

Date: February 17th, 2026

John Section: John 13:1-38

Key Text: John 13:34-35

Main Idea: Jesus shows what sacrificial love looks like.

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles, needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely written from Ephesus, AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quote of the Week: "On Christian Twitter, Christian Instagram, or Christian TikTok, you might just be convinced that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a giant rubber duck, through a city made of cheese" -

Anonymous

John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
 - **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
 - **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved
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Recap:

John 13:1-20 Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet - Ben

- Throughout John, we have seen a significant amount of Jesus' public ministry.
 - Remember our studies of:
 - Wedding at Cana
 - Feeding of the 5,000
 - Healing of the man born blind
 - The first 12 chapters covered roughly 3 years of Jesus' earthly ministry. But now we see this shift as we enter the upper room for some extremely important time with His disciples. These next few chapters will all take place within just a few hours.
- The first three verses provide context for the Feast of the Passover, preview Judas' coming betrayal, and give us a beautiful glimpse of Christ's love.
 - We are given context in verse 2 that the devil had already worked into Judas' heart to betray Jesus. What's powerful is that Jesus knows this. He knows the full plan of what is to come, and yet He continues to love in the face of betrayal.
 - Jesus exemplifies what it means to love. This is, of course, a context that we could never relate to (knowing of one's imminent crucifixion), but in a scenario where everything is going downhill for Jesus, He continues to love generously and serve humbly.
 - This is what makes this love so extraordinary. The pressure is growing, and Jesus' death is just hours away, yet we see Him continuing to stoop down to wash the feet of His disciples.
- **How does the world typically define love, and how is that definition challenged by the love we see in Christ?**

- As Jesus humbles Himself to wash the feet of the disciples, it is important to understand why this is so significant culturally.
 - The role of washing one's feet was typically reserved only for Gentile slaves. No superior or authoritative figure would even consider stooping to the level of washing another's feet.
 - Peter, having loved Jesus greatly, is very quick to react and fight against what Jesus is doing. He can't grasp why the Son of Man would choose to humble Himself to the lowest level and choose to serve.
- **Why do you think Peter struggles to accept Jesus' humble service? What does this teach us about the difference between human ideas of power and the servant leadership Jesus demonstrates?**

- We've talked about love, and we just finished discussing this idea of power and humble service. But now we see that this moment of washing feet is about far more than an example for Jesus' disciples to follow. It is about a spiritual cleansing, which is what we see in verses 8-11.
 - **8** Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." **9** Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" **10** Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." **11** For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, "Not all of you are clean."
 - Separate from the work of Jesus, there is no relationship with Him, and therefore no salvation. It's important to note that Jesus says, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." This is a strong picture of the gospel. Cleansing is not something we accomplish on our own or something that Jesus merely helps us out with. It is fully the work of Christ.
 - People will often read this section and misinterpret what Jesus is instructing. This passage has been interpreted to mean that we are clean (saved), but that in order to remain that way, we need to constantly work to remain clean.
 - There are countless churches that will preach this as truth:
 - God did His part; now you do yours.
 - Jesus secured your salvation, but you must maintain it through your performance.
 - When we sin, we need to work to return to right standing with the Father.
 - This view of our fellowship with God turns our focus away from the gospel and makes our relationship with God conditional, performance-based, and man-centered.
 - The reality is that there is no more slate for us to keep clean; that has already been taken care of by the work of Christ. Our relationship with God on the vertical is good and cannot be shaken.
- But how does this relate to our relationships on the horizontal? How are we to interact with each other in this broken world? That's where this text goes next.
 - Jesus commands the disciples in verse 14 that since He has washed their feet, they also ought to wash one another's feet. Even after emphasizing how the disciples are already clean in the eyes of the Lord, Jesus still calls them to serve one another in love.
 - As Christians, we do not always live out the way we know we should be living. In this passage, Jesus isn't teaching His disciples how they are to maintain their relationship with the Father; He is teaching them how to maintain relationships with one another.
- **If our cleansing and acceptance before God is entirely the work of Christ, why does He command us to serve one another in humility and love?**

John 13:21-38 - Noble

Fully Aware of Betrayal - Jesus Still Moves to the Cross (vv. 21-30)

- After Jesus has just performed a great act of washing the disciples' feet, the text then tells us that He was troubled in His spirit (v. 21). This is the same type of emotion that we saw in Jesus in John 11:33 (Lazarus) and John 12:27 (His hour is coming).
 - This is showing Jesus' humanity and also His divinity because He knows just how important the next week of His life will be. This will be the single most important event in all of Human history.
 - Jesus knows the weight of sin and brokenness. This world is affected and marred by sin, and Jesus still knew that He would be betrayed and still have to face death on a cross. And he proclaims to them that one of them would betray Him: Judas.
- Before we continue with the storyline. I want us to stop and talk about how Jesus' heart is on display through this passage. Jesus testifies, "Truly Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.
- **Small group questions:**
 - **How does Jesus' love stand out when we see that He knew He would be betrayed — and even knew who would betray Him — yet still chose to go to the cross for us?**

 - **How does that shape our gratitude and shape the way that we live?**

- As we can imagine, they are pretty interested in who will be the one to betray Jesus. And so they appointed John (the disciple that Jesus loved) to ask Jesus about what he meant by this and who would be the one to betray him.
- We then see in verse 27 that the devil enters into Judas. There is a lot of meaning in that. We can think back to Genesis 3:15, God promises: The offspring of the woman will crush the serpent's head — though the serpent will bruise His heel.
 - And from that time on, Satan has always had a strategy to stop the Savior that God would send to save and redeem His people.
 - We see that all through scripture, Satan has been trying to derail God's plan by corrupting humans and killing the ones God has chosen to deliver His message.
 - Satan believed that betrayal and death would defeat Christ, but God sovereignly used that very plan to accomplish redemption, so that what looked like Satan's victory became his ultimate defeat through the cross, as revealed in the unfolding glory of Christ in the Gospel of John.

