

John Ch13v31-38 - Changed By The Cross

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[0 : 00] Good morning everyone, it's nice to see you today. And as Alex said, please turn to John's Gospel chapter 13.

! As is usual, we have tea and coffee afterwards, so there's an opportunity to catch up with each other. And if there's any questions or anything to feedback, or you just want to talk about what we're looking at in God's Word today, there's opportunity to do that.

I'm just waiting on a glass of water, or I'm not going to get through the reading. It's on its way. So talk amongst yourselves, if you like, while we're waiting.

Thank you. Thank you, Alex.

So John's Gospel chapter 13. This section, chapter 13 all the way through to chapter 17, is one day just before Jesus is crucified.

[1 : 40] Jesus is spending time with his disciples, preparing them for his own departure to go back to the Father. And so we get to listen in to all the things that Jesus is teaching the disciples over this last 24 hours.

And we're going to pick it up in verse 31 to verse 38. When he was gone, that's Judas, Jesus said, Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little longer.

You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now, where I am going, you cannot come. A new command I give you, love one another.

As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

[3 : 07] Simon Peter asked him, Lord, where are you going? Jesus replied, Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.

Peter asked, Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you. Then Jesus answered, Will you really lay down your life for me?

Very truly I tell you, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times. Well, let's pray and ask for God's help as we look at his word.

Our Father God, we pray that by your spirit and through your word, you will be our teacher today. Just as you taught to the disciples, will you teach us so that we know more about you and what it means to follow you and to trust you.

[4 : 20] So help us now, we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, when my dad was sick with cancer, he called all the family together for a special meeting.

There were things he wanted to share with us. There were the plans for the funeral. There were things regarding the will. There was the care of my mum.

It was his way of preparing us for his death. He wanted to make sure that everything was all in order, the way it should be.

Well, in our text that we've just read together, Jesus is preparing his disciples for his own death. Did you see it there in verse 33?

Full of compassion and love, Jesus says, My children, I will be only with you a little longer. You will look for me.

[5 : 25] And just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now, where I am going, you cannot come. Well, Peter was terribly curious.

Verse 36. Simon Peter asked him, Lord, where are you going? Jesus replied, Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.

Jesus is talking about his soon-to-be death. He's teaching the disciples, and through God's word, he is teaching us and preparing us for the cross that is to come, and what the cross means. So this morning, from this short text, we're going to look at three things. We're going to look at the cross. We're going to learn from the cross.

And we're going to listen to the cross. So look, learn, and listen. First, by looking at the cross, we see Jesus' glory.

[6 : 43] By looking at the cross, we see Jesus' glory. Look back at verse 31. When he was gone, that's Judas, Jesus said, Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. But I don't think you could get any more glories into such a short space.

What does it all mean when it talks about glory? Well, glory works at two different levels. We can think of it this way. First, that someone can display glory.

They show their greatness and their beauty. But on the other hand, someone can give glory. So we praise them, and we honour them.

So we think of Manchester United. Not that I'm a fan of Manchester United, but you all know the song. Glory, glory, Man United. What are they saying?

[7 : 53] At one level, they're talking about the players on the pitch, and the glory that they display through their skills and scoring goals. But then on the other hand, there's the crowd that are watching, that give all the glory to the players.

They praise and honour them. So glory is both revealed, we see someone's glory, and it's received, we give someone glory.

And that's essentially what's happening here. First, Jesus reveals his glory. When Jesus did his first miracle, do you remember back in chapter 2, at the wedding feast, they had run out of wine, and Jesus turned the water into wine?

Well, this is the comment that we get after that miracle. What Jesus did here, in Cana of Galilee, was the first of his signs, through which he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Jesus' miracles, all the things he did, healing the lame, feeding the crowds, raising Lazarus from the dead, all of that revealed to everyone his power and authority.

[9 : 17] He was displaying his glory. But now look carefully at what Jesus says about himself. Look again at verse 31.

When he was gone, Jesus said, now the Son of Man is glorified. Well, what's the Son of Man? Well, turn with me back to Daniel chapter 7. Daniel chapter 7. And if somebody's got a page number, I always forget to write them down.

So if somebody's got a page number for Daniel 7, that'll be good. 892. Yeah, 892.

Page 892. So the Son of Man is a figure, a person, in the Old Testament, who has been given divine power, power from God.

[10 : 23] And this is what we read about the Son of Man. Daniel chapter 7, verse 13. Daniel has a vision, and here's what he sees.

Daniel chapter 7, verse 13. In my vision at night, I looked, and there before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven.

He approached the Ancient of Days, that is God, and was led into God's presence. And he was given authority, glory, and sovereign power, and all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him.

