

The Inner Sanctuary

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[0 : 00] Turn with me again, please, to John chapter 13. This is page 1086, 1086, if you've got the same Bible as me. John chapter 13.

And we can read again at verse 31, talking about when Judas had just left, when Judas 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, and so on. Now maybe you're a wee bit like me, and sometimes you're tempted to kind of live in a bubble, and you wish you could live in a bubble, and you can be in a place where everything good and nice is kind of trapped inside, and you don't have to worry about the bad things that are on the outside, and you can live in a kind of cosy wee cocoon, and just live your life out there.

That can be a bad thing. I think it probably is a bad thing most of the time. I remember hearing one minister talking, and he said, you know what I would love? He says, I would love if there was, see from my study, if there was a tunnel that went to the pulpit, and I could just come out of the study and go to the pulpit, and then preach my sermon, and then get back into the tunnel, and head back into the study, and not have to deal with people, and their issues, and their problems, and all that.

I think he was speaking a bit tongue-in-cheek, to be honest, but that was obviously the way he did feel sometimes, where he'd like to live in this kind of bubble, where he didn't have to engage with people, and issues, and problems, and all the sin in the outside world, as well as the sin in his own heart.

[1 : 57] Sometimes there's a kind of good side to the bubble, and I'm sure we've all known something of the kind of situation where, I don't know, maybe you've been at a great conference, or something like that, having a time of great fellowship, perhaps in a house, maybe a communion weekend, something like that, where you almost feel, for a weekend, or for a night, or whatever, you've been in a kind of bubble, and there's something just so lovely about being locked away in a big house in the country, or wherever it is, and having this lovely time of communion, and fellowship with fellow believers, and not having to worry about what's going on out there in the world, and you almost wish like it would never end, and when I preached this in there, recently, one of the ladies came up to me afterwards, and said, she says, I've known communion weekends like that, I remember one in particular, I can't remember what she said, where it was, but she said, down in, it might have been scalpy, but I can't remember, but anyway, she said, it was so amazing, we were just on a high, she says,

I came home, for a week, I didn't want to watch the TV, I was like living in this cocoon, and I didn't want it to end, and there's something lovely sometimes, about being able to live in a bubble, and sometimes when I think of this passage, that we've been reading together today, it kind of reminds me a wee bit of that situation, this is Jesus and his disciples, and they're locked into the upper room, the night before the cross, and it must have been one of the most amazing nights ever, when you read everything that's been preserved for us, across these three or four chapters, John 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, before Gethsemane, and before the cross, there's something so wonderful, about the way, they're just in that room, and they are like in a bubble, for a moment, for an evening, and Jesus gives them the most amazing teaching, and sermons, that anybody has ever had, and so much of it is preserved for us, in the scripture, chapter 13 opens, by saying, having loved his own, who were in the world, he loved them to the end,

I think it's the NIV says, he now showed them the full extent, of his love, and he began to pour out that love on them, and they must have felt, that in some ways, that they were, they were in this, kind of bubble, he's their hero, he's their saviour, and yet, there's one there, for who is not really the hero, and he's, certainly not, the saviour, that there's one, there who's, who's not enjoying, even in the way the rest are enjoying, and he's not responding, the way the rest, are responding, and he's not fellowshiping, and he's not loving, and he's not repenting, the way the rest are, there's one there, and there's dark things, going on, in his heart, Judas, Iscariot, and in a sense, he's spoiling, the bubble, effect, isn't he, and when we read, in that, that verse, verse 30, after receiving the morsel of bread,

