

Upper Room – Part 4

A New Commandment/Prediction of Peter’s Denial

Matt. 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:31-38; John 13:31-38

Here in the midst of the dinner, Jesus speaks to his faithful eleven. First Christ revealed one of them would betray Him, now He tells them all would deny Him!

I. A New Commandment – John 13:31-35

➤ The Discourse Begins

Judas is gone, the cross is before Him, and the disciples must be made ready to go on together without Him.

“Therefore, when he (Judas) was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man (Messianic reference – Dan. 7:13) glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway (immediately) glorify him.” John 13:31-32

Jesus now is ready to look forward to the glory His death and resurrection will bring.

[John 12:23; 17:4-5; Hebrews 12:2](#)

How is Jesus Glorified in His death and resurrection?

1. Victory over Satan [Rom. 8:1-4](#)
2. Work of the Redemption of man [I Peter 3:18](#)
3. Giving to believers the Example of humble service and love [Phil. 5-8](#)

Jesus had been glorified in His works and words to the crowds during His ministry. But His sufferings and gaining redemption for sinners will be the great work that will give Him glory for all eternity!

How is God the Father Glorified in Christ’s death and resurrection?

Jesus’ death was the great proof of God’s love, mercy, wisdom, and power! [I Cor. 1:18, 24](#)
It was a revelation of God’s character! Jesus revealed the Father! [John 1:18](#)

➤ Announcement of the Departure and Command to Love

“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.” John 13:33

“Little children,” – GK- “my own little children” - informal tender name, not about weakness but tenderness; like a father He had provided for them, protected, guarded and instructed them. Now He had His children before Him, Judas was gone!

“yet a little while I am with you” – this has become a reoccurring reminder [John 12:35; 14:19; 16:16-19](#)

“as I said unto the Jews” – Twice it was recorded that Jesus had said this to the unbelieving Jewish leadership (John 7:33-34; 8:21) There He would say these unbelievers would not find Him. Why? Their unbelief! (Matthew 5:20) That always separates sinners from Christ ultimately! Now He tells the disciples they just couldn’t come now, but that they will (John 13:36; 14:1-3).

“so now I say to you” – Here Jesus is connecting the leaving with the commandment to follow. He is telling them what He expects from His followers!

“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.” John 13:34-35

“A new commandment” – This commandment does not seem new! Lev. 19:18 All those who love God are called to love others. – In reality it’s like an old book being made into a “new edition” – corrected, expanded and enlarged!

“That ye love one another;” – Gk – keep on loving – These men loved Christ, now He tells them to love each other! This love will be the support they will need without Him!

Love – In the book of John LOVE will become a key word. In John 1-12 love is used 12 times; John 13-21 44 times! It became the keyword in Christ’s farewell address

Why love one another?

1. The Command of Christ – there are many commands of Christ---Great Commission, Lord’s Supper, service to others; Not only to love your neighbor but one another! This command carries special weight.

2. The Example of Christ – John 15:13 – Jesus left the Father; became a servant, this is our example and it should be our motivation, to be like Christ!

3. The Reputation of Believers – Love is the “Badge” of the believer; the greatest character trait of believers is their love! God always set His people apart with evident signs: Jews – circumcision; Sabbath; baptism of John; now the follower’s of Christ would be set apart with their love for one another and they would show the world Christ by it. There is no doctrine taught or action demonstrated that will show the world Christ more than LOVE! In the world – “everyman for themselves” In Christ – “everyman for others” I John 2:5, 8-11; 4:21; 3:10

“Such love will not only bring unbelievers to Christ, it will also keep believers strong and united in a world hostile to God” Life Application pg. 1836

II. Prediction of Peter’s Denial

Peter’s Declaration of Loyalty

Peter evidently heard nothing of the New Commandment to love one another! He was stuck on “Whither I go, you cannot come,”!

Peter did not raise his hand and ask a question on this new commandment to love one another. He did not give Christ time to give further instruction on this love. He did not desire to understand this love deeper. Matter of fact, it seems like he never heard the new commandment. He got stuck on, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." Peter literally interrupted Jesus with his burning question!

"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. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." John 13:36-38

"shall follow me afterwards" - follow to glory; Jesus work for the Father was almost complete but theirs was about to begin! In John 14 Christ will comfort and expand on this topic later

"Peter spoke as he thought, and though he was inconsiderate he was not insincere" Matthew Henry p. 1728; Jesus told Peter no, not now, but as a small child Peter was not taking no! He pushed Christ for more of an explanation!

