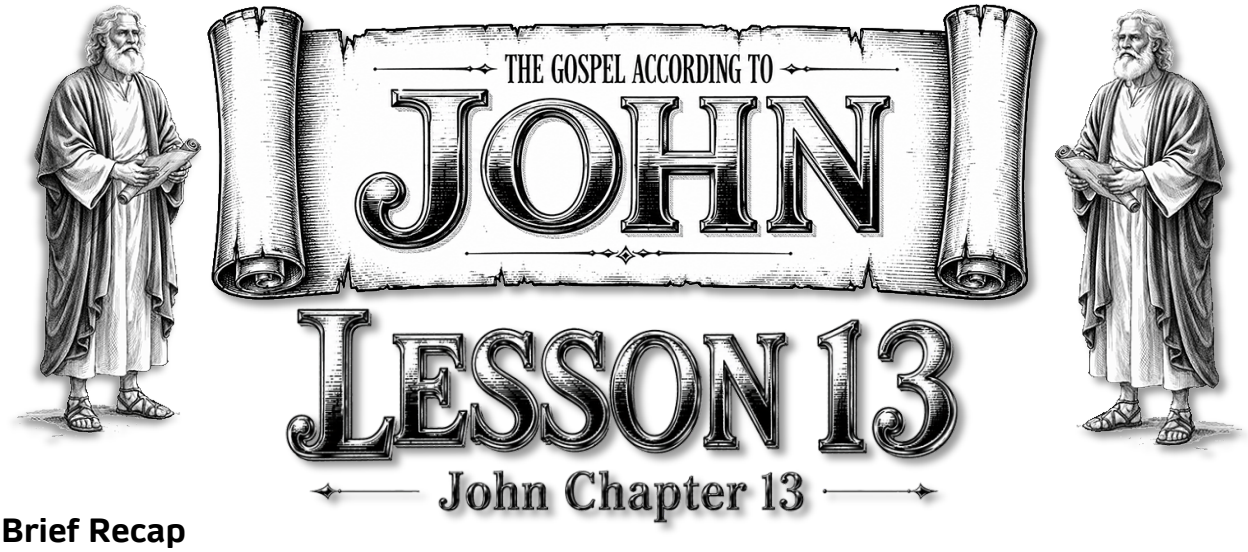


Brief Recap



John opened his Gospel not at Bethlehem, but **before creation**: "In the beginning was the Word." From that opening declaration, everything John recorded was designed to establish one central truth—**Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and life is found by believing in Him** (John 1:1–14; 20:30–31). The seven great signs progressively revealed His identity, culminating in the raising of Lazarus, while Israel's religious leadership moved progressively from skepticism to open rejection.

Chapter 12 brought Jesus' **public ministry essentially to a close**. The King entered Jerusalem exactly as prophecy anticipated, yet the nation that should have recognized Him rejected Him; John closes the chapter with Christ's final public appeal to come out of darkness and into the Light (Dan. 9:24–26; Zech. 9:9; John 12:12–50). Our last lesson therefore ended at a major dividing line in the Gospel: **Jesus now turns from the nation to His own.**

John Chapter 13

John 13 begins what we commonly call the **Upper Room Discourse** and extends through John 17. The atmosphere shifts dramatically: the crowds disappear, the Pharisees disappear, and the public signs disappear; Jesus is now alone with His disciples during His final hours before the Cross. Chapter 13 is known simply as **"Washing & Betrayal,"** followed by the promises of Chapter 14, the journey toward Gethsemane in Chapters 15–16, and Christ's great intercessory prayer in Chapter 17.

Jesus knows **"*that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father*,"** yet His attention is fixed upon "his own," whom **"*he loved…unto the end*"** (John 13:1). Against that backdrop, we will encounter three enormous themes: **the washing of the disciples' feet, the betrayal of Judas, and Christ's new commandment to love one another** (John 13:1–35).

Also, **Jesus knows exactly where He came from, where He is going, and that the Father has placed all things into His hands—and He gets down on the floor and washes feet.** At the same table sits Judas, already moving toward betrayal. Sovereign majesty, voluntary servanthood, divine love, human pride, and satanic treachery all converge in one room.

