to Jesus.

- Judas chose darkness, self-interest, and, ultimately, destruction. The remaining disciples, though imperfect and soon to fail, continued to follow the Savior Who loved them to the end.

- Every believer faces that same choice daily: Will we harden our hearts or surrender them more fully to Christ? Will we pursue our own interests, or will we love others as He has loved us?

- This week, intentionally demonstrate Christlike love to someone who cannot return or compensate you for that love. Let your actions point others to the Savior whose greatest display of His glory was revealed in His sacrifice on the Cross.

Sunday School Lesson for July 19, 2026
John 13:21-35

Welcome to Sunday School on the go from the First Baptist Church in Tallassee. I'm Jim Glass, one of the teachers in the Pairs and Spares Class, and, in our current study, we've been discovering how John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, describes the life and ministry of the Lord "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

On this third Sunday in July, as we see that purpose played out in every word on every page of this precious book, John invites us to the Upper Room where the Lord shared His last meal with His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion--a meal that's full of meaning and significance for them and for us as we find much to learn from what our Lord does and what He says in these intimate moments. In chapters thirteen through seventeen, our Lord washes the disciples' feet, predicts His betrayal, delivers to them a new commandment, addresses the disciples' concerns, tells them of the coming of the Holy Spirit, explains how He is the vine and apart from Him it's impossible to do anything of eternal worth, and, just before crossing over the Kidron Valley where He would be arrested, prays for Himself, His disciples, and all those who would place their faith in Him.

Following Trey's sermon from the first twenty verses of chapter thirteen about Jesus washing the disciples' feet and the message that followed, the focus of our study comes from verses 21 through 35 where we'll hear John tell us about the identification of the one who would betray the Lord, His glorification, and the new commandment He gave them.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all provide the familiar details about Jesus' instructions to make preparations for the Passover meal, but John's focus is different. He leaves it to the others to tell of those details and focuses instead

on showing his readers that Jesus is the Christ and how this Messiah is the Savior and the Servant of the world.

So, John records the story of Jesus humbling Himself, girding Himself with a towel, and washing the disciples' feet. His actions and His words illustrated and echoed the message He shared back in chapter twelve about authentic Christian discipleship, and now He models for them the attitude and actions they should have in serving others.

But even as He commends them for recognizing Who He is and encouraging them to follow His example, He lets them know there is actually an adversary among them. In verse eighteen, the Lord says, "I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he."

We can only imagine the surprising shock that must have taken Judas' breath away as he heard these words, knowing full well his intentions that very night to lift up his heel against the Lord by turning Him over to the Jewish authorities. Even as his secretive plan has just been laid before the disciples, Judas still doesn't repent--doesn't even hesitate to reconsider the immense consequences of what he's about to do, so unwavering was he in his obsessive pursuit of unimaginable evil.

Jesus knew all about it and even quoted from Psalm 41, verse nine--a psalm about David's enemies who betrayed him. But He said this to let them know, once again, that He is God/ before returning to His previous thoughts about the bond between servant and master in verse twenty.

Then, the Lord pauses to clarify what He's just told them, just in case they didn't grasp the significance of His words--verse 21: "After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.'"

Try to imagine what that scene would have been like. The disciples gathered around their teacher, reminiscing about all they had seen and experienced over the last three years, listening to Jesus as He explains why He's just washed their feet and how they ought to wash one another's feet. The mood's not somber, but thoughtful, reflective, heartening, and encouraging.

But there's a change in His appearance as if a shadow passes over His face. Everyone's silent, and all eyes are fixed on Jesus as His head drops for a moment as He considers the fact that one of those He had called to follow Him--someone who had seen the signs that clearly proved that He was the promised Messiah. They've heard Him say somewhat cryptically that one among them would do to Him what one of David's friends had done to him. Then, with a groaning in His Spirit that was unheard yet clearly visible, He announces without any ambiguity or obscurity, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."

They had heard Him say that "the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed"--Mark, chapter eight, verse 31--and--Mark, chapter nine, verse 31: "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him," but He had evaded every attempt so far, and could do it again--unless--one of their own were to deliver Him into the hands of men. But that was unthinkable--which of them would do such a thing?