Peter's prayer should have been, "Lord, thy grace enable me, I will lay down my life for they sake." Matthew Henry p. 1728; Instead, Peter was arrogant and self-sufficient, not understanding the strength of his sinful nature.

➤ Jesus Declares All will Deny Him

"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended (made to stumble; fall away - Matt. 11:6) because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite (strick) the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad (they will flee). (Zech. 13:7) But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." Matt. 26:31-32

"All" - Peter was unwilling to apply "All" to himself!

"for it is written" - much prophecy will be fulfilled in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. This is very important to Christ.

"be scattered" - John 18:8, Jesus desired the disciples **to scatter**, not follow, not defend. If Peter would have listened to this instruction there would have been no denial.

"I am risen" - the disciples have heard about the resurrection many times, and here again He declares it, just days before Christ rises, yet they did not believe the women when they had seen the angel.

Here Christ gave an important instruction to His faithful 11: You shall be offended tonight; flee/scatter; meet in Galilee after resurrection.

➤ Peter's Loyalty Reaffirmed Peter could not let it go.

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Matt. 26:33

“Though all men” - Peter’s pride and lack of a true understanding of his deprived, sinful and self-preserving nature never occurred to him. He felt better equipped for the trial than the others! He seems to even indicate he didn’t trust the other ten.

“yet will I never” - what a foolish promise - this vow must only be done by the grace and help of God! This is fleshly overconfidence! Instead the opposite will occur!

➤ Jesus Declares Peter will Deny Him

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desire to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou are converted (restored/changed/turned around), strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.” Luke 22:31-33

“Simon, Simon,” - Earnestly and soberly Jesus reverts back to Peter’s old name indicating that Peter had fallen into his old, fleshly ways. He will address Peter but it pertains to all!

“Satan hath desire to have you” - Gk “Satan has demanded permission for you all”; the word “you” in the Greek is “all”. Satan had stood before God and demanded access to all the disciples.

“that he may sift you as wheat:” - Satan desired to grind them and try what they were made of; these men had been with Jesus through great difficulty already, He had just commended them in Luke 22:28 We find Satan before God desiring to try Job!

“but I have prayed for thee” - in the Greek the word “thee” is singular, Jesus had prayed for Peter. BUT Christ didn’t pray that Peter would not deny Him, or Peter’s leadership would not be compromised by sin, or that he would think before opening his mouth! He prayed something much deeper!

“that thy faith fail not:” - Jesus prayer was not that Peter would not deny Him but that his denial would not destroy him!

“when thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren.” - Jesus declares “when thou”, this is a promise that Peter would change, what a wonderful promise to Peter. In John 21:15-17, Jesus will be in His glorified body making breakfast for seven of the disciples, it will be there, along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, that Jesus will encourage Peter to “feed my sheep” = “strengthen the brethren”!

“I am ready to go” - Peter meant it! Jesus’ words sounded very serious and grave, yet Peter pushes on! He foolishly ignored Jesus’ words of truth and warning.

“Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow (“twice” Mark 14:30), till thou hast denied me (“that thou knowest me” Luke 22:34) thrice.” John 13:38

After Jesus announces one of them would betray Him, He tells now their leader will deny Him!

Peter said he would never deny Christ but instead be willing to go to prison and even death for Him! Jesus informs Peter he would actually come off worse than all the others! They would desert Him but Peter will deny Him! Peter didn't really know his own heart! Jesus' words here in the Greek imply Peter's denial will be of his own accord, his own choice!

"till thou" - Gk - very strong, maybe Jesus points His finger at Peter emphasizing the word with His voice

"that thou knows me" - Peter said "never be offended" but instead he will disown Christ, deny knowledge of, no acquaintance of; he was afraid to own Christ!

Jesus said, "Peter you will do it again, again, and again—very, very soon!"

➤ Reaction of Peter & Disciples

"Peter said ("more vehemently" Mark 14:31) unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." Matt. 26:36

"more vehemently" - With great boasting Peter contradicts Jesus. He protests the words of Christ!

"Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." - Gk "If I must die with thee I will in no wise never deny thee." Peter still buckles down with His promise! At this point Peter should have been at the feet of Christ begging for mercy, strength and grace! Praying "led me not into temptation but deliver me from evil!"

