

Deepest Love and Challenge

Two Things We Have Been Learning in This Series...

1. You can impress people at a distance. But you can impact them from up close. And the closer you are to them, the greater and more permanent the impact.
2. Although we learn in large groups, the changes that we would like to make in our lives are usually made because of relationships.

The Scriptures

“When He was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in Him.

³² If God is glorified in Him, God will glorify the Son in Himself, and will glorify Him at once.

³³ 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.

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

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.”

³⁷ Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”

³⁸ Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!” - John 13:31-38

The Glory of Christ

With Judas leaving to “do quickly” what he was determined to do, Jesus would now be turned over to His enemies and He would die.

1. Jesus and the Father would receive glory through the cross.

- His death would destroy the power of sin.

“...having canceled the written code with its regulations that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross.” - Colossians 2:14

- His death would destroy the power of Satan.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death -- that is, the devil...”

- Hebrews 2:14

- His death would display the love of God in its fullness.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” - John 3:16

2. Jesus would receive an ultimate glory from the Father.

“Exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.” - Acts 2:33

The Identity of Believers

Jesus refers to the disciples as His “children”. (*Judas is gone*)

- He did this because He was leaving them.
- He did this because He was giving a command.

Jesus gave His followers a new command: Those who follow Christ are to love one another.

- We are to love in the way that He loved.
- We have no choice but to love. (must)
- We will be recognized as His followers when we love like this.

The Failure of Peter

Simon Peter feared the thought of Jesus leaving.

“Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. “Never, Lord”, he said. “It shall never happen to you.” - Matthew 16:22

Simon Peter should have feared failing.

Why did Simon fail?

1. He wasn’t listening.

³⁵ “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

³⁶ “Simon Peter asked Him, “Lord, where are you going.” - John 13:35,36

2. He wasn’t humble.

“Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” - v. 37

3. He wasn’t praying.

¹⁰ “On reaching the place, He said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”...

¹⁶ “Why are you sleeping?” He asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.” - Luke 22:10,16

4. He wasn’t patient nor sensitive to God’s plan.

“Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) ¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?” - John 18:10,11
“But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And He touched the man’s ear and healed him.” - Luke 22:51

5. He wasn’t following Jesus closely enough.

“Then seizing Him, they led Him away and took Him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.” - Luke 22:54

What Do We Learn?

1. God’s plan cannot be foiled by the contempt of a non-believer (Judas); by the denials of a believer (Peter); or by the attempts of Satan. God will do what He says He will do.
2. Christians need to see, comprehend, and fulfill the new command of Jesus. This is the greatest mark of the church.
3. We need to have the right relationships in place to practice our love and to help keep us from falling into sin.
4. I have learned in this series that I must...

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