Which is exactly what John tells us went through their minds--verse 22: "The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke." They looked around anxiously, each one of them conscious of what His words meant, each one beginning to examine himself to find whether he was the one, trying to recall any improper circumstance or unthinking, careless word that might have led the Lord to suspect him, each one conscious of the all-too-real capacity for evil in his own heart. Matthew and Mark tell us that they each asked, "Is it I, Lord?"--each one looking for some assurance from Him and the

others that he would never do such a thing. This was way too much for them to take in.

There were at least thirteen people gathered around the table that night with several dishes on the table that were passed around, as we would say, “family style,” so there were at least three others using the same dish as our Lord to dip the bread into. John, as we know from verse 23--speaking of himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”--was situated next to him; Peter was near enough to John to get his attention; and Judas was also close to Jesus, perhaps because of his responsibilities as the group’s treasurer, or maybe because he wanted to keep himself above any suspicion.

Contrary to the way da Vinci has depicted the Last Supper, the dinner participants weren’t sitting in chairs. The table was simply a slightly-elevated platform and the guests lay on pads surrounding the table, perhaps like this painting that dates back to around 300 A.D. found in Constanta, Romania. The guests would lie on their left elbows either diagonally or perpendicularly to the table and eat with their right hand. With this arrangement, it would be very easy to have rather private conversations with the person next to you without others overhearing you, which is probably what happened here.

The ever-impatient and impulsive Peter is determined to find out who it is that Jesus is speaking about, so, he gets John’s attention, and--verse 24: “Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.” John leans a little back towards Jesus and quietly asks the definite question--verse 25: “Lord, who is it?” and Jesus in the ear of the beloved disciple gives the reply, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.”

For the host of the meal--in this case, Jesus--to give a piece of bread, often dipped in a common bowl of spices and seasonings, to someone at the table was a mark of special honor. Although it must have intensified Judas’ realization that Jesus knew exactly what he was planning, it was so common a courtesy that none of the other disciples--except John--seemed to have noticed

it. This was the Lord's last, subtle appeal to Judas' better nature, but there was no response.

Verse 26: "So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot." For whatever reason, the Lord reveals to John alone who the traitor was, since the giving of the piece of bread was, at that table, merely like the handing of a plate or the offer of any other piece of food at a meal. John alone knew the significance of it. But Judas had recognized the narrowing circle of suspicion, and had possibly, for the moment, stopped dipping in the same dish with Jesus, lest he should be identified as the traitor.

So, Jesus dips and offers a piece for him, and we can be sure that the look that accompanied the act, as well as the act itself, showed Judas that his treachery was obvious to the Lord. And, after all the other disciples have finished asking the question, Judas, last of all, mechanically and curtly asks, "Is it I, Rabbi?" using the more common and less respectful title, "Rabbi" rather than "Lord" as the others had done. And Matthew tells us that Jesus answered, "You have said so."

Only Judas and John hear the Lord's reply that was quickly followed by, "What you are going to do, do quickly." Only John knew the meaning of the Lord's instruction. The rest only thought that Judas was going out to make some final purchases or to make a contribution to care for the poor during the Passover season. But John saw differently--verse thirty: "So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out."

When Jesus dipped the piece of bread into the spices and gave it to Judas, John tells us in the first part of verse 27, "Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him." John told us back in verse two that "the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him," and Judas had followed Satan's lead. Now, after several promptings from Jesus about the one who would betray him and Judas has not turned away from Satan's instructions, Satan now takes full possession of him. As James

describes the progression of sin in verse fifteen of the first chapter of his letter, “desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.” Satan had claimed his own, and now Judas was forever his.

Alexander MacLaren recognizes that “Two things, then, appealed to [Judas] at the moment: one, the conviction that he was discovered; the other, the wonderful assurance that he was still loved, for the gift of the morsel was a token of friendliness. He shut his heart against them both; and, as he shut his heart against Christ, he opened it to the devil. So ‘after the sop Satan entered into him.’ At that moment a soul committed suicide; and none of those that sat by, with the exception of Christ and the ‘disciple whom He loved,’ so much as dreamed of the tragedy going on before their eyes.”

