STUDY BIBLE WORKBOOK

John 13

The Servant King and the New Commandment

QUICK STUDY + DEEP DIVE

Jesus washes His disciples' feet, reveals the betrayal approaching Him, and gives a new commandment to love as He has loved. His servant-hearted glory exposes our pride and calls us to live in humble love.

Scripture quotations: World English Bible (WEB)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Quick Study: Begin with the overview, chapter movements, Bible words, Greek pronunciation notes, Gospel Connection, and a guided prayer.

Deep Dive: Eight Scripture-first SOAP passages include all 38 WEB verses, substantial observation, application, and prayer.

WESTERN GRACE MEDIA

John 13 — Geographic Setting

John 13 takes place during a supper before Passover, in the wider Jerusalem setting of John's narrative. Jesus washes His disciples' feet, speaks of betrayal, and gives the new commandment. The regional map highlights the Jerusalem vicinity, but John does not identify the house or room.



Original WGM regional atlas: Jerusalem vicinity highlighted; the supper room is not located.

Regional location



COUNTRIES IN YEAR 2020

Jerusalem vicinity: The Passover narrative provides broad geographical context for the supper.

The supper (13:1–30): John names the occasion but does not give its street address or building.

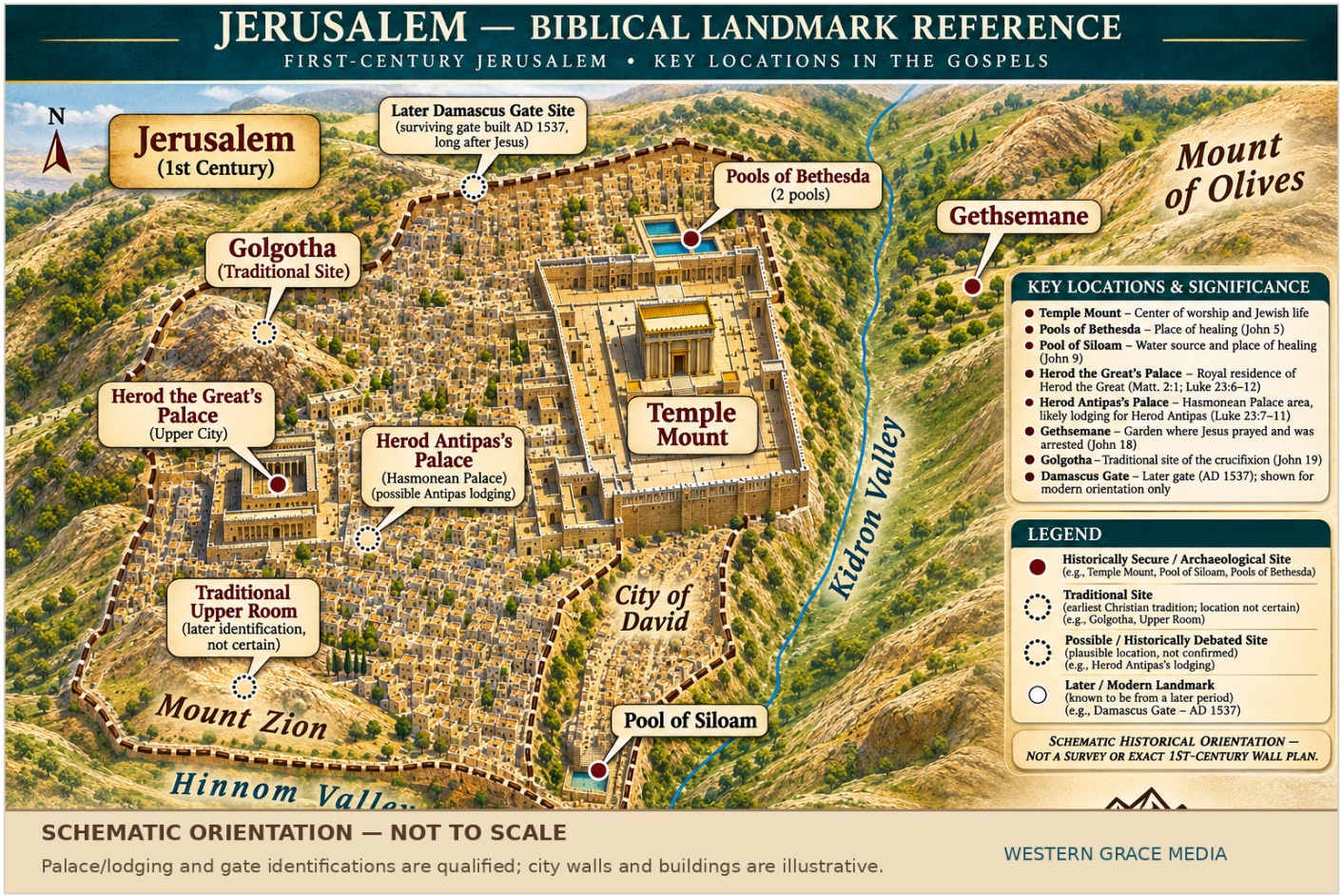
Mount of Olives: The eastern ridge gives orientation; John 13 does not mention it directly.