God is Glorified the Most Through the Cross (vv. 31-33)

- In this passage, we see that Jesus will be glorified through the most humiliating act that is ever going to happen to Him. This might seem a little backwards, but we'll see that the thing that was meant to be a terrible act of sin was actually used for the greatest good of mankind and for the glory of God.
 - When we hear the word glory, we think of fame, winning, success, and recognition; we don't often think of going to the cross and being humiliated.
- **In what ways do we see that God is glorified in Christ being crucified?**

The New Command: Love Like Jesus Loves (vv. 34-35)

- In this next section, we see that we are told some very interesting and deep truths about love. Jesus commands the disciples to love one another just as he has loved them. We see that this type of love is not just about kindness or friendship. It is about a sacrificial love that is defined by Christ.
 - This is new because this is something that will now define God's people. It is really cool because we get to see some new covenant language here! Previously, people identified with being of God's people by getting circumcised, or maybe they even associated it with keeping some of the OT laws and rituals, but now Jesus is saying that they will be defined by love. This is a supernatural love that happens because of God working to renew the heart of man, getting at this idea of circumcision of the heart!
- If we are to love one another as Jesus loved us, how did/does Jesus love us?
 - Unconditionally - Romans 5:8
 - Sacrificially - 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - With Forgiveness - Ephesians 4:32
 - Eternally - Romans 8:38-39
 - Characterized by purity - Hebrews 7:26
 - Through His life, death, burial, and bodily resurrection - 1 John 4:9-10
 - Jesus doesn't just say, "*Love one another.*" He says, "*Love one another as I have loved you.*" That's the difference. The standard is no longer:
 - love as feels natural
 - love as is convenient
 - love as people deserve
 - The standard is: love like Jesus loves

- **Why is the kind of love that Jesus defines so difficult for us and backwards to the way we would naturally define love?**

The Frailty of Peter is Exposed (vv. 36-38)

- We then see this exchange going on between Jesus and Peter: Peter asks where Jesus is going, Jesus tells him that where he is going now, Peter will not be able to come, but he will follow later. Peter, of course, tells Jesus that he will follow Him and even lay down his life for Him if need be. And of course, Jesus humbles him by prophesying about how Peter would deny Him.
 - This is why we see so many who have “passion” burn out so soon. They are looking to their own strength and own power to carry them through. We need to see that God uses weak, frail, and very broken people like us! Our greatest spiritual growth often comes after we realize how weak we really are.
 - When we look at ourselves → we fail
 - When we look to God’s grace → we stand
 - Jesus is the only pardon for sins, and he is our power for life (loosely paraphrased from Connor’s sermon)
- And here’s the encouraging part: God has never built His kingdom on strong, self-sufficient people. Throughout Scripture, He consistently uses weak, frail, broken, and dependent people to accomplish His purposes. Peter’s failure was not the end of his story — it was the means God used to strip away his self-confidence and replace it with deep trust in grace. The same is true for us. God is not looking for people who think they are strong enough; He is forming people who know they are weak enough to depend fully on Him.

Upcoming Events

- Christian Worldview class is available, 6 pm at Waukesha Bible, all are welcome.
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Other Helpful Resources:

- He Must Increase Podcast by Connor Shady & Adam Tredeau (Official Podcast of 3:30!)
- Waukesha Bible Church John 12 Sermons (Find on YouTube)

Other Reminders:

- Get involved with a church - **Specifically WBC!**
 - **Adam is teaching: 9 AM Class on the Book of Romans at WBC prior to service.**
 - WBC service is at 10:00 AM every Sunday!
 - Check out our Website: Threethirtyministry.com
- Join the 3:30 GroupMe chat to stay up to date on everything 3:30 Ministry.
- Also check us out on Instagram: @three.thirty.ministries and @three.thirty.mens.ministry

The Gospel: *We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!*

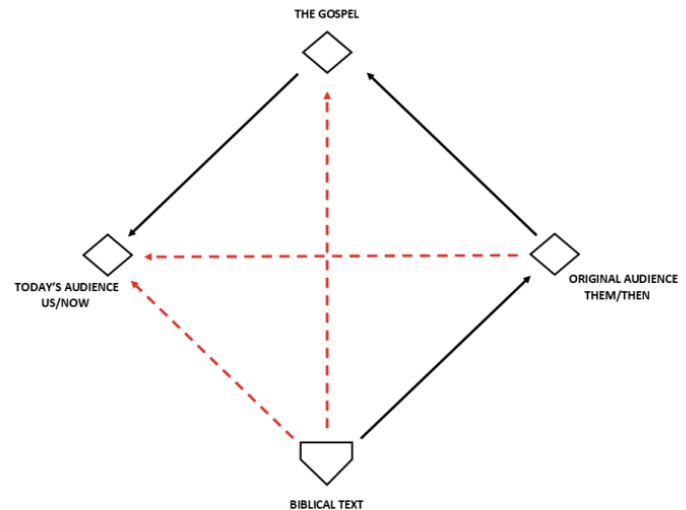
- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us has, since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture, our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
- In order to best do this, we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.

- **FIRST:**

- Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
- Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
- Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
- In a nutshell, the first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.



- **SECOND:**

- Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
- This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross. → Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc?

- **THIRD:**

- Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, the proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.

- **COMING HOME:** Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our legwork essentially stops, and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.