The Upper Room discourse replaces the two versions of the Olivet Discourse found in the Synoptic Gospels. Here, Jesus is also alone with His own. He was facing sacrificial death; His concern was for His disciples. This discourse becomes the seed plot of all grace teaching.

John 13:1-2] *"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him:"*

John deliberately announces that **the hour has arrived**. Jesus understands exactly what lies before Him: He will depart from this world through death and return **"*unto the Father*."**

The emotional and theological key to the entire Upper Room Discourse is this: while the great cosmic conflict approaches its climax, **Christ's focus remains on His own**. Facing sacrificial death Himself, He ministers to and encourages *them*. "***He loved them unto the end***" carries the force of love carried through **to its completion**—love that does not quit when the cost becomes unbearable.

The drama unfolding here extends from **Genesis 3 to Revelation 22.** It displays something creation alone could never fully demonstrate—**infinite love**. God's power can be glimpsed in creation, and His knowledge in His works, but Calvary reveals what divine love costs God Himself (Gen. 3:15; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Rev. 22:1–5).

- ✓ **Infinite power** is displayed in creation.
- ✓ **Infinite wisdom** is displayed in God's design.
- ✓ **Infinite love** is displayed at the Cross.

The phrase **"*supper being ended*"** reminds us that the Passover meal involved four traditional cups, associated with the promises of Exodus 6.



Cup of Sanctification "I will bring you out." | **Cup of Deliverance "I will free you."** | **Cup of Redemption "I will bless you."** | **Cup of Restoration "I will protect you."**

The Lord's Supper, referenced here, is associated with the third cup, **the cup of Redemption/Blessing.** Paul calls it **"the cup of blessing"** (1 Cor. 10:16). Jesus stopped before completing the final cup. The process was intentionally left unfinished. Many scholars see the completion of that final cup as occurring here, in connection with the Marriage Supper and the establishment of the Kingdom (Luke 22:15-18; Ex. 6:6-7).


Judas

John abruptly moves from divine love to satanic treachery. While Christ's heart is fixed upon loving His disciples, **Satan is working upon the heart of Judas**. The betrayal therefore operates on two levels simultaneously: Judas is morally responsible for what he chooses, while behind the visible events stands the unseen spiritual conflict moving toward its climax (Luke 22:3; John 6:70–71; 12:4–6; 13:2, 27).

Lesson materials can be found at:
www.TrustingInGrace.com

John 13:3-4] *"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself."*

John 13:5] *"After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."*



Jesus possesses absolute authority, knows His divine origin and destination, yet deliberately assumes a task associated with the lowest household servant. This would have been startling to the Jewish mind: the One who came from God voluntarily takes the place no one else in the room was willing to take, a servant. The One possessing universal authority does not demand that someone serve Him; **He serves them**.

Remez — The Garments Laid Aside

PATTERN

This passage offers a powerful picture of the kenosis ("to empty") Paul describes. Christ did not cease being God; rather, the One who existed **"in the form of God"** willingly took **"the form of a servant."** In John 13, the action becomes visible: He rises from His place, lays aside His outer garments, assumes the servant's appearance, performs the lowest service, and later takes His garments again. John 13:4, 12; Phil. 2:5–11. Look at the pattern:

- **He lays aside His garments** — voluntary humiliation.
- **He girds Himself as servant** — the form of a *doulos* (bond slave).
- **He later takes them again** — humiliation followed by exaltation.

That mirrors Christ's larger movement: from glory **into humiliation, through service and sacrifice, and ultimately back to glory** (John 10:17–18; 13:3–4, 12; 16:28; 17:5; Phil. 2:5–11).

LESSON

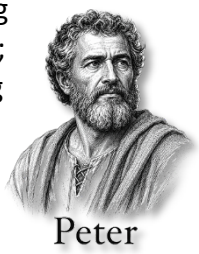
The Upside-Down Organization Chart: The disciples were concerned about **who was greatest**. Jesus turns their organizational chart upside down: in His Kingdom, genuine authority expresses itself by enabling and serving others rather than merely exercising power over them (Luke 22:24–27). Rather than the conventional top-down organizational chart. The greater person stoops lower to strengthen those entrusted to him. That principle applies directly to Christian leadership, teaching, family life, and ministry.

