

CCF Study Notes
Tuesday 7 AM Study
4 April 2006
John Chapter 13

Before beginning to read from John Chapter 13 let's spend some time in prayer, considering the glory of Jesus Christ. Let's just:

1. **Consider** God's love for us;
2. **Serve** one another as Christ served us;
3. **Thank** God for the lessons learned from Jesus' example;
4. **Acknowledge** our own propensity to betray Christ;
5. **Lean** on Jesus, and enter into His confidence;
6. **Glorify** Christ, now exalted and glorified in highest heaven, and
7. **Seek strength** to love one another as Christ loves us.

Chapter 13 begins a major section of John's gospel, a detailed account of what Jesus taught in the upper room at that last supper. A more intimate picture of Jesus with His disciples is not found anywhere else in all of scripture. To understand this relationship we need to understand the love of Jesus. And as we look at His love, it is contrasted with our own unfaithfulness, denial and betrayal of Christ. This serves to make the love of Jesus stand out most wonderfully as an example for us to follow – but never quite live up to. Yes the promise remains – one day we will follow Him, to be with Him forever. This is the central teaching of this time in the upper room.

Great contrasts abound in this chapter. The unfailing love of Jesus contrasts with our faltering love for Him. Christ's service in contrasted with Judas' betrayal. The power and authority of Christ contrasts with His humility in serving. Christ's willingness to serve is contrasted with our reticence to receive His service. Christ's complete obedience is contrasted with our limited obedience. The heart of Judas is contrasted with the heart of John. Jesus' coming glory contrasts with His imminent humiliation. Jesus' love for us contrasts with our love for one another. Peter's bold speech contrasts with what Peter actually is able to do. Each contrast points to an area where we need to grow.

What motivates the intimate teaching time in the upper room? (Verse 1) Impending change is not incompatible with continuing love. Rather, our love must be expressed by doing as Jesus did: by preparing those whom we love for the changes to come. Jesus carefully explains to His disciples the meaning of what He would do in days to come. Nothing is more vital for us than to understand than the meaning of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension. Our salvation is tied to these events, to the person of Jesus Christ.

Four details describe the context in which Jesus washes His disciples' feet. How do these help us understand what Jesus is doing? Jesus' unfailing love is expressed in concrete action. So we must express our love for one another. Though betrayed, Jesus returns only love. So must we. Given all things, Jesus in turn gives to His disciples. We must do likewise. Jesus thinks of His glory past and future yet humbles himself before the present company. We must likewise humble ourselves, considering our (inglorious!) past and glorious future. "If you know these things blessed are you if you **do them.**"

Jesus is troubled in spirit as he considers His betrayal. Yet Jesus tells His disciples in order that they would not stumble at it. The one who knew Jesus' love and leaned on His breast (John) was given clearest insight into what was happening. There are events which are troubling even to Jesus. Should we not be troubled at some events as well?

Jesus didn't talk of betrayal or crucifixion, but of glorification and of glorifying God. There is nothing to be ashamed of in the death of Jesus Christ. By His death and resurrection Jesus was glorified, and the Father was glorified. In dying Jesus broke the power of sin and of death. In rising He brought eternal life to as many as believe in Him.

Little children are fearful of separation from their parents. Jesus' disciples feared being separated from Jesus. Are there other reasons that Jesus calls His disciples "little children" (verse 33)? The command that enables fellowship among believers (that we love one another) is given in the context of Jesus' teaching concerning His death, resurrection and ascension. These things will involve at least a short term separation. Do they involve a long term separation? Why or why not? (Matthew 28:18-20) Yet, to the extent that we feel separated from Christ we encouraged to enter into fellowship with other believers.

Peter asks the question that on everybody's mind. Where is Jesus going? Jesus doesn't explicitly answer the question. Why not? Peter felt ready to pay the ultimate price to follow Jesus. What was the problem? Why didn't Peter follow Jesus all the way to the cross? How do we rightly evaluate our own abilities? God knows us better than we know ourselves! But did Peter betray Jesus by denying Him? Are our failures all betrayals?

Let's prayerfully consider what Jesus has said, and ask for the wisdom and strength to impement these things in our own lives. Do you feel Jesus' love even now? Then thank Him for it! Rest in His tender care – and His sure promise that we will one day follow Him.

P.S. MP3s of recordings of these studies in John and copies of these notes are now posted at <http://www.apu.edu/~jstoker>. The MP3s are not streamed, but can be downloaded. These MP3s are not small (13-14 Megabytes), so these will not work well on modem connections, but will work fine on faster DSL connections.