Judas immediately went out, and it was night, and there's one of John's double meanings there, isn't there, you know, John's full of double meanings in his gospel, and there's one right there, it was night, it was night outside, but it was night, in the soul of Judas Iscariot, there was a darkness, an evil, had come upon him, that Satan, had entered into him, and he goes out, and it was dark, and cold, and he was on the outside, of the bubble, when the rest were inside, and solemn as that is, I don't dwell on that, but you know, solemn as it is, what it does do, is it leaves, the rest, Jesus, and the other 11, in that bubble, in the upper room, and now, they are, of the one mind, and they are, of the one spirit, and there's a warmth, and there's an intimacy, and there's a fellowship there, in that upper room, that is now, deeper, and closer, and lovelier, than it was, when Judas, was still in there, there's a different spirit, once he goes out, and you can sense, even in the, what we read, there's a different atmosphere, comes on, where Jesus is with, his own, loved disciples, in that, almost like, an inner sanctuary, preserved in there, for the course, of that evening,

I grew up in, what's now, Downvale, in Glasgow, Downvale congregation, these days, it was Partick Highland, and it was, it was a very, Gaelic focused, congregation, I didn't have Gaelic, I'm kind of, on a par with the dog, it's like, you know, sit, sit down, come here, shut up, eat your dinner, you know, that sort of thing, that's my Gaelic, but there was two, Gaelic prayer meetings, in the week, one on a Thursday night, and one on a Saturday night, I went to the English one, on a Wednesday night, but the folks, that went to the Gaelic, one on a Saturday night, they used to say, what a beautiful spirit, there was, in that, in that prayer meeting, Gaelic prayer meeting, on a Saturday night, and, there was, the guy that used to, to lock the door, he'd be on door duty, it was the same fellow, every week, the same name as myself, Mardole McLeod, from Lachs, some of you might have known him, died a few years back now, but, he was the guy, on door duty, on a Saturday night, and he would, he would let everybody in, and then he would, stay outside, while they sang the first psalm, and I think maybe, at the end of the psalm, he would come in, just as a prayer, the first prayer, was about to start, but before he came in, you know, in part of it, probably the doors are open here, in part of it, he didn't do that, you know, he bolted the doors, before he came in, and couldn't see, what was going on out there, and, he said, when he bolted that door, on Saturday night, he said,

[7 : 52] I felt, that was, that was my Sabbath, was beginning, half past seven, on Saturday night, he says, and the world was outside, and he says, that was where it began, the Sabbath began, then, with that fellowship, and the warmth, and the closeness, of that fellowship, and the world was outside, and it was, the bubble had started, and there's something wonderful, about that, isn't there, there's something, so beautiful, about when there's a, cosy, intimate fellowship, with the Lord, and his people, it's something we would all, covet and crave, and something you would, just yearn for, and it wasn't there, when Judas, was there, that's a sobering thought, wasn't it, when Judas was there, it wasn't there, it's when he goes out, that that's, that's when it really begins, that's when the warmth, and the intimacy, of this chapter, really kicks in, that, that should be a sobering lesson, for any of us, beware, lest you're that cold person, lest you're the one, that brings a cold air, into the atmosphere, that brings a negative, downward spirit, into the fellowship, of God's people, instead, instead, develop, and cultivate, a love for God, a desire for God, a desire for fellowship, and intimacy, with him, develop that, that you never, be, the person, who brings, the bad spirit in, instead, you'll always bring joy, and wherever you are, you bring encouragement, and you bring strength, and you bring, warmth, into the meetings, of God's people, now, in saying all that,

I'm conscious, that, it's Jesus, who knows, that something has changed, with Judas, going out, the rest, don't pick it up, okay, the rest, don't pick it up, only he seems to feel it, at that time, the others don't suspect, that, there's been anything dodgy, here, going on at all, maybe this is where, they start to realise, they've never known, a night like it, and Jesus says, now, is the hour, he starts talking about that, all through his ministry, he said, my hour has not yet come, don't tell folk about me, my hour has not yet come, this is not my time, and now, at this stage, in the gospel narrative, he's starting to say, now the time has come, now, the hour has come, this, is the moment, everything he'd come into this world, to do, suddenly now, it's that time, now, is the son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him, now, is the hour, and they begin to experience, so much more, of the love, of his heart, for them, if I can break this down, into just, two things, firstly, the Lord's love, secondly, our love, just very simply, the Lord's love, and our love, okay, first thing, the Lord's love, now, is the son of man glorified, and God is glorified, and what does all that mean, there's a kind of peculiar mix, of tenses, and language, the son of man is glorified now, and God will glorify in himself,

