

Sermon Notes for Reflection and Discussion - John 13:31-38
February 22, 2026

When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”

- John 13:31-38

1 - Observe

Read John 13:31-28 aloud. This passage is dense - packed with emotion, meaning, and a foreboding sense of what is about to happen. When you read and hear this passage, what do you observe? Imagine you are one of the disciples in the room. What do you feel or think? What questions would you have?

2 - Framing John 13:31 - 17:26

These chapters are often called Jesus' Farewell Discourse. Why? Though Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment (John 13:34-35), he largely tells them what he is doing - and will do - to care for them. What are some things Jesus says and does to care for them?

3 - The Good Shepherd

Read John 10:11, 14-15, and 17-18. What does Jesus tell those who are listening about himself? How does this inform John 13:31-38? Why is it important to know and understand that Jesus is not a victim? That he moves toward his betrayal, arrest, mock trial, beating, and crucifixion willingly?

4 - A New Command

Why is John 13:34-35 a new command? What is new about it?

Jamie Brown stated, “An unloving Christian is not an option for us.” Explore this. Invite the Holy Spirit to show you ways - both great and small - he is sanctifying you to be more loving. In other words, what does this look like for you practically?

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5 - Little Children

See John 13:33. What is the meaning and importance of this phrase? To the disciples? To you and me?

Read aloud 1 John 2:28-3:3. How does this inform who you are in Christ, that is, how you see and know yourself? How does it inform how you live, that is, what you think and do?

6 - Peter and You and Me

See John 13:37-38. Jesus does what Peter does not do. [Note: Of course, Peter, filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit, will eventually do this. See John 21:18-19.].

Peter is often an example for us. How does this inform how we understand our life of faith? Consider this statement. Peter is confident of what he will do for Jesus. Jesus wants Peter instead to be confident of what he will do for him.

7 - Outward

Go back to John 13:34-35 with an eye toward others. Do those in the world perceive this to be true of you and me? Of Truro? What are ways for others to see and experience this apart from worship on Sunday mornings? Prayerfully consider if the Lord is leading your community and you to invite others to experience the love of God among you. Could it be a cookout? A play date with kids on the local playground? A service project at a local park or The Lamb Center? A food packing project for the food insecure in our community?