John 13:6-7] *"Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."*

John 13:8-9] *"Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."*

Peter's reaction is entirely characteristic. The thought of his Lord kneeling before him is intolerable: **Jesus should not be washing Peter's feet!** Peter considers the act far too demeaning for Christ.

The Greek construction lets us know that Peter's words were emphatic, meaning essentially, never*, ever.* Yet Peter's sincerity does not make his judgment correct; discipleship requires allowing Christ to define what we need rather than telling Him what He may do.



Jesus' answer immediately changes everything: **"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."** Notice carefully that Jesus says, **"part with me,"** not *life in Me*. The issue is not Peter losing salvation but **fellowship and communion with Christ**.



The central point, very simply: Metaphorically, spiritually, **you can't wash your own feet.** Christ **must** do the washing. No one can be part of the Kingdom unless Christ cleanses us.

- **Psalm 119:9** — cleansing our way according to His Word.
- **John 15:3** — "clean through the word" Christ has spoken.
- **Ephesians 5:26** — "washing of water by the word."



How does Christ wash us today? Scripture gives the answer—the cleansing agency is the **Word of God**, accompanied by confession when sin interrupts fellowship (Ps. 119:9; John 15:3; Eph. 5:25–26; 1 John 1:9).



1 John 1:9 is **"the Christian's bar of soap."** The believer does not get regenerated again every time he sins; confession restores the fellowship disrupted by daily defilement (Heb. 10:1–12; 1 John 1:9).



John 13:10-11] *"Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."*

Verse 10 is the key to the entire foot-washing episode. There are **two different washings**. The English word **"*wash*"** conceals two different Greek ideas. Jesus deliberately distinguishes a **complete bath** from the washing of a particular part of the body.



1. **Leloumenos** — bathed completely; the whole person has been washed (Acts 9:37; 2 Pet. 2:22).
2. **Nipsasthai** — washing a particular soiled area, such as hands or feet (Matt. 6:17).

Once-for-All vs. Daily Cleansing

Let's be particularly emphatic here: **we do not need to be saved over and over again.** Hebrews 10 establishes the once-for-all character of Christ's sacrifice; regeneration is the bath, while daily confession concerns fellowship rather than repeated salvation (Heb. 10:10–14; 1 John 1:9).

That explains Jesus' precise statement: **"*He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.*"** The believer is already **"*clean every whit*"** positionally, but his walk still encounters sin and defilement. The answer is not another regeneration but cleansing and restoration to fellowship. John 13:10; 1 John 1:6–9. This also reinforces an important distinction:

Union with Christ is established once; communion with Christ can be interrupted.

Peter belongs to Christ, but Peter will shortly fail spectacularly. His coming denial will not require him to become saved again—it will require restoration (Luke 22:31–32, 54–62; John 21:15–19).



But what about Judas? A remarkable detail: **Judas was apparently still present when Jesus washed the disciples' feet.** The hands of the incarnate Son washed the feet of the man who would shortly betray Him (John 13:5, 10–11, 21–27). That makes Judas one of Scripture's starkest demonstrations that **external participation in sacred things cannot produce spiritual life**. He could sit in the Upper Room, receive Christ's physical touch, and share the privileges of the apostolic circle. But Judas never crossed the line from **association to saving faith; he never desired it**. So, the dividing line was never proximity to Jesus—it was whether he truly believed in who Christ was (John 6:64; 13:10–11).

Notice that we never see Judas earnestly ask Jesus to explain Christ's identity, seek deeper understanding, or wrestle toward faith. The other eleven were imperfect men stumbling in their pursuit of Truth.



John 13:12-14] *"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."*

Jesus finishes washing their feet, takes His garments again, and returns to His place. Then comes the **"final exam time"**: *Do you understand what I just did?* The physical act was simple; the spiritual lesson behind it was enormous.