God will glorify him at once, there's that kind of present, and future tenses, all being mixed together, but it's all telling us, that the future, in God's hands, is guaranteed, and that he, is still in control of this, and Jesus knows that, he knows, there's an ordeal, ahead, his soul is, trembling, and shrinking within him, as he contemplates, what's going to happen, tomorrow, he knows, even though the disciples don't, but he also knows, that his father loves him, and knows, that his father is going to, to see him through, all this, even when it gets to that, most God forsaken moment, on the cross, must have been difficult, for the disciples, to see, at this point, exactly, what's going on, but it's true, nevertheless, and despite, the mysterious, providences, that they're going to, become aware of, over the next 24 hours, after this, there's a glory, in God's plans,

Christ is being glorified, in what looks like, his hour of greatest desertion, he is being glorified, and the glory of God, is shining down, upon him, but it's hard to see, in that period, but there's a glory, and a greatness, in God's purposes, and plans, as the mystery, of the ages, and the mystery, of the cross, begins to unfold, before them, God's, infinite love, will yet, be seen, God's, infinite wisdom, will yet, be seen, and his justice, is going to triumph, over man's, sin, and guilt, and depravity, and for all it looks, it's going to look at times, over that next, 24 hours, as though, God is not in this, and Christ is utterly, forsaken by God, and he's on his own, and he's, wretched, and he's lost, that's not, what's happening at all, is it, and it's only afterwards,

I'm sure, that the disciples, would remember, any of this teaching, from the upper room, only then, as the Holy Spirit, would bring it back, to them, afterwards, would they remember, his words, that he'd spoken, the night before, and they'd be able, to find comfort, in them, in spite of all, the horror, of what's about, to unfold, and that should be, a great lesson, to ourselves, we should remember, must remember, in all times, the Lord is in control, there's times, when it won't look like it, there's times, when it won't feel like it, there's times, in your own life, and your own experience, where you think, what have I done, why has God left me, why has he abandoned me, why is this happening, this is the very thing, that I prayed, wouldn't happen, has happened, why am I suffering, why is my loved one suffering, why is my child suffering, why has dementia come, why has cancer come, why, why, and these are the times, you have to hang on, to the truth, that God knows, what he's doing, and that there's no accidents, with God, and that we need patience, if you could have said, to these 11 disciples, that night, be patient, hang on, but these next few days, are going to be hard, but hang on, and you're going to see, that God is in control, all the time, and see that he knew, what he was doing, and there's something amazing, and God glorifying, and God honouring, happening here, that you just can't see, sometimes, we don't have that wisdom, and insight ourselves, but sometimes, you just feel, you need to say, be patient, ride it out,

[14 : 48] I don't know how long, you'll have to ride it out, I don't know how deep, and how troubled, you'll have to be, before the clouds part again, maybe they never will part, in this world, again, but one day, they'll part, if you're the Lord's people, and one day, the sun is going to rise, and going to rise forever, and all the shadows, will flee away, forever, we need patience, a holy patience, to trust God, even in the darkest, days, and the darkest times, and the darkest, deepest, valleys, Jesus heart, is so heavy, here, he says it two, or three times now, my soul is troubled, I'm almost tempted, to say, father save me, from this hour, but I know, it was for this very hour, I came into the world, but his soul is, in agony, within him, all that's going on, and yet, he's got so much time, for these disciples, if Jesus hadn't said a word, if he'd gone off, to pray in a corner, somewhere, to simply talk to God, in a sense, you wouldn't blame him, would you, you couldn't say, that was the wrong thing to do, if you knew, what was ahead of him, as he knew, what was ahead of him, but he doesn't do that, and he wants to be with them, and he knows, how important it is, that he teaches them, and he tells them, about what's going on, and he tells them, what they need to understand, and what they'll need to know, for the rest of their lives, as they're going to, to serve him, in the world, when he's physically, gone from them, he's so tender towards them, because he knows, how weak, they are, little children, he calls them, in verse 33, little children,