"also said all the disciples." - Peter led the rest of the disciples into this same false thinking, ALL of them said the same thing, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Peter was the leader and he was leading them wrongly!

- **Jesus' Words to Readiness** Only found in Luke; This loving instruction (John 13:1) is another warning of the difficulty and the needs they will have in the future. Don't miss the flow of Jesus' message in the Upper Room! Peter interrupted Christ and Jesus dealt with him, but it seems now Jesus moving on with the encouragement and instruction to the disciples concerning His departure and their need to be ready for changes in the immediate future!

"And he said unto them, When I sent you with out purse, and script (bag/suitcase), and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, nothing." Luke 22:35

In Luke 9:1-6 Christ sent out the 12 disciples to preach and heal and in Luke 10:1-16 He sent out 70. Both times they were sent with nothing but what was on their backs; no clothes, money or food. They were totally dependent on God's provision through the generosity of others. NOW things are different. They would be on their own and alone. Their provider and protector will be gone.

"lacked ye anything?" - Gk the wording expected no answer!

“Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished (fulfilled) in me, *And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.*” Luke 22:36-37

“But now” - in comparison with the last two times He sent them; conditions are different

“Let him take it” - they were to use normal means to provide for their own support; “purse”, “scrip”, “sword”, were all examples of normal means of personal care; God would not use others to care for their needs.

“sword” - short dagger used as a tool and protection in hand to hand combat; more like a pocket knife than a sword; not a weapon of aggression in their culture

“must yet be accomplished” - Gk action in progress “having its fulfillment”

“reckoned among” - Gk “numbered with” ; Isaiah 53:12 is being quoted by Christ concerning Himself

“an end” - The truth of Isaiah 53:12 will have its fulfillment, and it will be very soon

“And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.” Luke 22:38

“here are two swords” - These men took Jesus’ words too literal. The disciples did a quick inventory among themselves and two swords were found. Perhaps the ones used by Peter and John to prepare the lamb for their Passover dinner. This response grieved the Lord. They did not get the meaning of His instruction.

“It is enough” - Gk “Enough of such talk”; “Enough talk on this matter.”; It is sufficient talk about this.”; “Don’t say anything more about the matter.” Jesus drops the matter, they were not understanding. God has responded like this before - Deut. 3:26 Sometimes God just tells us to be quiet!

What Jesus was **NOT** teaching: **Violence** - No sword ever was to help spread the Gospel or fight back during persecution. Paul, Peter, John or Stephen never used aggression in the middle of persecution. Actually, Christian leaders were not to be violent - Titus 1:7-8; I Tim. 3:2-3; When Peter used the sword in the garden, Jesus tells him to put it away and then promptly heals the ear of Malchus. In Matt. 26:52-53, He goes on to tell Peter that “all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” and that He could call 12,000 angels if He wanted! The Word of God will move the Kingdom forward not the sword. John 18:36; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12 The disciples will learn this in time to come!

What Jesus **WAS** teaching: **Alertness/Courage** - “He is stressing the peril they face and the courage they need to muster for the crisis just ahead...Jesus’ admonition sought to sting them into alertness, not institute violence as a means of following Jesus.” The King James Study Bible; Thomas Nelson p. 1593

Believers' Application:

What should love among Believer's look like?

A long, careful study of I Corinthians 13 is appropriate here. The Homework that follows along with this lesson does have the students study and rewrite I Corinthians 13. Here are a few other thoughts:

1. Quick to Forgive – Eph. 4:31-32
2. Heart of mercy and kindness – Col. 3:12-14
3. Life of Peace – Col. 3:15; Rom.12:18 (9-21)
4. Giving – Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:16

John, the disciple that sat so intimately next to Christ that night, later wrote I John 4:7-21. This passage certainly reflects on the new commandment Jesus had given that night.

Peter - “Best follower of Jesus” – What lead to Peter's Fall?

80 verses in the New Testament tell of Peter's fall and restoration (that's a lot of coverage). Much to be learned in this event!

