

John 13.31-38—Glory, Love and Denial

- I. Introduction
 - a. I wanted to make up this story about the men’s fellowship the other night, when one of the guys finally left and we all were able to talk more freely and enjoy the fellowship after he left. It was such a relief.
 - b. And then you would have been wondering who it was but it’s just a made-up story.
 - c. But similarly, that’s how our previous passage ended. They are thinking about why Judas left.
 - d. In the midst of distractions, Jesus turns their attention to that which is most important—the glory of God.
- II. Main Point
 - a. The triune God is jealous for his glory and his glory must continue to be displayed through his disciples by loving one another and therefore causing all peoples to know that we are his disciples. But denying Christ is a public statement saying that you are no longer Christ’s disciple.
- III. Outline
 - a. The Reciprocal glorifying of the Son of Man and God
 - b. The Reciprocal Love of one another (you love and receive love)
 - c. (The non-reciprocal denial) hold to the end
- IV. Exposition
 - a. This glorifying of the Son of Man has been set in motion by Judas’ departure for he will be an active participant in Jesus’ arrest.
 - i. As Judas leaves the supper and disappears into the darkness, Jesus turns his full attention to the remaining eleven disciples to prepare them for his departure.
 1. Jesus has been teaching them for three years. He isn’t trying to pack everything in here at the end but rather instructs them on how to continue the mission of making his glory known to the world.
 - a. You know, we do ourselves and our church a real disservice when we do not make disciples and equip them to do the same. We will need them to encourage us and they will need to carry on the mission.
 - ii. These first two verses are saturated with “glory” language. Five times in two verses.
 1. (Jn. 13:31)--(which literally says) Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man was glorified, and God was glorified in him."
 - a. Jesus uses a passive; past tense verb and it doesn’t make sense without some sort of explanation. It’s perfectly okay to translate it in the present tense but that doesn’t grab our attention like the past tense does.
 - i. The reason the past tense doesn’t make sense is because he will be glorified by his death, burial, resurrection and ascension and all of that remains in the future at this point.
 - ii. Yet, Jesus says it this way to emphasize its certainty. He could have said, “Now the Son of Man will be glorified” but in our minds that remains to be seen.
 - iii. But Jesus says this in such a way that it is a done deal and the events that will happen in the near future have glorified him.
 1. This should be very strange to us but it’s not. To say that God would humble himself to the point of death, even death on a cross is utterly absurd. “Gods” don’t do that. “They” think their glory is in power to take life to get what they want.
 2. But Jesus gladly takes on flesh...takes on the title of Son of Man...takes on death by giving his life.

2. We must ask the question, "What is glorious about the bloody cross of Christ?"
 - a. We must acknowledge that it's not necessarily the blood or the cross that is glorious. But rather, who's blood and what the cross of Christ accomplishes are what is glorious.
 - i. Jesus is the Son of God who has eternally existed with the Father. He is of the same nature with all the same attributes. He is holy. For God of very God to take on flesh and human nature that he might be nailed to a cross and bleed and die is unthinkable.
 - ii. The Innocent One takes our punishment for us. He is cursed for us. He becomes sin for us. By his wounds we are healed. He was crushed for our transgressions. The penalty of our sins was laid on him.
- iii. Not only did Christ secure salvation for all who would repent and believe but he, the Son of Man, gained the eternal Kingdom.
 1. Take note of what Daniel saw in a vision concerning the Son of Man: (Dan. 7:13-14) ¹³ "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
 - a. This is the Son of Man John sees later in heaven as he writes the book of Revelation. The Son of Man walks among the lampstands (that is, the churches) and he is the One who died but is alive and he holds the keys to death and Hades.
 2. Jesus is this Son of Man. Previously John had said, (Jn. 13:3) ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God. He is the fulfillment of Daniel's vision.
 - a. I don't know about you, but this Daniel passage expressly implies that all other kingdoms will not last...will pass away...will be destroyed.
 - b. Entrance into this everlasting Kingdom must be through Christ by faith and repentance or you do not get in. He is the gate. He is the way. Come to Jesus and you will have eternal life.
- iv. Now, my point for this section was the reciprocal glorifying of the Son of Man and God.
 1. If we were to walk through the Phil. 2 passage that I have mentioned repeatedly concerning Jesus' humility in taking on human flesh and taking on the humility of a slave, that passage ends with the glory of God the Father.
 - a. (Phil. 2:9-11) ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 - b. Jesus has perfectly revealed the Father. So, Jesus' glory is the Father's glory. And in so doing, (v. 32) the Father will glorify Jesus in himself and glorify him immediately.
 - i. Of course, that is none other than the cross and resurrection which will happen in a few hours.
 - ii. And this event will open the door to God's Kingdom. The access door...the gate is in...and the Shepherd will lead his sheep to eternal salvation.