I find that so touching, in some ways, it's the only use, it's the only time, that word is used, or that phrase, is used, in the gospels, John was one of the disciples, that was there, and heard Jesus say it, and he repeats it, when he comes to write his own, epistles, years later, verse 2nd and 3rd John, and he uses that phrase, more than once, little children, and I think this is, where he picked it up, that night, from Jesus, little children, almost like a dying father, with his loved ones, gathered round, the bedside, little children, come here, I've got something to tell you, and, you know, these are not little children, these are big men, these are big, muscular, fishermen, and blue collar workers, of one kind, or another, they're big tough guys, at least, they think they're tough, outwardly, they're big tough guys, but Jesus knows, about, how young, they are, in some ways, how immature, they are, how, how weak, they are, how, naive, they are, how unaware, they are, of what's, about to come, upon them, they think they're so strong, and they're so weak, you know, they, they think they're tough, but they're so fearful, and they're going to run away, before morning comes, they're going to run away, and leave him behind, to face, death, and, eh, torture, they think they're so loyal, but they're so selfish, and so self-centered, and so self-protecting, they think they're so, sufficient, but they're so lacking, and he knows all that, even though they don't know it, and he gathers around, and he says, little children, come here,

I've got things to teach you, there's things I have to tell you, because you're going to need, to know this, in days to come, I know you need, love, I know you need, protection, I know you need, care, I know you need, guidance, I know you need, wisdom, I know you need, teaching, you're going to be, so tried, over this next, period, and he gives them, all this amazing night, of teaching, he warns them, that he's going away, although he never abandons, his people, he says to them, I'm with you, just a little while, 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, what did he say, to the Jews, you go back to, chapter 7, verses 33, and he said, I'm going away, and you can't follow me, and they, they at that point, thought he meant, where's he going, is he going, to another country, is he going to, the Jewish dispersion, in another place, where is he going, that we can't follow, and they didn't understand, what he meant, in the following chapter,

John chapter 8, he says the same thing again, I'm going away, and where I'm going, you can't come, and the Pharisees said, is he going to kill himself, what, what's he mean, I'm going away, and this is Jesus saying, once again, I'm going away, this time he's talking, to his disciples, and he's saying, where I'm going, you can't come, there's things, that only Jesus can do, there's things, that only Jesus can do, none of them, could have gone there, with him, at that time, none could go to the cross, as he was going, to the cross, none could die, for the world, as he was going, to die, for the world, there's things, only Jesus, can do, and things, that you and I, cannot do, we cannot do, Jesus work, for him, and we cannot, stand, as it were, in his shoes, we can only do, our own, and we shouldn't even try, we can't, convert, anyone, we can't change, anyone, there's things, that only the Lord, can do, probably would make things worse, if we try and do, what only the Lord, can do, there's a story about, how Spurgeon, was walking in the street, one day, and a drunk, came ambling up to him, and you know, through his kind of, slurry language, he said,

Mr Spurgeon, I'm one of your converts, and he says, well you look like, one of my converts, a pity you, you ain't one of Christ's, that's true isn't it, yeah, if they're our converts, it's not going to get anywhere, if you and I, try to do the Lord's work for him, we won't get anywhere, we'll make a mess, there's things, only the Lord can do, and that's what he says, I'm going away, I've got something to do, and you can't come with me, and you can't do it for me, I'm going away, but one day, we'll be together again, and he shows them, and he teaches them, this night, all about his love, and his love, that will never, actually abandon them, and will never forsake them, and that they'll never, actually be without, though their sense, of being without it, might well, be there, for a few days, let me move on quickly, that was the love of the Lord, what about our love, for him, Christ's love, secondly, our love, there's things, we cannot do, things, only the Lord can do, but that doesn't mean, we can't do anything, and Jesus goes on to say, this is what I want you to do, okay, this is what I want you to do, he says,