Our normal organizational charts place authority at the top and subordinates underneath; Jesus turns the chart around. The Christian leader's responsibility is to provide the **tools, resources, encouragement, and conditions** that enable believers to fulfill their calling. Christ has supreme authority yet expresses it through sacrificial service (Matt. 20:25–28; Luke 22:24–27).

Jesus' humility does not diminish His authority. Interestingly, during Christ's earthly ministry, the apostles are not recorded addressing Him simply as **"Jesus."** They address Him as **Lord**; the Gospel narratives themselves use "Jesus," while His enemies and demons are among those recorded addressing or identifying Him that way (Matt. 14:28; 26:22, 71; Mark 1:23–24; Luke 9:54; John 14:5; 21:7).

A profound difference exists between **intimacy** with God and **familiarity** with God. Grace brings us near; it never makes God common.



John 13:15-16] *"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."*

Jesus now states plainly why He washed their feet: **He has given them an example to follow.** Missler is careful here—the emphasis is not upon establishing a new sacrament or ordinance, but upon the spiritual realities the act demonstrates: humility, cleansing, communion, and service. Then Jesus drives the lesson home with a double **"Verily, verily"**: no servant of Christ can claim a status that exempts him from following the pattern of his Lord.

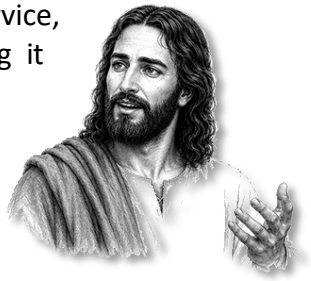
Six Distinct Lessons From Christ's Foot Washing	
✓An example of humility (John 13:14)	✓A warning to Judas Iscariot (John 13:18)
✓A rebuke to pride (Luke 22:24–27)	✓A picture of Christ's humiliation (Phil. 2:5–11)
✓A picture of daily cleansing (John 13:10)	✓A reminder of union and communion with Christ (John 13:8)



Our society treats **status as something to display and service as something to delegate**. That mentality shows up in Christian ministry whenever titles, platforms, credentials, dress, or influence become measures of spiritual importance. Jesus gives us the opposite pattern: **the closer a servant walks with the Lord, the less interested he should be in proving that some task—or some person—is beneath him.**



John 13:17-18] *"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."*



The disciples have just received a profound lesson in humility, service, cleansing, and fellowship; now Christ tells them that understanding it intellectually is only the beginning (Matt. 7:24–27; Jas. 1:22–25).

The word translated ***"happy"*** (*Makarios)* means blessed, spiritually favored. Christ therefore connects genuine blessing with obedience to revealed truth. Knowledge increases responsibility; blessing comes when what Christ teaches begins shaping how we actually live (Luke 11:28; John 13:17; 14:21–23).

Jesus then says, **"I Speak Not of You All."** Once again Judas stands apart from the others. And notice Christ's complete foreknowledge: **"I know whom I have chosen."** Judas is not an unforeseen disaster in Christ's ministry. Jesus identified the betrayer roughly a year earlier, long before the Upper Room. Here he quotes **Psalm 41:9**: ***"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."*** This Psalm originally concerned David's betrayal, and the betrayer was **Ahithophel**, David's trusted counselor. John now presents that earlier betrayal as a prophetic pattern culminating in Judas' betrayal of the greater Son of David (2 Sam. 15:12, 31; Ps. 41:9).



Remez — Ahithophel and Judas: The parallels become remarkable when we follow them further. Ahithophel was not an obvious enemy outside David's kingdom; he was David's intimate counselor who defected to Absalom's conspiracy. Judas likewise was not an outsider—he belonged to Christ's inner circle and shared His table. 2 Sam. 15:12, 31; Ps. 41:9; Matt. 26:20–25; John 13:18. And the pattern goes still deeper:

- ✓ **Both enjoyed privileged access before betraying the king.**
- ✓ **Both joined a conspiracy against God's anointed.**
- ✓ **Both ultimately went out and hanged themselves (**2 Sam. 17:23; Matt. 27:5).