Passover: The coming feast supplies the time context; we should not invent a precise house site.

Map caution: The rust ring locates the broader Jerusalem vicinity, not the supper room.

Jerusalem — Biblical Landmark Reference

This reusable city atlas compares the Temple, the pools of Bethesda and Siloam, the two Herodian-era palace settings, Gethsemane, traditional Golgotha and the later Damascus Gate site. John 13 does not specify the location of the supper room.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL LOCATIONS, TRADITIONS & LATER LANDMARKS

Biblical pools: Bethesda is north of the Temple near the Sheep Gate (John 5); Siloam is south of the City of David (John 9).

Two palaces: Herod the Great built a western hill palace; Antipas may have lodged in the older Hasmonean palace. His Jerusalem residence is not securely established.

Damascus Gate: Shown as a modern orientation reference. The surviving gate dates to the 16th century, with an earlier Roman gate beneath it. Neither should be projected onto the AD 30 city as drawn.

John 13 and later events: The supper room is unidentified; the Mount Zion Upper Room is a later tradition. Gethsemane and Golgotha help orient the reader for John 18–19.

Relief map is original WGM art and schematic; no precise site coordinates or routes are claimed.

John 13 — The Servant King and the New Commandment

MAIN VERSE

John 13:34, WEB: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another.

BIG PICTURE

Jesus, fully aware of His authority and His approaching death, chooses humble service by washing the disciples' feet. He tells Peter that he must receive Jesus' washing, then makes servant-hearted love an example for every disciple. Judas's betrayal approaches; Jesus is troubled but not surprised. After Judas departs, He gives His followers a new commandment: to love one another as He has loved them. Peter's confidence is met with a warning that he will deny Jesus three times.

Jesus Loves to the End (13:1–5)

Knowing His hour and authority, Jesus washes His disciples' feet.

Peter Needs to Receive (13:6–11)

Jesus insists that Peter needs His washing and warns that not all are clean.

The Lord Gives an Example (13:12–17)

The Teacher and Lord commands humble service among His followers.

A Betrayer Foretold (13:18–20)

Scripture is fulfilled, and Jesus prepares His disciples to believe.

QUICK STUDY NOTES

The Chapter’s Major Movements

Troubled at the Table (13:21–25)

Jesus names the approaching betrayal, and the disciples are perplexed.

Judas Leaves (13:26–30)

The betrayer receives the morsel and goes out into the night.

Love as Jesus Has Loved (13:31–35)

Jesus connects His glory with a new commandment of sacrificial love.

Peter Will Deny Him (13:36–38)

Peter offers courageous promises; Jesus warns of his coming failure.

QUICK STUDY FLOW

Jesus knows His hour and serves

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Peter must receive the washing

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Follow the Lord’s example

↓

Jesus foretells betrayal

↓

Judas departs into the night

↓

The Son is glorified

↓

Love one another as Jesus has loved

↓

Peter is warned of denial

QUICK STUDY NOTES

Important Bible Words

Word / Phrase	Simple Meaning	Why It Matters
The hour	Jesus' appointed time of departure and the cross	His suffering unfolds within His mission.
Foot washing	A lowly act of hospitality and service	The Lord models humility and cleansing.
Clean	Purity and belonging to Christ	Jesus contrasts true cleanness with hidden betrayal.
Teacher and Lord	Jesus' recognized authority and identity	His authority gives weight to His service command.
Example	Pattern for faithful conduct	Knowing the truth should lead to action.
Betrayal	Disloyal handing over of a close companion	Jesus faces sin without being surprised by it.
Glory	The Son's identity and Father's greatness displayed	The approaching cross is not defeat.
New commandment	Love shaped by Jesus' own love	Christians are known by their conduct toward one another.
Denial	Disowning a relationship or allegiance	Peter's confidence alone cannot keep him faithful.

