

# Rossville Church of Christ Doorpost Devo



February 19, 2023



## Encouragement from God's Word

### John 13:31-38: Disciples Love

What is the defining feature of a disciple of Christ? What are the distinguishing marks of the followers of Jesus? Is it an abundance of Bible knowledge? Is it faithful church attendance? Is it participation in baptism and communion? For Jesus, it is none of these things, although Jesus wants us to know God's Word, be faithful in attendance at worship, and has commanded us to be baptized and take of His body and blood in the Lord's Supper. Yet, from His own mouth, Jesus says his disciples will be primarily known by one thing—their love for one another (John 13:35). **Cont. on pg. 3 and 4**

### Scripture Plan: Read

The Great Commission

Mon, Tues, Wed.:

John 13:1-20 Each Night

Thurs., Fri., Sat.:

John 13:21-38 Each Night

### Devo Plan

1. Mon.--Read and Pray Together
2. Tues.--Read, Pray, Ask Questions, and Discuss
3. Wed.--Read, Pray, and Think about how to Apply
4. Thurs.-Sat.--Repeat steps 1-3 with New Passage
5. Sunday--Pray and Reflect on What was Learned in Worship and Class

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## Discussion Questions

John 13:1-20

Discussion Question #1: According to verse 3, what did Jesus know that led him to start washing the feet of his disciples? Why did he decide to do this?

Discussion #2: What does Jesus teach in washing the feet of his disciples? What can we learn about love and service?

Discussion #3: How can we apply Jesus' example today? What acts of service show this same kind of humility?

John 13:21-38

Discussion #1: What can we learn from Judas and how Jesus treats him?

Discussion #2: What is the new commandment that Jesus gives his disciples? Why is it called "new"?

Discussion #3: How will all people know who Jesus' disciples are? What does this look like practically?

## Apply and Obey

To obey what God says, this upcoming week I will...

I will share what I learned with...

## Prayer Points

- Lord, Thank You--For being a God of love, service, and humility
- Lord, We Praise You--For Christ's glorious example and love
- Lord, Help Us--to love one another as Christ has loved us

This makes sense when we remember that Jesus has called us to make disciples by teaching people to obey all that He has commanded. And for Jesus, the two greatest commandments center on love. So it would only be natural that we are to be a people defined by love. Thus, everything else we are called to do must be motivated by and directed toward love. Knowing the Bible more then becomes about love so that we can love God more deeply and be more effectively equipped to love others. Attendance in worship is not about a roll call; it is about a love for God and His people. Showing up with God's people to worship our loving Father reflects our desire to stir one another up to love and good works for Jesus. Obedience and love are intricately intertwined. Either one without the other is devoid of purpose and lifeless.

But how can I be the loving disciple that Jesus has called me to be? What does that look like? Nearly everyone on the planet would like to consider themselves a decent and loving person on their best days. The word love is tossed around as the triumphant value of our day and yet our culture and our world seem so loveless. Many groups hold up love as an exalted virtue, yet no one seems to agree on what it really even means. What one person calls love another calls hate. Is love a vague notion of affection? Is love mere dutiful acts of submission and respect? Is love unconditional acceptance? Disciples of Jesus Christ must allow our Lord and Teacher to define what love ought to look like in our lives. John 13 provides great insight. In the context of this chapter, Jesus is fully aware of His impending violent death on a cross. He moments away from being betrayed, and He is with His disciples for the last time before He must leave them. And knowing all this, knowing what is going to happen, he decides to do something profound and remarkable. He washes their feet. He assumes the position of servant. He takes initiative to lead and love by lowering Himself and serving. He serves the one who was about to betray Him. He washes the feet of the one who would soon deny Him. And all of this is a picture of what He is about to do in humbly laying His life down on a cross, taking the form of a slave, and sacrificially loving so that His disciples might be truly clean. In this vibrant picture of love, Jesus displays to us a powerful example. Love looks like actively and intentionally seeking the good of another, even when that person hates you in return. Love looks like lowering yourself to meet the needs of others. Love looks like generous sacrifice and thoughtful initiative. Consider the words of Christ in John 13 after He has washed the disciples' feet:

**"When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. 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.' 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. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 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." (John 13:31-38)**

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the *doorposts* of your house and on your gates." --Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Jesus' teaching on the love His disciples ought to have is preceded by a discussion on the glory of God. The Son of Man and the Father were to be glorified in Christ's humble and sacrificial love. The honor and glory of God are central in the mind and heart of Jesus. I do not think this is disconnected with the call for disciples to love. For Jesus, to love God is to have the glory of God as the highest aim, whatever the cost. God's glory is more valuable than safety, more valuable than status, and more valuable than physical life itself. To truly love is to glorify God because God being seen and known and honored is the most beautiful and loving thing a person can experience. If my acts of love and service do not point people to Love Himself and His glory, that love is empty because it is divorced from the source and author of love.

It is in this context that Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment, to love one another as Jesus has loved them. This is a higher standard even than the call to love our neighbors as ourselves. Disciples must have an even deeper love for one another, a love that is cross-shaped, a love that is imitating the ultimate love of Jesus. This is a love that washes feet. But even more, this is a love that is willing to die. This is a love that pursues and is faithful even when the object of love rejects the one who loves. This is a love not rooted in the worthiness of another person but in the love and worthiness of Jesus Christ and His example. That's how all people will know we are disciples, when our love for one another imitates the love of Christ. Does the world see that in us? Does the world see a glimpse of the self-giving love of Christ when they see our care and concern for one another? If we are truly to be followers of our Lord and Master, they will and they must.

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