His dominion is everlasting, and his dominion will not pass away. And his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Let's go back to John chapter 13. What a picture of someone with great power and authority. All the nations will worship him, and his kingdom will never end.

[11 : 42] This is the Son of Man. And here in John's Gospel, as Jesus is talking about himself, he claims to be the Son of Man. Now the Son of Man is glorified.

In other words, he's saying, get ready, because we are now going to see Jesus in all his glory. We're going to see his beauty and his majesty and all his splendour.

You think turning water into wine was amazing. You think raising Lazarus from the dead was amazing. Well, you haven't seen this.

And what does Jesus do next? What's the next thing Jesus does after all his miracles? What's the big thing he does? He dies.

The Son of Man with sovereign power and supreme authority is mocked and beaten and crucified. [12:44] the one who rules and owns all things and whose kingdom will never end hangs on a cross.

He suffers in shame. He dies in weakness. You see, the surprising thing is Jesus displays his glory in all its fullness at the cross.

and by looking at the cross we see Jesus in all his glory. Well, you say, where's the glory in that? Where's the glory in somebody who's been beaten and mocked with nails driven through his hands and a crown of thorns on his head? Where's the glory?

glory? Well, it's through the death of Jesus that my guilt and my sin is punished. It's through the suffering of Jesus that all my shame has been wiped away.

[13:48] It's at the cross forgiveness is given and new life is received. It's at the cross where I am washed clean and made new and I am given a fresh start and a new beginning and my past has been redeemed and my future is secured life with God now and forever more that's the glory of the cross.

So Jesus reveals his glory and then of course Jesus receives all the glory.

Do you see that in verse 32? if God is glorified in him God will glorify the son in himself and will glorify him at once.

As Jesus dies God glorifies the son. He lifts him up and says give him all the praise and all the honour. It's like an artist's painting that's hung in the gallery.

the picture on the one hand displays the glory of the artist, the skill of being able to move that paintbrush and create the picture and as people walk through the gallery they stop in awe.

[15:11] Wow! wow! They glorify the artist. It's like an actor performing on stage in a theatre where the spotlight beams down on the actor so we can see his skill and the way in which he moves and speaks and at the end of it all when they stand on stage the light shines again on the actor so that the crowd will applause and give all the glory to what they have done and that is what we are to do with the cross as we see all that Jesus does we give him the glory we give him the applause we give him the praise you see the cross changes how we see Jesus he's not just some miracle worker that we turn to in a crisis he's not some spiritual guru that we read just to get some advice he's not someone we turn to when the exams aren't going so well and go oh please help me and then forget about him no Jesus isn't some interesting person to analyse and argue about he is the son of man with sovereign power and supreme authority who died for you and for me

Jesus reveals his glory so that he might receive all the glory so first by looking at the cross we see Jesus' glory that's the first thing so we look at the cross and second we're going to learn from the cross by learning from the cross we get to love each other deeply do you see that in verse 34 this is what we learn a new command I give you love one another as I have loved you so you must love one another when we see the cross we see the glorious love of Jesus in other words if you want to know what love looks like don't turn on your

TV and go and watch some rom com or something like that don't look up a book or read some romantic novel if you want to know what love looks like learn from the cross there's two things for us to learn first we are given a new command he says a new command I give you love one another in the old testament you remember God had given the command love your neighbour as yourself now Jesus says love one another so it's not so much a new command that they've never heard before they know and we know that we ought to love each other but it's new in the sense that they are going to be the new community of love that when Jesus goes to the cross and goes back to the father the disciples will be together as a community of love they are verse 34 to love one another at the end of verse 34 love one another end of verse 35 love one another in other words love will be the distinctive mark of the church as people walk in as we walk in on a

Sunday morning we should be immersed in love our actions will be loving our words will be loving our thoughts will be loving the new command for God's people love one another so what does this love actually look like well we are given a new standard of loving one another a new standard if we want to know what love looks like learn from the cross verse 34 look at it again a new command I give you love one another as I have loved you so you must love one another so how did Jesus love us how does he demonstrate his love well think about what happens either side of this command in its context it's about betrayal and denial so before

Jesus gives the command look back at verse 21 second part of verse 21 Jesus says to his disciples very truly I tell you one of you is going to betray me right that's before the command now look at

what happens after the command look at the end of verse 38 very truly I tell you before the cock crows you will disown me three times where's the love in that betrayal and denial and then in the middle of it all Jesus says love as I loved you you see Judas would turn against Jesus Peter would turn away from Jesus but knowing this would happen Jesus loved them to the very end and he went to the cross for people like

[21 : 28] Judas and Peter Jesus in love would lay down his life for the betrayers and the deniers that's the standard it's nothing less than servant hearted self sacrificing other centered love it's a love that is demonstrated and seen at the cross by learning from the cross we get to see how we love each other deeply you see when we love others deeply it will have a wider effect look at verse 35 verse 35 by this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another you see as we love as

