

John 13:31-35

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32 If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 33 Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' 34 I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Scripture takes place during Passover at the Last Supper. At this time, when Jesus hour of trial has arrived, he washed the feet of the disciples and talked about his betrayal. When Judas left Jesus continued to teach the disciples about his glory and God's glory. One of the key points of this lesson is the new commandment to love one another. This commandment comes with a condition, "just as I have loved you." We are to love others like Jesus loves us.

We talk about love a lot; in sermons, Sunday school, and Bible study. That's because the lessons on love are in the Bible in many places. It is a key principal that is emphasized. Repeatedly we read about, and learn about, the love of God and the love of Christ and today the commandment to love one another. People tend to choose who to love, how to love, and how much to love. However, the love that Jesus commands is specific, "just as I have loved you." As Christians, we are to model our lives after Christ and he specifically commands us to model after his example of love. I take this opportunity to emphasize when this occurs. This is the Last Supper lesson. It is Jesus final plea with the disciples. This is the main point that he wants to emphasize before he leaves. God's glory is revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus. From the standpoint of the cross and resurrection, it is the glorified Christ that speaks. Jesus is going to his death and in complete unselfishness and care for the well being of others he gives his disciples this new commandment. It is a summary of his teaching to lay down the foundation of the unity of the church that we are to be united in love. As the door closes behind Judas, in this hour of darkness and betrayal, there is no anger, resentment, or complaint. Jesus opens his heart to his closest allies and speaks to them intimately. It is when Christ tells his disciples that he must leave that he gives love unselfishly.

When we appeal to Christ, we should be following his commandment. This is a biblical mandate. Love one another like Jesus loves us - fully, completely, one hundred percent. We are to model after his example of love. He is willing to give all of himself to us and for us. The commandment to love is major point that Jesus emphasized. It is an intimate and tender moment. He is alone with his disciples when Judas is absent. It is when Jesus must leave them that he sets up the requirement to love one another just like he loves. Jesus said "You are my disciples; everyone will know this if you have love for one another." The word "if" is a key word, it makes the statement conditional. You are a disciple if you have love like Jesus for one another. It is very important for us to understand this. Discipleship is not about judging righteousness or worthiness, and it is not about earning your way into heaven. Discipleship is based on love - to love one another as Jesus loves us. The appeal of Christ is purely unselfish and generous. The New

Commandment is summed up into the whole duty of humanity - to give of the self for the benefit of others. Christ loves us and gives of himself for us. His love is the measure against which we are tested. He leaves a distinguishing mark upon his people. The characteristic of discipleship is to love like Jesus Christ himself loves.

When we measure ourselves by the standards of Christ we come to realize that our complaints are trivial because when we see what all Jesus went through without complaint. It is during his darkest hour that his focus was not on his self but on us and our well being. Jesus gave of himself for us. When you follow Jesus, you will love as Jesus loves, then the world will know that you are his disciple.