

I. John 13:31-14:31 – The Upper Room Discourse

A. John 13:31-35 – The new commandment

1. John 13:31 – “*Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him ...”*” Judas had **left** to go to betray Jesus to His executioners, but God was going to turn Judas’ evil deed into a blessing that would glorify Him. Psalm 76:10 says, “*For the wrath of man shall praise You; with a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself .”*”
 - a. Here Jesus’ use of His messianic title, *Son of Man*, is a reminder that from this point onward He will suffer, die and be resurrected as a **human** substitute for all humankind. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 2:17
 - b. Also, now that Judas left, we notice a shift in the content of Jesus’ teaching. Now that the only unbeliever was gone from the group of disciples, Jesus began to teach truths that would be expanded and developed later in the **epistles**.
2. John 13:32 – “*if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately .”* Since Jesus displayed God’s glory, God was going to give His own glory to Jesus, and He was going to do it immediately, without further **delay**.
3. John 13:33 – “*Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’ .”* As any good parent would do, Jesus reminded his fledgling disciples that He only had a **short** time left with them. This caused them great sadness as we will see.
 - a. Speaking affectionately to His disciples, Jesus called them “little **children**.” This was a term of endearment, not one of ridicule or criticism. He told them they would seek for Him once He was gone, but they would not find Him. They could not come to the place He was going. John 7:33-34, 8:21, 13:1
 - b. We now know that His departure was via death on the cross, burial, descension into Paradise, resurrection, and ascension to the Father. This was a road that only He could walk. That is why He told them they could not go where He was going. It was a **burden** that only He would bear; it was a cup that only He would drink. Matthew 26:39
4. John 13:34 – “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another .”* The command to love was nothing new as we see in Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5. What was new was a new standard: “*even as I have loved you.*” This was a **deeper** love than what the law commanded.
5. John 13:35 – “*By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another .”* It is our love for one another, our love for fellow believers within the church, that distinguishes us from this dying **world** .
 - a. Love shows we are Christ’s **disciples**, trained, commissioned and empowered by Him. 1 John 4:12, 20
 - b. When we lose our love or fail to walk in love, we **malign** the very basis of Christianity and our greatest distinctive. Revelation 2:4-5
6. John 13:36 – *Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.”* Peter’s question showed he still did not understand Jesus’ true **purpose** for coming to earth. Matthew 16:21-23
 - a. Only after Jesus ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers did Peter and the disciples understand fully the reason why Jesus came to earth. Jesus’ death and resurrection paved the way for all who believe in Him to be with Him in **heaven** one day. Hebrews 12:2
 - b. Jesus graciously promised Peter that eventually he would go where Jesus went, just as we will eventually go where Jesus went. Jesus is now in heaven. To die now means we depart to be with Him. We count on this **fact**. Philippians 1:23
7. John 13:37 – *Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.”* Peter sincerely had great enthusiasm for the Lord. Sadly, as we often find, he trusted in his own **ability** to stand. Peter had to discover that he could not stand for the Lord in his own strength. He would fail if he attempted to serve the Lord in his own power.
8. John 13:38 – *Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times .* This was a sobering and sad prophecy concerning Peter. Jesus prophesied that Peter would **deny** Him three times in one night. In saying this, Jesus rebuked Peter for his confidence in the flesh. John 15:4-5

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- a. In the New Testament we see this truth reiterated by the apostles. They all came to understand that the ability to serve, to be faithful, and to accomplish anything of true spiritual value requires a **dependence** on the Lord and His enabling power. Human determination or impulsiveness cannot accomplish God's purpose.
- b. Romans 15:18 – *For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished **through** me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed.*
- c. 1 Corinthians 15:10 – *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace** of God with me.*
- d. 2 Corinthians 3:5 – *Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God .*
- e. 2 Corinthians 4:7 – *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the **power** will be of God and not from ourselves;*
- f. 2 Corinthians 12:9 – *And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my **weaknesses** , so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*
- g. Galatians 2:20 – *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me .*