Jesus declared to all the disciples that they would deny him. This was a **fact** that He revealed to them. Yet Peter in his pride would not accept Jesus' words. Over and over again he contradicted the Word of God! He could have used his precious and limited time with Christ to beg for deliverance, grace, strength, and wisdom. Instead, he was prideful and condescending before his peers and Christ. **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!** We can easily fall into the same pattern: reject God's truth, “hunker” down in our self-righteousness, have confidence in our spiritual strength. How Foolish! If you could have interviewed some of the many hundreds of people who followed Jesus regularly, and asked them, who was the best follower of Jesus, the answer undoubtedly would be Peter. The Gospel record is clear he was the most prominent and held up as the leader of the group both by his peers and Christ. **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!** Those in leadership are tempted and deal with their sinful nature too.

1. Peter was the object of Satan's temptation. Luke 22:31 We all are! My pastor, Ron Kutz, says often, “Every believer has a target on their back.” We must be aware of our sinful flesh and weakness and be on guard! **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!**

2. Peter's old sinful nature of fear and pride. Jer. 17:9 His natural reaction to danger and self-preservation kicked in around the fire later that night and his pride in his own spiritual strength hurt him as he sat with Christ at this Passover dinner. Both will cause him to deny Christ. He didn't have Satan in his life, but he did have the sinful nature! **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!**

3. Peter slept when he should have been praying! Matt. 26:36-46 This is an amazing passage. Jesus told Peter, James, and John to pray as He prayed in the garden, yet they fell asleep. In verse 41, He returned to the sleeping men and woke them up. He told Peter, “Watch and pray that *ye* enter not into *temptation*; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (italicize mine) This was the God given advise given to Peter!! PRAY! Yet his flesh took over and he gave into sleep. How often we rob ourselves of spiritual power over sin because we don’t ask God for power over temptation! Our heart desires to please God with a righteous life but our flesh is so weak! Do you spend time daily saying, “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:” Matt. 5:13 **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!**

4. Peter sat by a fire with unbelievers during a time of testing. John 18:18 Peter should have followed Jesus’ instructions and scattered with the rest of the disciples in the garden. Instead, he followed the crowd of religious leaders and temple guards. Ultimately this got him into trouble.

Peter - What Brought Him Back to Fellowship with Christ? - the same for all of us in our sin!

1. Peter’s repentance of his sin - Matt. 26:75 This was the beginning of fellowship with God and then leadership within the body of Christ.

2. Christ interceded to God for him - Luke 22:32 This is a work of Christ for His Church today. He intercedes for all of us! Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:24-26; 9:24 What a wonderful, comforting thought! Jesus mentions my name to God, He pleads for me! In Luke 22:32 it tells that Jesus’ prayer for Peter was for his faith to not fail.

3. Christ gave comfort and restored him - John 21:15-19 God’s Word is full of comfort and instruction to the sinner. It can give us strength in temptation and strategies in weakness. We must saturate ourselves in His Words. They are life and health! Prov. 4:20-27

Peter & Judas – What is the difference between these two men’s reaction to their sin before Christ?

Three times the Apostle John will place Peter and Judas together to contrast their lives. (John 6:66-71; 13; 18) He wanted his readers to understand the difference between a sinning believer and a sinner. Jesus said calamity waited Judas and that Peter would deny Him but turn back and become a leader of His brethren. The difference was **REPENTANCE!** Judas went away after pouring out the 30 pieces of silver and never saw another sunrise. He would not humble himself before God and seek forgiveness. He would not face his peers. Could God have made him a trophy of grace?! YES! God delights in it! He followed the Devil to death. But Peter will be strengthened, humbled and a wiser man. He **will** follow Christ to prison and death (Luke 22:33; John 21:18-19; Acts 1:15; 2:14; 2 Peter 1:10-15) **Be careful not to judge Peter to harshly!** We must be honest and not deceive ourselves. Our own sinful, weak flesh is capable of gross sin and shaming Christ. (Rom. 12:3; Gal. 6:1; I Cor. 10:13) Satan desires to see us fail, an old, Grandpa Peter said in I Peter 5:8, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeing whom he may devour.” The Devil was able to blind Peter to his pride and self-confidence. One of the Apostle Paul’s greatest fears was this very thing. In 2 Cor. 12:6-7 he recognized his “thorn in the flesh” as a God-given deterrent to fleshly pride and confidence. “For though *I would* desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he hearth of me. And lest *I should be exalted* above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, *lest I should be exalted* above measure.” (italic mine) Pray daily as Jesus had taught his disciples to pray two different times in His ministry, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...”. Pray for wisdom and strength over the flesh. Pray for boldness to stand faithfully for Christ in daily situations. Be vigilant!