

JOHN 13:21-38

JESUS COMMANDS

The tone shifts as the meal continues.

What was once a moment of quiet service becomes heavy with tension.

Jesus speaks openly: one of His own will betray Him. The disciples are confused and unsettled. Even as Jesus identifies the betrayer with an act of honor, the weight of what is coming becomes more evident. Judas leaves and John simply notes, “it was night” (13:30b).

With Judas gone, Jesus turns to the remaining disciples and speaks about what lies ahead. Paradoxically, He describes His coming suffering as glory. The cross, marked by betrayal, denial, and death, will reveal the fullness of His love.

And then He gives them a command that will define their lives together: “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (13:34b). This is not a sentimental love, but a costly love shaped by Jesus Himself.

DAILY READINGS

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| I. JOHN 13:21-38 | V. MATTHEW 26:14-25 |
| II. MARK 14:17-31 | VI. MATTHEW 26:47-56 |
| III. LUKE 22:31-38 | VII. LUKE 22:54-62 |
| IV. PSALM 41:1-13 | |

MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 13:35

JOHN 13:21-38

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. 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.

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.**”

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.**”

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 The 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!**”

DISCUSSION

Have you ever talked big but been unable to follow through? Share a time when you made bold statements or predictions that you later realized you couldn't fulfill or wished you had never said.

Read John 13:21-38 aloud.

What has already taken place in the upper room (John 13:1-20)?

What do you imagine the mood is like when Jesus announces that one of them will betray Him? Why is it important that this betrayal fulfills biblical prophecy (John 13:18; Psalm 41:9)?

What is Jesus predicting in verses 31-33? In what sense will He be glorified? Why do you think the disciples struggle to grasp what He means?

How does Jesus' command to love one another fit into the events of John 13? How are we doing with this command as individuals, as a small group, and as a church?

Why do you think Peter makes such bold claims in this passage? How might the experience of denying Jesus, just as Jesus predicts in verse 38, shape Peter's future?

Have you ever experienced betrayal? How does it affect you to know that Jesus endured that same kind of pain from His closest followers? Why is it significant that He understands what it means to have a trusted friend turn against Him? (See Hebrews 4:14-16.)

Looking at everything that unfolds in John 13, what do you think Jesus is inviting His community, then and now, to become? How might we live that out together?

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you love one another."

JOHN 13:35