If you’ve been watching how all this came about, you’ve seen how John has followed the exposure of Judas’ intentions. The first indication occurred after Jesus’ message following the feeding of the five thousand in chapter six. As the Lord Jesus explained how He was the Bread of Life and that--verse 56--“Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me,” some of the disciples--verse 61--“were grumbling about this.”

Jesus asked, “Do you take offense at this?” and, after reminding them--verse 63--that “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life,” He added, “‘But there are some of you who do not believe.’ (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him).” “After this,” John said in verse 66, “many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So, Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘Do you want to go away as well?’ to which Peter replied, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.’” Then, in verse seventy, “Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a

devil,’” and John then adds: “He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.”

At this early point in Jesus’ ministry, He’s revealed that one of His very own disciples would turn against Him. The rest of the disciples didn’t yet know who it was, but John remembered what Jesus had said and recorded that first revelation of the fact that Judas would become consumed by the spirit, the envy, the malice, and the treasonable plans of Satan himself. As this point in Judas’ mind, however, there seems to be only a suggestion to betray the Lord.

When Mary broke an alabaster jar of extremely expensive perfume and poured it over the Lord’s feet, Judas was incensed at what he considered a waste, and Mark--chapter fourteen, verse ten--tells us that it was then that Judas “went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.” The timing of Luke’s account is more ambiguous, telling us in the opening verses of chapter 22 that “Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot”--verse three--and--verse four--“went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So, he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.”

By the time the Last Supper has begun, John has told us that--in the second verse of this chapter--“During supper, ... the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him.” At this point, Judas is thinking seriously about what he might do. He hasn’t begun to carry out his plan, and, from what the Lord says to him in the conversation in the first part of the chapter, it seems that there was a clear opportunity and invitation for him to change his mind.

But the thought of betrayal soon became the resolve to betray as John tells us that in the moment that Jesus gave Judas that piece of bread, “Satan entered into him.” One commentator writes, “The unmasking of the traitor was so gentle, so gradual as to allow time enough for repentance; the branding was

accomplished by Judas himself, when he arose after the sop and went out.” Whether it was scornful contempt for the Lord’s knowing exactly what he had chosen to do / or how the Lord showed such incredible grace in that moment to the one who would be responsible for identifying Him to His executioners, we can only guess, but it was at that moment that Judas--now resolved to turn the Lord over to those who would put him to death--stood to his feet and left the room.

How Judas came to the decision to betray the Lord is an interesting study, although much of what has been written is built on speculation. From the hints provided in the four gospels, it’s generally assumed that Judas was, at first, sincere in joining the Lord and His Eleven. Perhaps because he had some business experience and skill in managing finances, Judas was appointed as the treasurer of the few funds that had been given to the Lord. We soon see, however, that he slowly began to embezzle the funds entrusted to him as John tells us in chapter twelve, verse six.

It’s quite possible that his expectations of what the Messiah would do were fed by the Lord’s early teaching and the crowds that began to follow Him; but, when Judas saw his hopes disappointed as Jesus--perhaps in Judas’ mind--failed to take advantage of so many opportunities--the crowds that continued to grow through His teaching and healing ministry, the increasing profoundness of those miracles John has called “signs,” and then the glorious reception He received when He entered Jerusalem, only to hear the Lord tell them of how He would soon be killed by the very religious leaders / Judas perhaps expected would be part of their deliverance from Rome, it seems he saw no worldly advantage in being / on what he surely saw as the losing side, so he decided to make whatever profit he could, given the circumstances, or force one final challenge on Jesus to reveal Himself as the Messiah that he--Judas--and other worldly-minded revolutionaries wanted Him to be.

