

Bible Study

Gods Word in Focus



Week Twenty One

Gospel of John

John 13: 1-38

Jesus' supreme humility

John 13:1-17

As Jesus' hour of humiliation draws near he reveals to his disciples the supreme humility which shaped the love he had for them. He stoops to perform a menial task reserved for servants -- the washing of smelly, dirty feet. In stooping to serve his disciples

Jesus knew he would be betrayed by one of them and that the rest would abandon him through disloyalty. Such knowledge could have easily led to bitterness or hatred.

Jesus met the injury of betrayal and disloyalty with the greatest humility and supreme love. Jesus loved his disciples to the very end, even when they failed him and forsook him.

The Lord loves each of us unconditionally. His love has power to set us free to serve others with Christ-like compassion and humility. Does the love of Christ rule in your heart and thoughts and in your actions?

Disloyalty versus fidelity

John 13:18-20

How do you treat people who have caused you grief or disappointment, especially those who might be related to you in bonds of friendship or kinship? In his last supper discourse, Jesus addressed the issue of fidelity and disloyalty in relationships. Jesus knew beforehand that one of his own disciples would betray him.

Such knowledge could have easily led Jesus to distance himself from such a man and to protect himself from harm's way. Instead, Jesus shows affection and loyalty to those who were his own, even to the one he knew would do violence to him through betrayal.

Jesus used a quotation from Psalm 4:9 which describes an act of treachery by one's closest friend.

Betrayal and faltering loyalty to Jesus

John 13:21-30

Jesus' disciples were put to the test as Jesus prepared to make the final and ultimate sacrifice of his own life for their sake and for all the world.

What was different between Peter and Judas? Judas deliberately betrayed his Master while Peter, in a moment of weakness, denied him with an oath and a curse. Judas' act was cold and calculated. Peter, however, never meant to do what he did. He acted impulsively, out of weakness and cowardice.

Jesus knew both the strength of Peter's loyalty and the weakness of his resolution. He had a habit of speaking with his heart without thinking through the implications of what he was saying.

The treachery of Judas, however, is seen at its worst when Jesus makes his appeal by showing special affection to him at his last supper.

"Love one another, even as I have loved you"

John 14:31-38

How does God reveal his glory to us? In his Last Supper discourse Jesus speaks of his glory and the glory of his Father. What is this glory? It is the cross which Jesus speaks of here. The cross of Jesus shows us that the greatest glory in life is the glory of willingly sacrificing one's life for the sake of another. In the cross God reveals the breadth of his great love for sinners and the power of redemption which cancels the debt of sin and reverses the curse of our condemnation.

Jesus gave his Father supreme honor and glory through his obedience and willingness to sacrifice his life on the cross. The greatest trust one can give to their leader is the willingness to obey in the line of duty, even to the point of putting oneself in harm's way.

In warfare the greatest honor belongs not to those who survive but to those who give the supreme sacrifice of their lives. Jesus also speaks of the Father bringing glory to the Son through the great mystery of the Incarnation and Cross of Christ. God the Father gave us his only begotten Son for our sake, to redeem us from slavery to sin and death. He freely offered his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the world.