Ahithophel therefore emerges as an extraordinary **type of Judas Iscariot**. The betrayal surrounding David becomes a prophetic shadow of the betrayal surrounding the Son of David.

The phrase ***"lifted up his heel"*** pictures the sudden, vicious kick of a horse or mule. It is betrayal from someone close enough to strike unexpectedly. But the language also immediately recalls the Bible's first great messianic prophecy: the conflict involving the **heel** in Genesis 3:15. At the moment Satan's conspiracy against Christ moves toward its climax, Jesus quotes Scripture describing the betrayer as lifting his **heel** against Him (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 41:9).

John 13:19-20] *Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.*

In the previous verses, Jesus has just identified the betrayal as something Scripture had already anticipated; now He explains **why He is telling the disciples beforehand**. When Judas betrays Him, they are not to conclude that Jesus lost control—they are to recognize that His foreknowledge confirms His identity. Then, Jesus deliberately turns their attention **away from the traitor and back to their Master**, reminding them of the extraordinary authority with which they will soon be sent into the world.

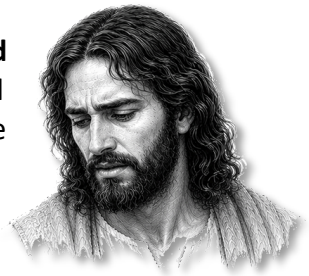
This is one of Scripture's great purposes for predictive prophecy: **God declares beforehand what will occur so that fulfillment becomes evidence of His identity and sovereignty.** Isaiah makes that argument precisely—God declares "the end from the beginning" and challenges false gods to demonstrate comparable foreknowledge (Isa. 41:21–23; 42:9; 46:9–10; John 13:19).

Fulfilled prophecy functions like God's signature upon history.

Prophecy is not merely given to satisfy curiosity about the future. Here Jesus explicitly tells us one purpose: ***"that…ye may believe."***

John 13:21-22] *"When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake."*

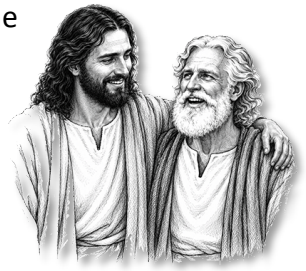
John 13:23-25] *"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?"*



John gives us another glimpse into Christ's humanity: **Jesus was troubled in spirit**. He knows Judas' identity, knows exactly what Judas will do, and knows that Scripture will be fulfilled—yet foreknowledge does not make betrayal emotionally painless.

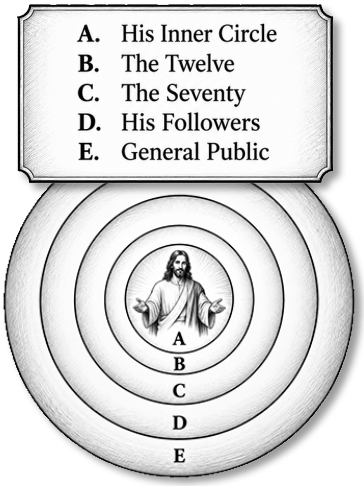
Again Jesus uses the solemn **"*Verily, verily*"—Amen, amen.** But the shocking words are ***"one of you."*** The enemy is already inside the apostolic circle, and the announcement lands like a **"bombshell."** These men have shared about three and a half years of intimate ministry, and suddenly they discover a traitor sitting among them.

What is interesting is that **nobody suspected Judas**. There may have been suspicions somewhere in the group, but Judas clearly had **not been exposed or isolated**; the announcement leaves the disciples bewildered. Judas' apostasy was largely invisible from the outside. Yet Jesus had known his true condition from the beginning.



John characteristically avoids naming himself, calling himself ***"one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."*** John is not implying that Jesus did not love the others; John simply enjoyed a much closer relationship with Christ.

The Inner Circle: Missler reminds us that **Peter, James, and John** repeatedly form an inner circle within the Twelve. They were present together at several moments when the other disciples were not.