“What you are going to do, do quickly.” Alexander Maclaren elaborates on the Lord’s words so eloquently here: “There is a world of solemn meaning

in that one little word ‘do.’ It teaches us the old lesson, which sense is so apt to forget, that the true actor in [our] deeds is ‘the hidden man of the heart,’ and that when it has acted, it matters comparatively little whether the mere tool and instrument of the hands ... have carried out the behest. The thing is done before it is done when the man has resolved, with a fixed will, to do it. ... Because there was a fixed purpose which could not be altered by anything now, therefore Jesus Christ regards the act as completed. It is what we think in our hearts that we are; and our fixed determinations, our inclinations of will, are far more truly our doings than the mere consequences of these, embodied in actuality.” “Everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” “These hidden movements of desire and will that never come to the surface are our true selves. Look after them, and the deeds will take care of themselves. Serpent’s eggs have serpents in them. And he that has determined upon a sin has done the sin, whether his hands have been put to it or no.”

“But, then,” he says, “turn for a moment to the other thought that is suggested here--that solemn picture of a soul left to do as it will, because divine love has no other restraints which it can impose, and is bankrupt of motives that it can adduce to prevent it from its madness. Now I do not believe, for my part, that any man in this world is so all-round ‘sold unto sin’ as that the seeking love of God gives him up as irreclaimable. I do not believe that there are any people [for whom] it is impossible for the grace of God to find some chink and cranny in their souls through which it can enter and change them. There are no hopeless cases as long as [we breathe]. But, then, ... every one of us, over and over again, has known what it is to come exactly into that position in regard to some single evil or other, concerning which we have so set our teeth and planted our feet at such an angle of resistance as that God gives up dealing with us and leaves us, as He did with Balaam when He opposed his covetous inclinations to all the remonstrances of Heaven. God said at last to him ‘Go!’ because it was the best way to teach him what a fool

he had been in wanting to go. Thus, when we determine to set ourselves against the pleadings and the beseechings of divine love, the truest kindness is to fling the reins upon our necks, and let us gallop ourselves into a sweat and weariness, and then we shall be more amenable to the touch of the rein thereafter.”

He concludes: “Judas set his teeth against two things, the solemn conviction that Jesus Christ knew his sin, and the saving assurance that Jesus Christ loved him still. And [today,] whosoever resists either of these two is getting perilously near to the point where, not in petulance but in pity, God will say, ‘Very well, I have called and ye have refused. Now go, and do what you want to do, and see how you like it when it is done.’ ... But since consequences last when deeds are past, perhaps you had better halt before you determine to do them.”

Although Judas thought He had gotten the upper hand on Jesus for failing to be the kind of Messiah he wanted Him to be, in the end, he only proved that he was only carrying out the plans of His intended Victim--that he was, in fact, merely an instrument in the hands of the Lord for the carrying out of His will. MacLaren adds, “in effect, all antagonism, all malicious hatred, all violent opposition of every sort ... work in with Christ’s purpose, and carry out His intention; and ... at the moments of deepest apparent degradation, He towers, in manifest Majesty and Masterhood”

“He uses his foes for the furtherance of His purpose. That has been the history of the world ever since. ‘The floods, O Lord, have lifted up their voice.’ And what have they done? Smashing against the breakwater, they but consolidate its mighty blocks, and prove that ‘the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters.’ It has been so in the past; it is so to-day; it will be so till the end. Every Judas is unconsciously the servant of Him whom he seeks to betray; and finds out to his bewilderment that what he meant for a death-blow is fulfilling the very purpose and will of the Lord against whom he has turned.”

Judas “immediately went out”--perhaps out of fear of being found out by the rest of the disciples and prevented from doing Satan’s bidding--and went directly from Bethany to Jerusalem to make the final arrangements for delivering Jesus into the hands of the religious leaders.

John adds here: “And it was night.” So resolved was Judas to carry out his plan that the darkness of night didn’t hinder or discourage him. After all it was a dark work he was about and darkness was the best time for it--a proper picture of the blackness of the crime he was going to perpetrate.

But there’s more to John’s words than just the passing observation that it was dark outside. In the gospel that speaks so many times of Jesus being the Light of the world in chapters one, three, eight, nine, and twelve; and where darkness almost always refers to moral darkness--chapters one, eight, and twelve--that we also find in the first two chapters of John’s first letter--we can hardly be mistaken to understand that Judas went forth from the Light of the World into the night in which one cannot keep from stumbling “because there is no light in him”--chapter eleven, verse ten.

