



“The Mark of a True Disciple”
John 13:31-38
Sermon Date: September 27th, 2020

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

Prayer

As you begin your study this week, spend a few moments praising God for being merciful, gracious, and abundantly loving. Ask the Lord to help you understand His love in greater measure and to help you see the ways you can extend love and grace to others. Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to teach you what it means to “love one another as [Christ] loved you” (John 13:34). As you pray, make the following words your own before the Lord (prayer taken from Everyday Prayers by Scotty Smith).

“Lord Jesus, as I meditate and pray my way through these Scriptures, I’m quite literally undone. What but the gift of faith can enable me to grasp the wonder of these words and the magnificence of this moment? What but the power of the gospel can enable me to believe and obey them? Grant me both, I pray; grant me both.

On our calendar we call this day Maundy or Mandate Thursday. It is a day of Holy Week and a day in the history of redemption brimming over with glory and grace. Passover will soon become the Lord’s Supper — your supper. The promises of the old covenant will soon be fulfilled, by the blood of the new covenant — your blood.

Having shared eternal glory with the Father, you now show stunning grace to your disciples. Having loved this ragtag bunch of broken men – who squabbled with each other hours earlier for positions of honor and who within a few hours would all scatter and deny you – having loved them so well, you now show them even greater manifestations of your love. Your disrobing to wash their feet was with a full view to your being stripped naked to wash their hearts and our hearts. What wondrous love is this indeed! How wide, long, high, and deep!

“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34 NIV). This is the new and never-ending mandate we’re now under as your disciples. Don’t let me ever forget that the measure of your love is not just the basin and towel of the upper room but your cross and your death at Calvary. There simply is no greater love — none.

Jesus, as my heart comes more fully alive to how you loved me by your death and how you love me now in your resurrection glory, I’ll seek to make fewer excuses for loving poorly and to offer quicker repentances when I do. As you continue to show me the full extent of your love for me in the gospel, love through me to your glory. I pray in your name. Amen.”

Scripture

John 13:31–38 – (English Standard Version)

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. 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.’ 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. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

36 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” 37 Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” 38 Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

Handling the Word

1. Our passage this week begins by telling us that Jesus said these words to His disciples: “When he had gone out” (v. 31). What was He going out from? Describe the scene leading up to our text this week (John 13:1-30) as it helps us to better understand Jesus’ command in verse 34.
2. In our passage, Jesus speaks about glorifying the Father and the Father glorifying the son. Look up in your bible dictionary, or encyclopedia or even a systematic theology, and write down what it means to “glorify” someone. Here is a link from Ligonier ministries that may also help:
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-glory-of-god/>

Understanding and Applying

1. Jesus begins his message to his disciples by addressing them as “little children” (v 33). Why do you think Jesus chose this phrase to describe his disciples? What does he mean by this? What might this tell us about Jesus’ love for them?

6. Last week we saw Judas betray Jesus. This week Jesus tells Peter that “you [will deny] me three times (v38). Do you think there is a difference between Judas’ and Peter’s actions, or are they the same? If so, how or why? What do you think was the motivation behind each of their actions?
7. In two instances, Jesus’ friends let him down—one by betrayal and one by denial. How did Jesus respond to his friends when they let him down? How does the example of Jesus help guide us in how we should respond to people who let us down? Read through the following verses and write down what they tell us about loving people who may have done us wrong:
- Romans 12:12-14
 - Colossians 3:13
 - Ephesians 4:31-32
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:14
8. From these verses, what glorious truths about Jesus, His grace, or the gospel lead you to worship Him? As you finish your study, spend a few minutes worshipping Him for the truths you listed.

“‘Love one another’ Let us take heed that this well-known Christian grace is not merely a notion in our heads, but a practice in our lives. Of all the commands of our Master there is none which is so much talked about and so little obeyed as this.”

J.C. Ryle