[21 : 59] I'm going to give you, a new commandment, I know you've got 10, already, and you've got the whole, of the scriptures, I'm going to give you, a new commandment, the 10 commandments, you know this, they're not 10 suggestions, they're not 10, recommendations, they're not 10, words of good advice, they're 10, commandments, that the Lord says, this is what you must do, or, this is what you must not, do, and he's saying, I'm going to give you, another one, one, on the path, on par, with the first 10, you know, this is as important, as the 10 commandments, you think it's important, not to steal, not to kill, not to commit adultery, they are, all these things are important, I'm going to tell you one more, and it's just as important, as any of them, you need to love, one another, that's a, that's a big thing, there's a great old story, from Scottish church history, where,

James Usher, who at that time was, it's going back about, three, four hundred years ago, he was, I think archbishop, of, one of the Irish denominations, he was based over, in Northern Ireland, and he knew, and he'd been hearing about, the godliness, of Samuel Rutherford, who was ministering, at that time, down in that corner, of Scotland, the south west, of Scotland, Dumfries, Scalloway region, down there, a little place called, Anworth, on the Solway Firth, and he'd heard, the reputation, of Rutherford, and he longed to visit him, and he said, the next time I cross over, to Scotland, I don't suppose it was, Larne, Dister and Rar, like today, but it was, you know, that's the way he crosses it, because that's the shortest crossing, he says, next time I go over, I'm going to go to Rutherford's house, and see if he really is, the man, whose reputation, I've heard about, and he arrived, at Rutherford's house, and he, he dressed himself, as though he were a kind of tramp, he didn't look like an archbishop, when he arrived, he looked like a tramp, a wanderer, looking for a bed for the night, and he was taken in, and given some, something to eat, and at one point,

Mrs Rutherford, was rounding, the servants, or the house people up, for worship, and she asked, the visitor, would you like to join us, for worship, and he says, like what, what's that, pretending he was ignorant, and she said, how many commandments are there, he said, eleven, and she said, oh, a lost cause, a lost cause, you just sit there, you would think, that would be all the more reason, she would have him in, but she said, he obviously doesn't know anything, well, you sit there, we're going to have worship, in the next room, which is what happened, and he didn't join them, the next day, he got up early, Archbishop Usher, and he was out, walking around, the outside of the house, when, who did he come across, but Samuel Rutherford, walking in the gardens, they hadn't met, till this point, remember, he's pretending, just to be a, a tramp, a visitor, and, and they met, and they, realised who each other was, and they introduced, and they got on fine, and Rutherford said, would you preach, in church this morning, and Usher said,

I will, as long as you don't tell anybody, that it's me, and I'm going to do that, and Rutherford said, that was fine, and when Mrs Rutherford, went looking for the tramp, she found he was gone, no sign, he'd just cleared off, and fine, we'll never see him again, but then, when she got to church, and she's waiting for her husband, to come into the pulpit, who comes in, but a man that she thinks, I've seen him before somewhere, of course he doesn't look like a tramp now, he's got himself a bit, more spruced up, and she thinks, I've seen that man somewhere before, and, when it came time, to preach the sermon, he said, today we're going to, to look at this word, from John chapter 13, verse 34, 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, he says, some people, have said, this is the 11th, commandment, and at that point, Mrs Rutherford, whoop, and she realised, she realised who he was, and what he'd said the night before, and he wasn't as ignorant, as she thought he was, and it would have been, an interesting conversation, over dinner, but I think, what the story reminds us of, is, that this commandment here, is as, big, and as important, as any of the other, ten,

Jesus calls it, a new commandment, how is it new, were we not always, to love our neighbour, were Old Testament people, not to love, their neighbour, well, I guess it's new, in the sense that, here it's been modelled, in a way, it's never been modelled before, it's been modelled, by the Lord Jesus, himself, and they have an example, before them, where he shows, that the vastness, of his love, what the NIV, he called, the full extent, of his love, self-giving, to the extreme, and if they think, they've understood, something of that, in the washing of the feet, it's nothing compared, to what they're going to see, in Calvary, tomorrow, love, such as has never, been seen, before, a new commandment, I give you, love, one another, I don't know about you, but whenever I hear that, it makes me feel guilty, it makes me feel, the coldness, and the shallowness, of my own heart, and, you kind of hang your head a bit, and you know,