One more word from the pen of Alexander MacLaren before we move on: “Why was Christ so willing, so eager, if I may use the word, that His death should be accomplished? Two reasons, which at the bottom are one, answer the question. He thus hastened to His Cross because He would obey the Father’s will, and because He loved the whole world--you and me and all our fellows. We were each in His heart. It was because He wanted to save [you] that He said to Judas, ‘Do it quickly, that the world’s salvation and [your] salvation may be accomplished.’ These were the cords that bound Him to the altar. Let us never forget that Judas with his treachery, and rulers with their hostility, and Pilate with his authority, and the soldiers with their nails, and centurions with their lances, and the grim figure of Death itself with its shaft, would have been all equally powerless against Christ if it had not been his loving will to die on the Cross for each of us.”

“What you are going to do, do quickly. ... So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out.”

// Now, with Judas gone from their midst, the room has been purged and purified of the demonic oppression that must have weighed heavily upon the Lord. Now, His mood changes; He's able to speak openly to those who truly loved Him and were willing to following Him wherever He might go, even if that meant they would give up their lives as well, so earnest was their devotion to Him, and in spite of the fact that they all would desert Him when He would be arrested. He knew their hearts, and He knew the limitations of their wills, and yet He still loved them, and now would be the moment for Him to open His heart to them, sharing with them some of the most important words they would ever hear from the lips of the Son of God--all those things He could never have shared with them had Judas been present.

John records these words for us beginning in verse 31: “When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once.’”

What a marvelous declaration of the announcement of God's glorification--the momentous events that will display for all the world to see the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption that had been waiting since before the foundation of the world--and it's a triple glorification: the Son of Man glorified in His Cross, God glorified in the Son of Man, and the Son of Man glorified in God.

First, the Lord Jesus says, “Now is the Son of Man glorified.” On the surface, this seems to be a contradiction--an absurdity--that, at this very moment, there rose up before the Lord the picture of the shame and suffering, the pain and death, and the sense of the Father's abandonment--which was worse than all the others. Yet He seems to stretch out His hands to bring the Cross nearer to Himself while His soul was filled with a sense of victory!

MacLaren calls this “the triumphant anticipation rising to the surface, and conquering for a time the shrinking,” and the writer of the letter to the Hebrews--chapter twelve, verse two--says, “for the joy that was set before him [He] endured the cross [and despised] the shame.”

Why did Jesus think of His cross as a glorifying? In general, the New Testament speaks of His crucifixion in terms of the very lowest point of His shame and humiliation, but John’s gospel always presents it as the very highest point of His glory. And the two things are both true; it was at the same time the very lowest depth of the Lord’s humiliation, as well as the very highest, culminating point of His glory.

How did the Cross glorify Christ? In two ways. It was the revelation of His heart and it was the throne of His sovereign power.

It was the revelation of His heart. All his life long He had been trying to tell everyone in the world how much He loved them. His love had been presented through His words and His work, but soon, in His death, His love would be poured out upon the entire world as all the barriers are tossed aside as the light of a morning sunrise blazes across the land.

MacLaren writes, “Because His Cross reveals to the world for all time, and for eternity, too, a love which shrinks from no sacrifice, a love which is capable of the most entire abandonment, a love which is diffused over the whole surface of humanity and through all the ages, a love which comes [bearing] the richest and the highest gifts, even the turning of selfish and sinful hearts into its own pure and perfect likeness, therefore does He say, in contemplation of that Cross which was to reveal Him for what He was to the world, and to bring His love to every one of us, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified.’”

Not only was His glorification the revealing of His heart, it was also the throne of His saving power. By His death, “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him”--Colossians, chapter two, verse fifteen--and in Hebrews, chapter two, verse

fourteen we read that “through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.” Our greatest enemy was vanquished in the death of Christ--what greater reason could there be for celebrating our Lord!

