

**Lighthouse Bible Church**

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014**

**John 13: 31 – 38**      *Scripture Reading: Philippians 2: 1 - 4*

**‘The Evidence of True Christian Love’**

**Stand – Read – Pray**

You remember that while the disciples are in the upper room with Jesus, He teaches them some valuable lessons on love and humility by washing the disciples feet.

During His washing of the disciples feet, He tells them a profound lesson on the one time spiritual cleansing to salvation and the daily need for the washing of sin through confession and repentance. During this time, Jesus told the disciples that one of them was not clean, was not saved and would later betray Him.

He said this betrayal would fulfill scripture and should not come as a surprise to the rest of the disciples when it happens nor should it hinder their responsibility to ministry after Jesus is gone.

You remember that Peter asked John to ask Jesus who the betrayer was and Jesus told John it is the one whom I shall give a piece of bread after I have dipped it. When He dipped the bread He gave it to Judas and it was at that immediate time that Satan entered into him and Jesus dismissed him to complete his plan of betrayal.

None of the rest of the disciples knew why Judas left and all of them looked at themselves and at others, according to the parallel passages, trying to find out who it could be. They didn't automatically say it was Judas because he disguised his hypocrisy and deceit and greed very well. So we pick it up now where Judas is gone and Jesus is addressing the remaining disciples starting in Verses 31 – 32.

What Jesus says in this passage of scripture and beyond is so very practical for us today in our Christian living and discipleship and commitment to Jesus Christ. Much of the next 3 chapters are about Christian living and how to follow Christ that evidences itself in the fact that you are one of His. These will be some of the last words of Jesus before He dies and they are significant to the disciples and they are significant to disciples in all ages, including today.

Because, once Jesus dies on the cross, the disciples become the bearers of truth, the ones to whom people can go to for answers, they become the instruments that God will use to further His kingdom. There is no plan B so Jesus wants to instruct them on how to be a true disciple of His. *Compare to Christians today*

**Verses 31 - 32: So, when he had gone out, Jesus said ‘now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself and glorify Him immediately.**

After Judas left, Jesus told His disciples that He, **the Son of Man, is now glorified.** He is referring to His soon death on the cross. What from man’s perspective seemed to be a disgraceful, shameful, humiliating death by crucifixion, Jesus says will bring glory to Himself and to God.

God will be glorified in the death of His Son and the Son will be glorified through His submission to the Father’s will to the point of death, even death on the cross. Remember we have seen before that the death of Jesus glorifies Himself and God because:

His death provided the perfect punishment and sacrifice for sin. **John 1: 29** says **behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.**

His shed blood and death provided redemption for all mankind. **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 18 – 19** says we **were redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus**

His death defeated Him who had the power of death, **Hebrews 2: 14** says is the devil.

His death and subsequent resurrection, **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 3 – 5** provides a secure salvation **reserved in heaven** because we are **kept by the power of God**.

His death fulfilled many, many Scriptures but most importantly, His death showed the incredible love that God has for His creation. **John 3: 16**.

And then Jesus looks beyond His death and says **God will also glorify Him**. Christ will be exalted to the right hand of God once again, **Philippians 2: 9 – 11** says **and at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue confess..** In **Acts 3: 13** it says that **God glorified His Servant Jesus Christ...** Jesus yearned for that time and He knew that it would only be accomplished through His own death on the cross and then **immediately** after His death He would be raised.

And by the way, we can bring glory to Jesus Christ too, can't we, after all that is what we are called, as born again believers, to do. **2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1: 11 – 12** says **therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power (why) that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and you in Him**.

We can bring glory to God through Jesus Christ as we use our spiritual gifts. **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4: 10 – 11** says **if anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God and if anyone ministers let him do it as with the ability which God supplies that in all things God may be glorified...** Then Look at Verse 33.

**Verse 33:** Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me and as I said to the Jews 'where I am going you cannot come, so now I say to you.