[27 : 35] I haven't loved, as I ought, to have loved, pray, for the ability, to love, even to love, the unlovely, even to love, the unlovable, pray, for the ability, to do what Christ, not just suggests here, what Christ commands, of us, love, one another, it's a massive, commandment, and it's right up there, with any other, commandment, that the Bible, gives us, Jesus will even, go further, and he won't just say, love your fellow believers, he'll say, love your enemies, your enemies, that's, that's a tall order, yeah, we tend to think, don't we, that, well, we're not at war, with anybody, I'm not being asked, to love Nazis, or anything like that, you know, there's nobody, like that, around just now, but your enemies, are the folk, you don't get on with, the folk, you don't see, eye to eye with, the folk, that rub you up, the wrong way, the folk, that wind you up, yeah, surely, that's, in Christ's mind, as he says, love your enemies, love folk, that, you find it hard, even to, to like, there's an old song, by Don Francisco, he says, love is not a feeling, it's an act of the will, but sometimes, you have to will yourself, to love somebody, and you can't, force a feeling, that's not there, but you can do, love, you can be kind, to a person, that you don't feel, warm towards, you can, you can, do good things, and do nothing, nice things, and do helpful, things to people, that you struggle with, and Jesus is doing that, as he washes, his disciples feet, he knows, he's even, even does Judas, this man's going to betray me, he washes his feet, this man here, he's going to deny, with oaths and curses, that even knows me, but he washes his feet, these guys here, they're all going to run away, and abandon me, before the night is through, and he washes their feet, and he does, kindness to them, and he does, love to them, and he says to you and me, love, one another, be kind, be gracious, and be helpful, be nice, even to those folk, you're struggling, with, and John will take it, on a stage further, in his own epistle, he'll say, later on, we know, we have passed, from death to life, if we love the brethren,

I know I'm a Christian, if I love the brethren, and if I don't love the brethren, the scripture has challenged me, are you a Christian, that's the implication, of the text, we know we've passed, from death to life, and become a Christian, if we love the brethren, if you can put up, with the brethren, with their foibles, and with their, habits, and with their, quirks, and, whatever, might be worse, than that, and you can still say, I love them, because they're the Lord's, and I'll be gracious to them, because they're the Lord's, because that's what I'm commanded to do, he says, you know, you've become a Christian, if you can tolerate, and even love, the brethren, and if you can't, you need to look at yourself, and question, well am I a Christian, because this is the benchmark, that Jesus gives us, and he goes further, and he says, by this, all people will know, that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another, he says, that's the image, that has to come over, that's the perception, that needs to be there, if you want people, to know, that the gospel is true, if you want people, to know, that there is a God, if you want people, to know, that Christ, has salvation, for them, do you love one another, he says, this is how people know, whether it's all true, or not, and whether you really are, my disciples, we can pray, in the prayer meeting, that people, will come to know the Lord, and that the folk, in the community, around about, that never come near a church, that they'll come in, but they won't come in, for some of the, things that, we say and do, they won't say, look how these folk, go to the prayer meeting, so faithfully, every week, they must be real disciples, they won't say, look how, smartly they're dressed, they must be real disciples, they won't say, look at how nice, the church is, they must be real disciples,

