



Portrait of Christ

Sketches in the Gospel of John

Inductive Discovery Lesson 14
John 13:1-38

Jesus: Teacher, Servant, Lord

Matthew, Mark and Luke record how Jesus and His disciples shared the Passover and then went to the garden called Gethsemene. As John looks back on that night, he lingers in the upper room. Powerful lessons are not soon forgotten. In his mind's eye, the old disciple can still see Jesus tie the servant-towel around His waist, take the basin in hand, and bend down before one man...then another...and another...to wash their dirty feet. No one else had been willing.

John is the only gospel writer to tell us that Jesus washed His disciples' feet that night in the upper room. It was a poignant lesson for men who followed Jesus but often failed to follow His example. On more than one occasion, the disciples argued about who should be greatest. John's own mother had even asked the Lord to give her sons preference!

The great lesson Jesus gave His disciples was that serving one another would bind them together in love, whereas competing for their own ambitions would divide them. The power of their witness to the world would be measured by the strength of their love for each other.

*“By this all men will know that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another.”*

Working Text for John 13:1-38
New King James Version (NKJ)

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. **2** And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, **3** Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, **4** rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. **5** After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. **6** Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" **7** Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." **8** Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part 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, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." **11** For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? **13** You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. **14** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. **16** Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. **17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. **18** "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' **19** Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. **20** Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." **22** Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. **23** Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. **24** Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of

whom He spoke. **25** Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" **26** Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. **27** Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." **28** But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. **29** For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. **30** Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

31 So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. **32** If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. **33** Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. **34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." **37** Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." **38** Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

John 13:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 13:12-20

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 13:21-30

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 13:21-38

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. _____

Give a simple title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.



Take A Closer Look

**“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another,
even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
By this all men will know that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another.”**

John 13:34-35

Memorize God’s Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God’s Word

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God’s Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

(Challenge alert: You won’t always see an obvious answer directly from the verse.)

Look up. What does this verse show you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, or His promises.)

Look around. What does this teach you about life or people in general?

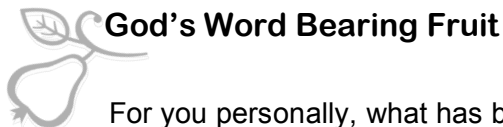
Look within. What does this teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter?
How will you put what you have learned into practice?

Something to Think About . . .

The supreme evidence of discipleship, the authentic badge,
is genuine love for one another.

J. Oswald Sanders

Message Notes:



A large rectangular area with horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or message template. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the area. The edges of the rectangle are irregular and jagged, giving it the appearance of a piece of torn paper. The background of the area is a light gray color.