Not only is the Son of Man glorified in His death, God is glorified in Him as well. In the death of this innocent God-Man, we find the greatest revelation and personal expression of the nature of God Himself, for, as Paul writes in Second Corinthians, chapter five, verse nineteen, “God was-- in Christ-- reconciling the world to himself.” John told us in the opening chapter of his gospel--in verse eighteen--that “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” And it was through Jesus’ death that He made known to us the Father, and God was glorified in this.

MacLaren puts it like this: “For if the dying Christ be the Son of God dying for us, then the Cross glorifies God, because it teaches us that the glory of the divine character is the divine love. ... [T]he Cross upon which Christ died towers above all other revelations as the most awful, the most sacred, the most tender, the most complete, the most heart-touching, the most soul-subduing manifestation of the divine nature; and stars and worlds, and angels and mighty creatures, and things in the heights and things in the depths, to each of which have been entrusted some broken syllables of the divine character to make known to the world, dwindle and fade before the brightness, the [radiant], gentle brightness that beams out from the Cross of Christ, which proclaims God is love, is pity, is pardon.”

The Son of Man is glorified in His death, God is glorified in Him, and “God will also glorify him in himself.” These words are a preview of what the Lord will pray in chapter seventeen: “Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.” As the Son of God returns to His place at the right hand of His Father, “God [will] highly [exalt] him and [bestow] on him the name that is above every name, so that at

the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"--Philippians, chapter two, verses nine through eleven.

"This, then," MacLaren writes, "was the vision that lay before the Christ in that upper room, the vision of Himself glorified in His extreme shame, because His Cross manifested His love and His saving power; of God glorified in Him above all other of His acts of manifestation when He died on the Cross, and revealed the very heart of God; and of Himself glorified in the Father when, exalted high above all creatures, He [sits] upon the Father's throne and rules the Father's realm." And there's so much more we could add here.

Then, to encourage His disciples, He tells them--verse 33--"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'" In the most tender words of lovingkindness, the Lord reminds them of what He had said before in chapter eight and prepares them for what lay ahead--a path that He alone would tread. They will probably speak more about this on Wednesday night as he explains the Lord's answer to Peter's question in verse 36, and we'll return to this thought in chapter sixteen.

At some point in the evening's conversation, Luke tells us that the disciples were arguing yet again about which of them was the greatest. Perhaps this is what prompted Jesus to say in verse 34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

In these most important words to those who would be the first to take the gospel to the ends of the earth, the Lord Jesus tells them that they are to love each other in the same way that He has loved them--sacrificially, selflessly, unconditionally, unreservedly. They didn't have to agree with each other on everything, but what they had to do was love one another, for as they loved

each other as the Lord had loved them, then the world would be able to identify them as genuine and authentic followers of Jesus. This would be the highest commendation any of them--or any of us--could ever receive--that they and we be recognized to be the Lord's disciples.

Tertullian, the second-and third-century Christian theologian wrote in chapter 39 of his Apology, "[I]t is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. 'See,' they say, 'how they love one another,' ... how they are ready even to die for one another." And John himself was known to have encouraged the believers in Ephesus by the simple words, "This is the Lord's commandment. If ye love one another it is enough."

As you would expect, there's an entire lesson on these two verses alone, but we'll revisit this command again in the next four chapters of John's gospel.

The one who would betray Jesus, having been identified and dismissed to carry out Satan's evil designs, the Lord has encouraged His disciples with the assurance that He and the Father would be glorified--celebrated--through the horrific events to come in the next few hours. Through it all and forever, they are to heed this new commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you. By this, everyone will know that you are My disciples." May it be so with us today as well.

Thank you for being a part of our brief overview of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus seen through John's eyes that's meant to lead you to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, by believing in Him, you might experience the fullness of life that can only come in Him.

Next week, the Lord Jesus continues His conversation with the eleven disciples there in the Upper Room. Following Trey's sermon from the first fourteen verses of chapter fourteen where the Lord will assure them of His provision for them because He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, we'll hear the Lord tell them in verses fifteen through 31 of His peace and abiding presence through the One He would send in His place--the Helper, the

Comforter--Who would teach them everything they needed to know and remind them of everything He's told them.

As always, as it's still a good thing to do, keep calm, trust in the Lord, and wash your hands! God bless you!

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