Jesus says, they'll know, you're real disciples, if you love, one another, and if that, love, is apparent, and clear, in our dealings, with one another, it's hugely challenging, we want people saved, and he says, you've got to demonstrate, that love, for one another, do people know, we're the Lord's people, do they know, it's the truth, do they know, the reality, of what we profess, you know, if they don't, it might be, because they pick up, we don't love, one another, you don't, exhibit, and demonstrate, and prove, love, for one another, why is the gospel, so slow to spread, why is the church, not bigger than it is, and you just wonder, is this, the acid taste, that the world, actually judges us on, we think, maybe it's other things, in reality, Jesus is saying, it's this, do you love one another, are you seen, to love, one another, it's a huge, question, but he's saying, that's how the kingdom grows, that's how people will know, you are my disciples, how did Christ, love us, he showed it, by giving himself, in a way, that nobody ever, could, or did, give themselves, let me, bring it to a close, let me just mention, briefly, this little section, between 36 and 38, about Peter,

Peter says, Lord, where are you going, I want to come to, and Jesus says, no, you can't, where I'm going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterwards, Peter said to him, Lord, why can't I follow you now, he's arguing with the Lord, he seems to have forgotten, a bit about love one another, he's gone back, to the previous conversation, about where Jesus said, where I'm going, you cannot come, and it's as if, that's going in one ear, and out the other, for Peter, and he's not thinking, at all about that, makes you wonder, does he think, I've got that bit sussed, of course I love, I love you Lord, and I love these guys here, and I would never do anything, to hurt any of you, and because he's not listening, catastrophe, he's waiting for him, a couple of hours, down the line, but all he's thinking about, just now, is how strong he is, I'm going to be with Jesus, through thick and thin, no matter who else, leaves him, and who else abandons him, not me, I'm not going to do that, wherever you go Lord, I'm coming with you, you know, we need, we're going to get anywhere, spiritually, we need humility, and we need a sense, of dependence, and not a sense, of our own strength, or our own courage, or our own spirituality,

Peter's saying almost, Jesus you need me, don't go anywhere, without me, you need me, and Jesus is saying to him, no my friend, you need me, you need me, you don't realise, how much you need me, but you need me, and it's not about your strength, because I know how weak it is, and it's not about your friendship, because I know how, fragile, it is, and there's something endearing, about Jesus, here, and he's so conscious, of the naivety of Peter, maybe he never loved him more, than at that moment, but he knows, how vulnerable, and how close, to the edge he is, and he knows, what's going to happen to Peter, he knows, it's going to break Peter's heart, when he denies him the third time, and realises what he's done, and Peter must have walked away, from the high priest's courtyard, with the image in his head, of Jesus, looking at him, as he denies him the third time, with curses, and swearings, and that image must have been seared, on his mind, as he sloped off, into the darkness, and cried, and cried, and cried, and thought, what have I done, and there's no way back for me, but Jesus knows, even before it's happened, that this experience, is not going to destroy Peter, it's not going to crush him, it's going to drive him low, lower than he's ever been in his life, but it's not going to destroy him, somewhere down the line, it's going to enrich him, and it's going to strengthen him, and it's going to, help him to look back, and realise, my strength is not in myself, it's in him, and it's going to be the making, of him, and it's going to prepare him, and equip him, for the lifetime, of wonderful service, that he's going to render, for the Lord, for the rest, of his days, eventually, there would even come a point, where Peter would thank, the Lord, that he'd gone through, what he went through, because it was the making, of him, and how the Lord's love, upheld him, and sustained him, through the darkest time, he ever knew,

[37 : 17] God's ways are so, mysterious, but they're always, so loving, and that, that should thrill our hearts, no matter how much, you've let him down, no matter how much, you've, betrayed, denied, the Lord, no matter how much, you've failed, to love, his people, failed to love, as you ought, there's a way back, and Peter reminds us, there's a way back, not because of his own strength, and his own brilliance, but because of the Lord's grace, and the Lord's love, and that, that should cheer us, immensely, and encourage us, immensely, what the Lord, has done, the person, who's been, rescued from a burning building, or saved from drowning, in the river, must be forever grateful, to the rescuer, how much more, should you and I, be grateful to, our saviour, who saved us, not just in a temporary sense, but saved our souls, from all eternity, if we believe in him, and trust in him, he's not just our hero, not just our rescuer, our saviour, our redeemer, our Lord, our God, may we live, worthy of him, let's pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.