B. John 14:1-7 – A comforting promise

1. John 14:1 – “ *Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me .*” Jesus challenged the disciples to not waver but to keep **trusting** in God and in Himself. He was not inviting them to be saved by faith (justified), because they were already saved. He invited them to be strengthened in their faith. What preceded His passionate counsel?
 - a. To comprehend the full significance of Christ's words, we should ignore the **chapter** break, because Jesus' words here are a continuation of what He told them in chapter 13.
 - b. In chapter 13, Jesus told His disciples that there was a traitor among them. He told them He was going to leave them. He also just gave Peter the bad news that, before the night was over, he was going to **deny** Him three times.
 - c. With all this bad news, Jesus did not want His disciples to become overwhelmed and **hopeless**. He called them to hold tightly to their faith in God and Himself. It is faith, not our toil and striving, that gets us through tough times. Psalm 23, Romans 15:13
2. John 14:2a – “ *In My Father's house are many dwelling places if it were not so, I would have told you...*” On a night when Jesus could have used personal encouragement Himself, He spent His time **comforting** His disciples. He encouraged them with some inside information about the Father that only a true Son could know. 1 Corinthians 15:56-58
 - a. He said that in His Father's home there are many dwellings in which to live. In other words, heaven has many **rooms** where a person can rest and feel at home.
 - b. This description is somewhat **mysterious** to us. Obviously, we would love to know more of what Jesus meant here. We are sure His descriptions are true. For those who doubt Him, Jesus added, “If this is not the way it is, I would have clearly told you.”
3. John 14:2b – “ *...for I go to prepare a place for you* (plural).” These words answer Peter's question from John 13:36-37 where he asked, “*Where are You going?*” Jesus gave this promise to shift the disciples' **focus** from temporal things to the eternal. He wanted them to focus on heaven, not on their present circumstances. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
 - a. Jesus promised that He was going to prepare a place in His Father's house just for them. This statement was designed to encourage Peter who would soon fail through **denial** and the others who would likewise abandon Jesus in panic. Matthew 26:56, Mark 14:50
 - b. Many of the promises given in John include us as well. This future heavenly home is a reality for every believer. When you know you have a place to call **home**, you can get through even the toughest of trials. 1 Corinthians 15:22, 51-52
4. John 14:3 – “ *If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also .*” When Jesus said He was going to His Father's house (heaven) to prepare a place for His disciples, it logically meant they would **all** eventually be with Him in that place.
 - a. When Jesus told His disciples this fact, Judas had already **departed**. With Judas gone, Jesus spoke openly, intimately and inclusively to His saved disciples.

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- b. Jesus promised He was going to go and prepare a dwelling place for them. This was **good** news. He also promised something more. He vowed to return and take them back there with Him. This speaks of the future return of Christ when He plans to gather believers together and take them home with Him. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- c. Jesus did not simply refer to their souls being taken to heaven; He also spoke of a time when Jesus would **physically** receive them, body, soul and spirit, to Himself. That part of His promise has not yet occurred. 2 Timothy 2:16-18
5. John 14:4 – “*And you know the way where I am going.*” Jesus declared that the disciples already knew the **way** to the place He was going. This was simple. In verses 2-3 he had plainly told them He was going to His Father’s house to prepare a place for them and would come back to get them and take them with Him.
6. John 14:5 – *Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?”* Sometimes the **simplest** things are the hardest to understand. Thomas’ question showed he had not grasped Jesus words. His personality tended to be pessimistic and he struggled with believing. He may have thought Jesus was going into hiding.
7. John 14:6 – *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me .* This “I am” statement was another claim to deity. Jesus stated that He was the **only** means of reaching the Father. In our world today, statements like this are deemed arrogant, narrow, rude, or bigoted. However, this statement is absolute truth.
- a. *I am the way:* Through His death on the cross and resurrection, Jesus opened to us the one and only true **pathway** to heaven. There are not several ways to God. He is the only road; no other possibility exists. John 10:9; Hebrews 10:19-21; 1 John 5:13, 20
- b. *I am ... the truth:* By nature, truth is exclusive. Contradictory messages cannot both be true. In relation to gaining access to God, forgiveness for sins, and eternal life, Jesus represents the only **truth** that exists. Look nowhere else! If you seek truth elsewhere you will be led astray and deceived. John 13:1,3, 17:3
- c. *I am ... the life:* Jesus gives life to every creature; however, in this context, He is called the life because He is the only one who gives **eternal** life to spiritually dead sinners. He alone delivers on the promise to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. John 10:10
- d. In summary, *the way* communicates access, *the truth* communicates accuracy, and *the life* communicates existence. Jesus is the true conduit to heaven. He is the only accurate roadmap to God. Jesus is the fountain of life. Is your hope found in **Him** alone?
8. John 14:7 – “*If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him and have seen Him.*” Here is yet another claim to deity. In this verse, Jesus stated that since the disciples knew Him, the Son, they knew the **Father**. John 1:18, Hebrews 1:3
- a. *If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.* This kind of **conditional** statement in Greek can be either a true or a hypothetical statement. The context helps us decide which it is. In this case it was a true statement. The disciples did indeed know Jesus. Jesus is the revelation of our unseen God.
- b. Paraphrased, this statement can be understood as follows: “If you **know** Me and you do, you likewise know My Father. In fact, from now on you do know Him and you have seen Him.” Jesus assured His disciples that knowing Him intimately had a direct impact on knowing God the Father intimately.
- c. John 1:18 said, “*No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained** Him.*”