Jesus calls His disciples **little children** *tecknon* an affectionate term of love for them and He says I'm only going to be with you a little while and then I am going to be gone and **you will seek Me**, you will try to find Me, but I will be gone and **where I am going you cannot come.**

Jesus said you will miss Me because I am going back to the Father and you can't come here now. He told the unbelieving **Jews** the same thing back in **John 7: 33 – 34** and **John 8: 21** *Read both.*

The difference is, look at **Verse 36** **Jesus says where I am going you cannot follow Me NOW, but you shall follow Me afterward.** Where the unbelieving Jews could not go because of their unrepentant, unforgiven sin, the disciples will someday go and that is heaven.

This would have broken their hearts and they would miss Him deeply...until His resurrection and they would once again be overjoyed at seeing Him. But that would be short lived as well because they would be standing outside with Jesus and **Acts 1: 9 – 12** says that He was **taken up in a cloud..**

Jesus tells them that He has to be separated from them in His death for the glory of God and that He will be raised from the dead and go back to the Father and there be exalted in heaven. That is the essence of the Christian life today, isn't it. The death, burial, resurrection, exaltation and return of Christ and that is the gospel we share today and that is the celebration we have at this table today.

**Verse 34: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**

The Lord's command to His disciples was not new in the sense of loving one another because that has always been the command of God. First of all, love God **Deuteronomy 6: 5** says with **all your heart, soul, mind and strength** and then to **love your neighbor as yourself** as **Leviticus 19: 18** says.

Jesus here says the standard or measure of love for one another is the stand or measure of love that I have shown you; **love one another as I have loved you**. How had Jesus loved them? It was a **selfless, sacrificial, humbling, understanding, unconditional forgiving** love and not just for some, but for even the most unlovable person, Judas.

John was so profoundly moved by the love of Christ and His call for them to love one another the same way, that he wrote about it in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> John using the word love over 40 times in 7 short chapters.

That same commandment to love and the way to love is given to us today and the only way we can fulfill it is by a transformed heart and the indwelling Holy Spirit controlling us. Isn't that what **Romans 5: 5** says **the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us**. And **Galatians 5: 22** says **the fruit of the Spirit is (what) love**.

We are called in **Ephesians 5: 2** to **walk in love as Christ also loved us and given Himself for us...** It is the **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13: 4 – 8** kind of love that **never fails**. This kind of love would preserve the unity in a marriage, in a family and in a church if everyone would be willing to do two things: (1) willing to apologize and say I'm sorry and seek forgiveness from those we have wronged and (2) grant forgiveness to those who ask, and to those that don't ask but need it, because as **Ephesians 5: 32** says **forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you**.

**1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3: 12** says **my the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to ALL.** Listen, more churches are divided by a lack of love than doctrinal issues and you know what John said in **1<sup>st</sup> John 3: 14 – 15** we know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death, whoever hates his brother is a murderer. There are some murderers in some churches of America today.

If we would just love one another the way Paul told the church at Philippi to love, we would be a lot better off. He said in **Philippians 2: 2 – 4** **have the same love for one another and ... let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves...** and when we live like Christ commands us to live and we love the way He calls us to love, Jesus says in Verse 35 that you will have an incredible testimony.

**Verse 35:** **by this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.** The greatest evidence of anyone being a follower of Christ, a true disciple of Christ, a born again believer, is how they love one another in what they say and what they do. What does a lost world today see in the churches of today? What kind of testimony are we to them? Well, I think we are just like the church of Thessalonica in **1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4: 9** where it says **but concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another and indeed you do so toward all...**

**Verse 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 shall follow Me afterward.**

Peter wants to know where Jesus is going, implying that he wants to go with Him. So Jesus tells Him **where I am going you cannot follow Me now.** Jesus was going back to the Father after His death and subsequent resurrection and Peter would not be able to go with Him **now**, but he will later is the implication.