- Jairus' daughter — Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51.
- The Transfiguration — Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28.
- Gethsemane — Matt. 26:37; Mark 14:33.
- Olivet Discourse — Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21

Peter and John, in particular, repeatedly appear together: preparing the Passover, at the supper, running to the empty tomb, and ministering together after Pentecost (Luke 22:8; John 13:22–25; 20:1–8; Acts 3:1; 4:13, 19–20; 8:14–17; Gal. 2:9).

Peter now, after learning of the betrayal, beckons to John and uses John as the intermediary since Peter sits slightly farther away. John simply leans back and asks: **"*Lord, who is it?*"** The answer in the next verse will be extraordinarily revealing, because Jesus will identify Judas through an act that was itself a gesture of **special honor and friendship**.

John 13:26] *"Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon."*

Jesus answers not merely with words, but with an unmistakable gesture, "***to whom I shall give a sop.***" The "sop" was a morsel of unleavened bread dipped in the meal's broth and bitter herbs, then handed to another person. Please note that this was not a gesture of accusation or contempt—it was **"an act of love"** (Ps. 41:9).

Jesus does not expose Judas by publicly humiliating him. He identifies the betrayer by honoring him. This action was reserved for the **guest of honor.** The very act that identifies Judas simultaneously demonstrates Christ's grace toward him.

Was Judas forced to betray? Jesus knows what Judas will do, and Scripture has already foretold the betrayal, but God's foreknowledge does not force Judas to betray Christ. Judas acts according to his own settled choices. Even during this final supper, **repentance had not been beyond Judas' reach**. Peter himself had failed grievously and would fail that very night again, yet Peter could recover; Judas continued deliberately toward his final choice.

John 13:27] *"And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."*



Verse 27 is one of the darkest spiritual moments in the Gospel of John. Judas has resisted Christ's warnings, witnessed His works, had his feet washed by Him, and just received the sop as the honored guest. The gesture of friendship in verse 26 became the **final boundary** before Judas gave himself completely to the course he has chosen—then John records the terrible words: **"*Satan entered into him.*"** With the course decided in Judas' mind, Jesus gives the command that suddenly forces the issue: **"*That thou doest, do quickly.*"**

Once Jesus announced that a betrayer was among them, Judas faced a choice: abandon the conspiracy or move immediately; the conspiracy's timetable suddenly accelerated. Judas had already made an agreement with the religious authorities, but they had specifically agreed **not to arrest Jesus during the feast**, fearing an uprising among the enormous Passover crowds and the Roman response it would provoke (Matt. 26:3–5; Mark 14:1–2). The religious authorities have their timetable. Judas has his plans. Rome has its security concerns. Satan has entered Judas—but ultimately **Christ determines when events move forward.**



John 13:28-30] *"Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."*

Even after Jesus told Judas, **"That thou doest, do quickly,"** the other disciples do not grasp what He means. Even after Jesus announced that one of them would betray Him, Judas remains so unsuspected that his departure does not immediately expose him. John obviously understood more of what had just occurred because Jesus had answered his question concerning the betrayer. But the rest of the group still does not put the pieces together. They interpret Judas' departure as normal.

Judas has much more urgent business, so "**he went immediately out**". He must reconnect with the authorities, accelerate arrangements, secure access to Pilate, and organize the arrest party for Gethsemane. The timetable the conspirators did not intend for that night is now moving rapidly forward.

John's deceptively simple sentence, "And it was night," shows the Holy Spirit using physical darkness as a metaphor for the spiritual darkness of the moment**.** John describes the time of day while also capturing the spiritual condition into which Judas has entered.

Judas and Judah

The name **Iscariot** is commonly connected with *Ish Kerioth*—"man of Kerioth," a location in Judah—making Judas the only one of the Twelve identified with Judea rather than Galilee (Josh. 15:25).

If you want to pursue it, a deeper typological connection exists between **Judah and Joseph**. Judah proposed selling Joseph to the Gentiles for silver; Judas betrays Jesus for silver and delivers Him into the hands of those who will turn Him over to Gentile Rome (Gen. 37:26–28; Matt. 26:14–16; John 18:28–35).