- v. I want us to be passionate for God’s glory. I want us to be a God-centered church. If we might think of it like this: If we ask the evangelism question “If you were to die today and the angels ask you at the gate of heaven why they should let you in and you say, “because I believed in Jesus” they are going to let you in. But I want us to answer that question like this, “Because Jesus saved me.” Let’s live and talk and die in such a way that God is the hero of our story, because he is.
- b. The glory of God is a big deal. God is jealous for his glory. And he intends to continue the display of his glory THROUGH his disciples. And the way he does that is through the reciprocal love they have for one another.
 - i. Why is this necessary? Because Jesus is going back to the Father. He now addresses his disciples and prepares them for his departure. (Jn. 13:33) ³³ 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.'
 - 1. Such an endearing address in the use of “little children.” He is certainly displaying the Father’s love toward his family with this title.
 - a. But Jesus has said, “Where I am going you cannot come” to the Jews already. I believe he would have us be reminded of that conversation since he said “just as I said to the Jews.”
 - i. Back in chapter 7, there is this discussion going on with the Jewish leaders as to whether Jesus was the Christ.
 - ii. They make the statement that when Messiah comes no one will know where he is from and they conclude that Jesus is not the Messiah because they think they know where he is from.
 - 1. They think he is merely the son of Joseph and Mary and grew up in Nazareth. Though that is partly true; that’s not where he is from. His Father sent him to save his people.
 - iii. He says this again in chapter 8. There Jesus clarifies this: (Jn. 8:23-24) ²³ He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am you will die in your sins."
 - b. But there’s something different this time. These are his disciples. Instead of warning them about dying in their sins, he gives them a new commandment.
 - i. Jesus has spoke of his impending glory with certainty. He tells them he is going away and they cannot come. Why a new commandment?
 - ii. He leaves them this: (Jn. 13:34) ³⁴ 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.
 - iii. John says it this way in his letter (1 Jn. 4:10-11) ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
 - iv. The love of Jesus is the love of God. Therefore, we are to love one another the way God loved us.
 - v. Let me give a very brief list of ways that Jesus and the Father loved here in John’s gospel: Jesus revealed God, the True Light exposed the darkness, God sent out a witness, Jesus personally came to his people, endured rejection, received all who believed, grace and truth came through him, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,

Jesus was jealous for God's house, he healed the sick, God loved by sending his Son into the world to save the world, he sent out laborers into the harvest, he defended the truth...you get the picture.

