

John 13:31-33a, 34-35

When Judas had left them, 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,
God will also glorify Him in Himself, and God will glorify Him at
once. My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. I
give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved
you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will
know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection Questions

- 1) ***The Context:*** Unlike the synoptic gospels, in John's gospel the last supper does not take place at Passover but several days before (Jn 13:1). In John's gospel Jesus will die on the day of preparation for the Passover (Jn. 19:31). During this supper, Jesus washes the feet of His disciples (a task usually reserved only for the lowliest servant of the house). Normally, this task would be considered 'beneath' any Jewish man. But Jesus sets the standard and the tone of what He is about to tell them through His actions. This passage sets the tone for Jesus' entire series of farewell discourses (Jn. 13:31-16:33).

- 2) Verse 31 tells us that Judas has just left. Earlier, Jesus had identified the one who would betray Him and therefore was 'troubled in spirit' (vs. 13:21). Now that Judas and his evil intentions have departed from the room, Jesus seems to consciously change His tone. Jesus begins to talk about how He has been glorified by God and how God is glorified in Him. The Greek word for 'glory' means 'brightness, radiance and splendor.' This is a stark contrast to the night darkness that is mentioned in verse 30 to describe Judas walking out into darkness (a darkness that matched the darkness of his heart). There are intentional contrasts in these verses. Why do you think that John chose to spell out this contrast at this point in the text? What is the gospel-writer wanting us to notice?

- 3) The term "glory" in the Biblical sense is used only to describe God's glory. Both Jesus and God will be glorified at the same time through Christ's obedience to a humiliating death on the cross. In this passage Jesus speaks in both the past and the future tenses "has been glorified" and 'will also glorify' and 'will glorify at once'. As Jesus speaks in the past tense, there is a sense that His conquering of sin evil and death by saying yes to the cross has already happened because He has already said 'yes' to it in His heart. Christ's sacrifice will make visible to all people His obedience to God, His love for His Father and His love for all people. On the cross, He draws all people to Himself. On the cross, He opens the doorway to eternity. The disciples are confused by His definition of 'glorification' because they associate 'glory' more with something like the transfiguration. In what way is it still difficult for us to connect glory with the cross? How does Jesus

glorify His Father by saying ‘yes’ to the cross? How is God glorified in Jesus through His entire walk to the cross?

- 4) “Little children, I am with you only a little longer”. Here Jesus refers to the Jewish leaders and reminds them that they will not find Him (vs. 33b) because they never recognized who He was when He was in their midst; a harsh condemnation.
- 5) “I give you a new commandment”. There is a bit of irony in this term because this commandment is far from new as it goes back to Leviticus 19:18, and Leviticus 19:34 “The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.” So, how is this commandment new? It is new in the sense that Jesus has offered a living example of what it means for us to love one another. Everything Jesus did while He was on earth was done out of love. Which ones of Christ’s actions stand out for you as a witness of humble dedicated servant-love? (see Jn 15:12-13)
- 6) This commandment focuses on the Christian community, and how we are to love each other as brothers and sisters in Him. This commandment sets into place a new covenant that is based more in love than in laws. This commandment is positive and open-ended (e.g. there are always ways that we can give more.....give of ourselves....lay down our lives for others more). There are endless ways in which we can love others in His name. What are some of those ways that you are being called to love now?
- 7) “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (vs. 35). The Church’s witness can take many forms but there is nothing quite so powerful as people’s love for each other. The Church grew very quickly after the resurrection, in part because of the powerful witness of Christian love. How have Christians’ love for one another been a witness to you?