That sits within the much larger Joseph/Christ pattern: the beloved son rejected by his brethren, sold for silver, brought among the Gentiles, yet ultimately becoming the means of their deliverance (Gen. 37:3, 26–28; 45:4–8).



John 13:31-32] *"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."*

Judas has left, Satan's instrument is moving toward the authorities, and the machinery of arrest and crucifixion has begun moving rapidly. Yet Jesus' first words are not about tragedy—they are ***"Now is the Son of man glorified."***

Many scholars regard this point as essentially the beginning of the **Upper Room Discourse.** From here forward, Christ opens extraordinary truths to His disciples that will become foundational to the Church.

John 13:33] *"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you."*

Judas' departure also changes the character of the room. Jesus is now alone with His own, and the intimate teaching for the faithful disciples moves to center stage. Jesus' tone becomes extraordinarily tender: **"*Little children, yet a little while I am with you.*"**

The disciples are about to lose the physical presence of the One upon whom they have depended for three and a half years. Christ therefore speaks to them with the tenderness of a father preparing his children for separation.

John 13:34-35] *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*

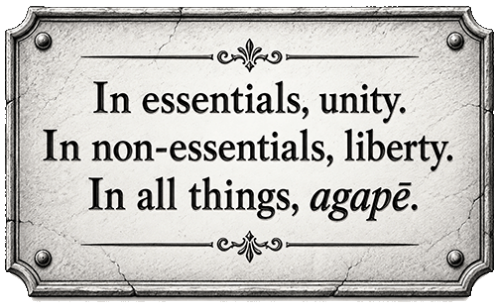
With Judas gone and the Cross immediately ahead, Jesus gives the eleven a defining command: **"*love one another; as I have loved you.*"** At first glance, we might ask: What is new about commanding love? The Old Testament had already commanded, **"*thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" (**Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39). The newness is found in Christ's standard:

- Old standard: **"as thyself."**
- New standard: **"as I have loved you."**

Jesus Himself becomes the measure. Within hours, He will show exactly what that means by voluntarily laying down His life for them.

Christians have always been commanded to love everyone—including their enemies—but the **"new commandment"** Christ states here (John 13:34–35) is **directed toward believers** loving one another. Christ intended the sacrificial love within His Body to become a visible testimony to the unbelieving world: **"*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples.*"** The world is the audience; the disciples' love for one another is the evidence (Gal. 6:10; 1 John 3:14–18).

We must stand firmly on certain doctrines, but even theological disagreement never cancels Christ's command to love one another.

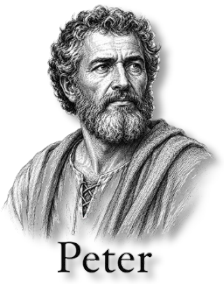


John 13:36] *"Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards."*

John 13:37-38] *"Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."*

Peter hears Jesus say He is going away and immediately asks, **"*Lord, whither goest thou?*"** His devotion is genuine—Peter truly believes he is ready to die for Christ—but Jesus knows Peter far better than Peter knows himself.

Ironically, Peter's coming failure will occur not in his weakest area, but in what everyone would have considered his **strongest—his courage**.


Peter

We naturally assume our greatest danger lies in our weakest characteristic, but Peter demonstrates that **the flesh can fail precisely where we believe ourselves strongest.**

Peter was arguably the most visibly courageous of the disciples. He walked on water and swung a sword in Gethsemane, yet only hours later fear caused this courageous man to deny his Lord (Matt. 14:28–29; John 18:10, 17, 25–27).

Peter has apparently latched onto Jesus' statement from verse 33: **"*Whither I go, ye cannot come.*"** Jesus gives Peter an extraordinary answer: **"*Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*"** Peter will eventually follow Christ through death; after the Resurrection, Jesus will tell him by what death he will glorify God and then command him simply, **"Follow me" (John 21:18–19).**

So Jesus does not tell Peter, **"You will never follow Me."** He tells him, **"not…now."** Peter's willingness to die is real, but before Peter can become the man who will stand courageously for Christ, something in Peter must first die—**his confidence in Peter.**


PATTERN

Remez — Peter and Judas: Two Very Different Failures: John deliberately places Peter's predicted denial immediately after Judas' betrayal. Both men will fail Christ spectacularly that night, but their underlying relationship to Christ is fundamentally different.