And he would. Remember what Jesus said to Peter after Jesus rose from the grave in **John 21: 18 – 19**. Jesus said ‘Peter you will be crucified and in your death, God will be glorified’. And historical tradition records that Peter was crucified upside down in the presence of his wife. And then he **followed Him afterward** to the place where Jesus was, in heaven.

**Verse 37** Peter said to Him ‘**Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake**’. You have to be encouraged by the love that Peter had for Jesus and his desire to be where He was. But it was a statement made brashly and somewhat in pride and overconfidence, in the flesh, from emotion, and not in submission to or understanding of Jesus’ plan. I love Peter and can identify with him.

If you read the account in all the gospels, because all 4 of them record what Peter says here to Jesus, he said **even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble. If I have to die with You, I will not deny You. Lord, I am ready to go with You to prison and to death, I will lay down my life for Your sake.**

**Verse 38:** Jesus answered him ‘**will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.**

The One who was about to lay down His life for Peter asks Peter **will you lay down your life for Me?** At some point in the future he will, but not right now. He says your good intentions and brave words will be put to the test in a few short hours and you will fail the test as a matter of fact **the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.** **Mark 14: 30** adds that the rooster would crow 2 times and Peter would deny Him 3 times.

That must have cut to the heart of Peter because we don’t hear from him again until chapter 18.

We know the account of Peter's denial because it is recorded in all four gospels as well. Look at **Matthew 26: 69 – 75** *Read*

You know what caused Peter to deny Jesus? He boasted in his own flesh, in his own ability to do what only God and His Spirit could empower someone to do.

Another thing that caused him to deny Jesus is because we never see him praying about any of this. He just assumes and goes ahead without thinking or praying things through, and by implication, searching the scriptures that talk about this very event happening.

Another thing that caused him to deny Jesus is he acted outside the will of God, albeit with good intentions, still outside the will of God. Good intentions to relieve one from doing God's will. He tried to defend Jesus in the garden and even took a sword and tried to kill the servant of the high priest who came to arrest Him. Jesus said I could have called 12 legions of angels ... for this purpose I came into this world ... that the scripture might be fulfilled.

And finally, Peter denied Jesus because He no longer walked with Him through the difficulties of life. **Luke 22: 54** said **having arrested Jesus they led Him and brought Him to the high priests house but Peter followed at a distance.** He said he would never stumble, never deny, go to prison, and even give his life and die for Jesus. But when the going got rough, Peter denied Jesus 3 times.

A valuable lesson for us to learn today. Their may be times when through your words or actions you deny Jesus but the good news is, as we shall see in **John 21: 15 – 17**, Jesus forgave Peter and restored him, much like He can do with us today.

Gospel and to Lord's table

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**March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014**  
**John 13: 31 – 38**  
**‘The Evidence of True Christian Love’**

Introduction and Review:

Verses 31 – 32:

John 1: 29, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 18 – 19, Hebrews 2: 14  
1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 3 – 5, John 3: 16, Philippians 2: 9 – 11  
Acts 3: 13, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1: 11 – 12  
1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4: 10 – 11

Verse 33:

John 7: 33 – 34, John 8: 21, Acts 1: 9 – 12

Verse 34:

Deuteronomy 6: 5, Leviticus 19: 18, Romans 5: 5  
Galatians 5: 22, Ephesians 5: 2, 32  
1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13: 4 – 8, 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3: 12  
1<sup>st</sup> John 3: 14 – 15, Philippians 2: 2 – 4

Verse 35:

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4: 9

Verse 36:

John 21: 18 – 19

Verses 37 – 38:

Mark 14: 30, Matthew 26: 69 – 75, Luke 22: 54  
John 21: 15 – 17

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Acts 3: 13, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1: 11 – 12  
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Verse 33:

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Verse 34:

Deuteronomy 6: 5, Leviticus 19: 18, Romans 5: 5  
Galatians 5: 22, Ephesians 5: 2, 32  
1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13: 4 – 8, 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3: 12  
1<sup>st</sup> John 3: 14 – 15, Philippians 2: 2 – 4

Verse 35:

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