1. You might say, I can't take away the sin of the world. No, you can't but you can give them the gospel of Christ and if they believe their sin is taken away by Jesus.
 2. You might say, I can't heal the sick. But Jesus can. Pray for them. But more importantly, give them the gospel that they might be eternally healed.
- vi. The command to love one's neighbor isn't new. However, the standard was to love your neighbor as yourself. The newness of the command is that the standard has changed. Love one another just as Jesus loved you.
2. I've seen love boiled down to wearing a shirt with sleeves above your elbow.
 - a. I've wanted to tell them that they need to stop worrying about putting on a long-sleeve shirt and put on kindness! Put on patience. Put on humility. Put on joy. Put on peace. Put on gentleness.
 - b. Let's be a people who are devoted to one another in brotherly love, outdo one another in showing honor, live in harmony, do not judge but build up, welcome one another, instruct, do not sue, care for, do not provoke and do not envy, bear one another's burdens, speak truthfully, forgive, be in submission, bear with one another, teach and admonish, comfort, encourage, be at peace, seek their good, pray for, stir one another up to love and good deeds, do not speak against, do not grumble, confess our sins to one another, be hospitable, serve, be humble, greet and have fellowship with one another.
 - ii. But why? Because, in verse 35 it says, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
 1. Why is this important? So far, the people know they are Jesus' disciples because they are following Jesus...in person. But he is leaving so the MARK now of a follower of Jesus is love for one another.
 2. Followers of Jesus loving other followers of Jesus in the ways I have already described is how people know we are his disciples.
 3. Revealing to the world that Jesus is our Master and Lord is conditional. If we do not love one another, the world cannot see who we are following. Do people know that you are a disciple of Christ?
 4. You might ask, "Can I just put on a t-shirt that says I'm a follower of Jesus? Can I just get one of those signs that goes in the yard that says I'm a member at UHBC?" There's nothing wrong with those things but we must love one another. You should be fully committed to this body of believers and come to this gathering each week so that you can love one another. Outward appearances are easy. Having deep concern for one another is what Jesus has commanded us to do.
 - c. Now, the final point that I have intentionally waited until now to say. We saw the reciprocal glorifying of the Son of Man and God who commands us to have reciprocal love for each other. We are now at the prediction of Peter's denial to which I want to call it the non-reciprocal denial. Jesus tells Peter that he will deny him three times but Jesus doesn't reciprocate by denying him.
 - i. Let's pick up here in the story at (Jn. 13:36) ³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?"

1. Essentially, Peter is saying, "Wait, where are you going?" instead of asking any specifics on how he might love the other disciples.
2. Nor is he concerned about figuring out what Jesus means by being glorified.
3. I do wonder if he is making some progress. He did call him Lord instead of teacher. But calling someone Lord and living in submission to Jesus as Lord are two different things.
- ii. (Jn. 13:36) Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward."
 1. Jesus repeats his statement without any details but adds two very important words—now and afterward.
 2. You must be aware that this exchange is just between Jesus and Peter. From here to end of the chapter, "you" is singular.
 3. Though Jesus has replied that Peter cannot come, it is only temporary. He cannot come right now. But Jesus states with certainty that he will follow him later.
 - a. "Peter cannot follow now, not only because it is not time for him to die, but because only Jesus, the Lamb of God, can offer the sacrifice that deals with the world's sins" (Carson 486).
- iii. (Jn. 13:37)³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."
 1. I don't hear arrogance but misunderstood devotion (Carson 486).
 2. I think Peter is saying that he will take a bullet for him.
 3. Yet, we human beings can say far more than we truly mean while sitting in a private room having dinner with friends.
 - a. Peter's weakness needs to be revealed for many good purposes to come.
 - b. The process of exposing his weakness will be painful as is our as well. But it's worth it. The Good Shepherd continues to lead us by keeping us fully dependent on him.
 4. (Jn. 13:38-14:1)³⁸ 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.
 - a. In the hours to come, Peter will soon find out just how much he really needs Jesus to die for him not the other way around.
- iv. Peter will refuse to publicly identify with Jesus in order to save himself. But you will never hear Jesus denying Peter. That's inexpressibly amazing.

V. Response

- a. We are about to come to the Table which clearly says that Jesus' sinless life was broken for us. The Son of God shed his own blood that we might be forgiven!
- b. To take the bread and fruit of the vine is to say that you have previously repented of your sins and have been publicly marked off as a disciple of Jesus Christ through baptism where you publicly identified with his death, meaning his death was your death, and publicly saying that you were in desperate need of washing your sins away.
- c. If that is you and you are in good standing with a local church then we invite you to join us in the continued public identifying with Christ as we come to the Table.
- d. If that is not you, then I would urge you to stop denying Jesus and come identify with him through repentance and faith in the Lord's death and resurrection. Come to him and he will save you. Then you can sit at his Table.