

SBCOD Bible Study Notes

9-24-25

John 13

Jesus And His Disciples At Last Meeting Before Arrest – Verses 1-3

¹ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

13:1 Jesus knew he would be betrayed by one of his disciples, disowned by another, and deserted by all of them for a time. Still he “loved them to the end.” God knows us completely, as Jesus knew his disciples (2:24-25; 6:64). He knows the sins we have committed and the ones we will yet commit. Still, he loves us. How do you respond to that kind of love?

13:2-3 Chapters 13–17 tell us what Jesus said to his disciples on the night before his death. These words were all spoken in one evening when, with only the disciples as his audience, he gave final instructions to prepare them for his death and resurrection, events that would change their lives forever.

Jesus Washes The Feet Of His Disciples – Verses 4-5

⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

13:4-5 Jesus was the model servant, and he showed his servant attitude to his disciples. Washing guests’ feet was a job for a household servant to carry out when guests arrived. But Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist, as the lowliest slave would do, and washed and dried his disciples’ feet. If even he, God in the flesh, is willing to serve, we his followers must also be servants, willing to serve in any way that glorifies God. Are you willing to follow Christ’s example of serving? Whom can you serve today? There is a special blessing for those who not only agree that humble service is Christ’s way, but who also follow through and do it (13:17).

Jesus Overcomes Peter’s Objections And Washes His Feet – Verses 6-8

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” ⁷ Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” ⁸ “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”

13:6-8 Imagine being Peter and watching Jesus wash the others’ feet, all the while moving closer to you. Seeing his Master behave like a slave must have confused Peter. He still did not understand Jesus’ teaching that to be a leader, a person must be a servant. This is not a comfortable passage for leaders who find it hard to serve those beneath them. How do you treat those who work under you (whether children, employees, or volunteers)?

Peter Tells Jesus To Wash Him Completely – Verses 9-11

⁹ “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”
¹⁰ Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

13:9-11 When Jesus responded, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me,” he may have meant (1) that unless he washed away Peter’s sins by his death on the cross, then Peter could have no relationship with him, or (2) that unless Peter submitted to him and allowed Jesus to minister in this way, Peter would never learn the lesson of humility. Either way, Peter seemed to grasp the significance of Jesus’ words, for he then wanted to be bathed completely: “Not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”

Jesus Call His Disciples To Follow His Example – Verses 12-17

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. ¹³ “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

13:12-16 Jesus did not wash his disciples’ feet just to get them to be nice to each other. His far greater goal was to extend his mission on earth after he was gone. These men were to move into the world serving God, serving each other, and serving all people to whom they took the message of salvation.

13:17 The theory of being humble and being a servant isn’t worth very much. But the practice of being a servant pleases God, fulfills our calling, bringing blessing and happiness. “If there is a position in the church where the worker will have to toil hard and get no thanks for it, take it, and be pleased with it. If you can perform a service, which few will ever seek to do themselves, or appreciate when performed by others, yet occupy it with holy delight. Covet humble work, and when you get it be content to continue in it. There is no great rush after the lowest places, you will rob no one by seeking them.”

Jesus Reveals That One At The Table Will Betray Him – Verses 18-20

¹⁸ “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned^[a] against me.’ ¹⁹ “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. ²⁰ Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”

13:18-20 When Jesus chooses a person He knows them. He does not choose apart from His knowledge of who they are and what they will do. It was important for Jesus to tell the disciples that He was not surprised by the betrayal that would soon happen. Jesus reminded all His disciples — the faithful ones and Judas — that His work was not finished. Judas would not win; the work of Jesus would continue and they would be sent as His representatives. He also wanted Judas to know that rejecting Him meant rejecting the God who sent Jesus.

Jesus Identifies Judas As His Betrayer – Verses 21-26

²¹ After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.” ²² His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. ²³ One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, “Ask him which one he means.” ²⁵ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

13:21 He was troubled in spirit: Judas’ betrayal of Jesus troubled Him. Jesus was not unfeeling or emotionally detached from the events surrounding His passion. He loved Judas, and was troubled for Judas’ sake, much more than His own.

13:24-26 Sometimes we imagine people are against us when they are not and it makes us suspicious, unpleasant, and afraid. Jesus knew Judas was against Him yet His love and goodness seemed to become greater instead of lesser. Jesus even gave Judas the chance to repent without revealing him as the traitor to all the other disciples.

The Departure Of Judas – Verses 27-30

²⁷ As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.” ²⁸ But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹ Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor. ³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

13:27-29 Satan’s part in the betrayal of Jesus does not remove any of the responsibility from Judas. Disillusioned because Jesus was talking about dying rather than setting up his kingdom, Judas may have been trying to force Jesus’ hand and make him use his power to prove he was the Messiah. Or perhaps Judas, not understanding Jesus’ mission, no longer believed Jesus was God’s chosen one. Whatever Judas thought, Satan assumed that Jesus’ death would end his mission and thwart God’s plan. Like Judas, Satan did not know that Jesus’ death was the most important part of God’s plan all along.

13:30 John describes these few moments in clear detail. We can see that Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen. He knew about Judas and about Peter, but he did not change the situation, nor did he stop loving them. In the same way, Jesus knows exactly what you will do to hurt him. Yet he still loves you unconditionally and will forgive you whenever you ask him. Judas couldn’t understand this, and his life ended tragically. Peter understood, and despite his shortcomings, his life ended triumphantly because he never let go of his faith in the one who loved him.

Jesus Declares The Cross As Supreme Glorification – Verses 31-33

³¹ When he was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. ³³ “My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

13:31 This is the only place in the Gospels where Jesus addressed His disciples as little children. He didn’t mean it as an insult. He meant it with a sense of tenderness, care, and recognition of their present dependence and immaturity.

13:33 I shall be with you a little while longer... Where I am going, you cannot come: This would have been like an earthquake to the disciples. They had literally left everything to follow Jesus, and expected to be high-ranking officials in His government when He took political control of Israel as Messiah. After three years they now heard Him say He would leave.

Jesus Tells Of A New Commandment – Verses 34-35

³⁴ **“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”**

13:34 To love others was not a new commandment (see Leviticus 19:18), but to love others as much as Christ loved others was revolutionary. Now we are to love others based on Jesus’ sacrificial love for us. Such love will not only bring unbelievers to Christ; it will also keep believers strong and united in a world hostile to God. Jesus was a living example of God’s love, as we are to be living examples of Jesus’ love.

13:34-35 Jesus says that our Christlike love will show we are his disciples. Do people see petty bickering, jealousy, and division in your church? Or do they know you are Jesus’ followers by your love for one another? Love is more than simply warm feelings; it is an attitude that reveals itself in action. How can we love others as Jesus loves us? By helping when it’s not convenient, by giving when it hurts, by devoting energy to others’ welfare rather than our own, by absorbing hurts from others without complaining or fighting back. This kind of loving is hard to do. That is why people notice when you do it and know you are empowered by a supernatural source. The Bible has another beautiful description of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

Peter’s Denial Of Jesus Is Predicted – Verses 36-38

³⁶ **Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.” ³⁷ Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” ³⁸ Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!**

13:37-38 Peter proudly told Jesus that he was ready to die for him. But Jesus corrected him. He knew Peter would deny that he knew Jesus that very night to protect himself (18:15-18, 25-27). In our enthusiasm, it is easy to make promises, but God knows the extent of our commitment. Paul tells us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought (Romans 12:3). Instead of bragging, demonstrate your commitment step-by-step as you grow in your knowledge of God’s Word and in your faith.