Christ love it's going to cause a stir it'll be like a firework at night exploding it gets everybody's attention and they see and it will be talked about people in carriage will say they're loving people and I want to encourage us to keep loving one another as we do because it has an effect it helps people see that Jesus loves us so we are to love one another but what is this going to look like in practice well here's two things for us to consider two things first live with the reality not the ideal you see mostly I think this is true of me you tell me what you think but I think this is true of everyone we look for the ideal in everyone in other words

I will love those who won't betray me or deny me I will love those who don't annoy me or disappoint me the problem is that none of us ever meets the ideal because we all fail and fall that's why Jesus is saying love one another you see if we waited for the perfect person to love we're never going to love anybody because the perfect person doesn't exist love the person who frustrates you and does things differently to you love the reality of one another love messy broken sinful people like me and like us all so live with the reality not the ideal and second look to the cross not yourself because we've all got standards standards that we establish and that we control that we can control ways in which we're willing to go and love but no further love is conditional on our part

I will love you if you apologise to me I will love you if you promise never ever to do it again I will love you if you do this for me I will love you if you fill in the blank but the problem is our standards are just far too low the standard by which we are to love is the cross a love that is intentional and unconditional a love that will love deniers and betrayers so second we not only look to the cross but we learn from the cross and as we learn from the cross we learn how to love one another deeply that's all good right happy so far love others as Jesus loved us and give

Jesus all the glory easy simple but the problem is we don't do we I know I don't I know I'm good at loving myself I love myself huge and I'm good at giving glory but glory and seeking glory for myself so what's going to be the response and the answer to that what do we do well we look we learn and we listen by listening to the cross we get to know ourselves clearly or we understand ourselves fully look at verse 37 Peter asked Lord why can't I follow you now I'll lay down my life for you this is this is classic

[27 : 00] Peter he's all in he's so enthusiastic oh oh Jesus oh yeah the love thing got that sorted by the way I'm going to lay down my life for you whatever you ask I'll do it but the problem is Peter has a distorted view of himself he can't see what he's really like look how Jesus responds to Peter's claim of great extravagant love of laying down his life look what Jesus says will you really lay down your life for me very truly I tell you before the cock crows you will disown me three times wow bang at the cross we begin to see ourselves clearly two things the cross speaks to us about that I want us to get as we finish first the cross speaks about the horror of my sin it speaks about the horror of my sin you see it's not it's not

Peter who lays down his life for anyone and it's not me who lays down my life for anyone it's Jesus who lays down his life for us as Jesus is mocked and beaten as Jesus suffers and dies I begin to see my true self as I look at the cross it's like a mirror reflecting back on me the fact that Jesus had to go to the cross and die shows me that I am more sinful than I ever thought I'm not just weak and get it slightly wrong I'm deeply broken you see at the cross my true self is revealed I don't glorify Jesus as I should I don't love others as I should like

Peter I deny Jesus and the cross reminds me of what I deserve I should be where Jesus is I should suffer as Jesus suffers I should die as Jesus dies can you look at the cross and see him die and say that should be me so as I listen to the message of the cross I see the horror of my own sin and what I deserve but thankfully the cross also speaks about the beauty of God's love it speaks about the

beauty of God's love as Jesus dies he dies for me he lays down his life for me knowing my sin knowing that I would betray him knowing that I would reject him he dies for me the fact that Jesus would go to the cross shows me that I am more loved than I ever dreamed possible you see looking at the cross we see God's heart revealed for you and for me where Jesus stands where I deserve to stand he dies as I deserve to die here at the cross we fall and experience the grace of God who forgives me of all of my sin where all of my shame that I carry over the years is washed away and all the guilt that weighs me down is removed forever and more than that through his love I am changed on the inside and I'm humbled and I'm driven to love people as Jesus loved me and to him I give all the glory listen listen to the cross the cross speaks to us and confronts us with something that we are never ever to forget the horror of our sin and wow the beauty of God's love here at the cross I am reminded of what I deserve and it reminds me of what Jesus has done you see when we listen to the message of the cross we are humbled and broken and yet changed and transformed we come to the cross and together we stop and we reflect look learn and listen he loved us so much that we love others and give

[33 : 03] Jesus all the glory let's pray Lord God we we confess that so often we spend our times looking at well let's just say rubbish on our TV we listen to so much nonsense we learn silly things from our phones help us to put the cross at the centre that we would look to Jesus this week that we would learn from Jesus this week and that we would listen to

Jesus this week thank you for the cross thank you for dying for us for giving us life and for changing us and to you we give all the glory and the praise amen Thank you.