Judas has never truly believed; Jesus had identified that unbelief long before the betrayal. Peter, however, genuinely believes and loves Christ but disastrously overestimates his own strength (John 6:64, 68–71; 13:37–38).

That distinction becomes unmistakable afterward. Judas moves away from Christ into darkness; Peter's failure ultimately drives him back to Christ (John 13:30; 21:15–19).


PATTERN

A Moment's Weakness, a Lifetime's Lesson: Peter's denial is essentially **a moment of weakness followed by lifelong regret**. Yet Christ already knows Peter's coming failure and still says, **"thou shalt follow me afterwards."**

Failure does not erase Peter's discipleship or Christ's purpose for him. The same Peter who trembles before a servant girl later stands publicly in Jerusalem and boldly proclaims the resurrected Christ (Luke 22:54–62; Acts 2:14–36; 4:8–13).

"And Peter":

An interesting detail about Peter after the Resurrection. The angel who appeared after Jesus' resurrection instructs the women: **"*But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter…*"** (Mark 16:7). Notice Peter, at that time, was not considered one of the disciples; **he had not been discarded**. Christ later meets Peter beside the Sea of Galilee and asks him three times about his love—giving Peter a deliberate opportunity for restoration (John 21:15–17). Because of the **three denials,** Jesus asks **three questions.** Then He responds, **"Follow me."**



Our culture teaches us to identify our strengths, trust ourselves, project confidence, and build identity around personal capability; Peter shows the spiritual danger hidden inside that philosophy. The place where we feel **least vulnerable** may become the place where pride makes us most vulnerable. Mature discernment therefore asks not only, *Where am I weak?* but also, **Where have I become so confident in myself that I have stopped depending upon Christ?** (John 15:5; Phil. 3:3).

Next Lesson: Read John 14; also, if you have time, Isaiah 26:19-21, 1 Thess. 4:13-18; and 1 Cor. 15:50-55. Continuing the **Upper Room Discourse**. We will be looking at **four specific questions** asked by the disciples, and the scope of the answers Jesus gives, such as the doctrine of the **Rapture** and the **exclusivity of Christ**:

1. Lord, where are You going? (John 13:33 through John 14:1) (Rapture – Harpazo)
2. How can we know **the Way**? (John 14:5-7)
3. Show us the Father. (John 14:8-21)
4. How can You manifest Yourself to us and not to the world? (John 14:22-31)

JOHN CHAPTER THIRTEEN

H	E	T	L	E	W	O	T	T	I	R	I	P	S	D
Q	O	S	A	H	A	E	W	A	T	E	R	B	E	E
O	U	J	T	B	E	Q	L	R	E	G	I	N	T	I
B	N	I	Y	N	L	A	U	P	N	A	O	H	S	T
A	R	E	P	P	E	E	R	I	M	K	C	A	B	F
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C	E	T	A	S	S	A	R	E	O	K	X	R	A	A
L	A	S	H	S	E	T	B	A	F	I	L	E	D	S
E	D	J	O	L	T	T	L	O	G	C	N	Y	U	T
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T	B	R	I	W	O	O	H	O	A	P	D	E	T	H
I	E	S	S	R	T	M	L	I	P	R	R	B	S	S
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B	E	M	O	S	O	B	S	I	M	O	N	R	M	W

BASIN
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BETRAY
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CANNOT
CHOSEN
CLEAN
DEPART
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FEAST
FOLLOW
GARMENTS
GLORIFY
HAPPY
HEART
JUDAS
LEANING
LORD
LOVED
MASTER
QUICKLY
SERVANT
SIMON
SOP
SPIRIT
SUPPER
TABLE
TOWEL
WASHED
WATER