Which word or phrase in John 13 helps me understand Christlike service and love?

Translation Word Notes

Pronunciations are approximate classroom-style Biblical Greek. CAPITAL letters show the stressed syllable. Greek helps clarify meaning but is not required for understanding Scripture. NKJV/NIV/NLT phrases are brief comparisons; full Scripture quotations remain WEB.

Verse	Greek & pronunciation	NKJV	NIV	NLT	Meaning in context
13:1	telos TEH-los	to the end	to the end	to the very end	The full extent or completion of Jesus' love.
13:5	niptō NEEP-toh	wash	wash	wash	Physical washing that models humble care.
13:8	meros MEH-ros	part	part	belong to	Share or participation with Christ.
13:10	katharos kah-thah-ROS	clean	clean	clean	Cleansing and purity, with context pointing to Judas.
13:15	hypodeigma hoo-poh-DAYG-mah	example	example	example	A pattern to imitate, not a way to earn salvation.
13:16	doulos DOO-los	servant	servant	slave	A bondservant, not above his master.
13:17	makarios mah-KAH-ree-os	blessed	blessed	blessed	Favorable standing expressed in obedience.
13:21	tarassō tah-RAHS-soh	troubled	troubled	deeply troubled	Jesus experiences genuine distress.
13:31	doxazō dok-SAH-zoh	glorified	glorified	glorified	The Father and Son's glory revealed.
13:34	entolē en-toh-LAY	commandment	command	commandment	An authoritative direction from Christ.
13:34	agapaō ah-gah-PAH-oh	love	love	love	Love shaped by Jesus' sacrificial example.
13:38	arneomai ar-NEH-oh-my	deny	disown	deny	Repudiate an allegiance or relationship.

Word-study notes:

The Gospel Connection

John 13 takes place as Jesus' hour approaches. The Lord who came from God and returns to God voluntarily takes a servant's towel and washes His disciples' feet. Peter must learn to receive before he can imitate. The foot washing points to Jesus' humble love and anticipates the self-giving that will reach its climax at the cross. Even as Judas plans betrayal, Jesus remains faithful. He announces that the Son of Man will be glorified and commands His people to love one another as He has loved them. The good news is not that our own service makes us clean; Jesus saves sinners by His gracious work, and those who belong to Him are called to reflect His love in obedient action (John 3:16; 13:8, 34–35; 20:31).

Reflection: Am I receiving Christ's grace and showing His love through humble service?

A Short Prayer from John 13

Lord Jesus, You knew Your hour had come, yet You knelt to serve. Thank You for loving Your people to the end. Forgive my pride, resistance, and empty promises. Teach me to receive Your grace, serve with humility, and love other believers in ways that show You are Lord. In Your name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

QUICK STUDY COMPLETE

One Truth to Carry With You

The Lord of all stooped to serve me; because He has loved me, I must receive His grace and love others as He has loved me.

READY TO GO DEEPER — NEXT PAGE

Ready to Go Deeper?

This Deep Dive follows S.O.A.P.: Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. Begin with the complete WEB passage. Let the text set the terms of our study, then consider the explanation, respond personally, and pray.

S — Scripture

Read every verse slowly; note changes in speaker, setting, and what Jesus reveals about Himself.

O — Observation

What does John reveal about Jesus' love, authority, betrayal, service, and the meaning of discipleship?

A — Application

What should I believe, confess, obey, trust, or share in response to the passage?

P — Prayer

Respond prayerfully to what the passage actually says, not imagined motives or events.

Before I begin, what do I need to understand about Jesus' kingship, His cross, and the call to walk in the light?

Questions and repeated words to watch for:

JOHN 13:1–5

The Lord Takes the Servant’s Towel

S — Scripture

1 Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his time had come that he would depart
from this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
2 During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray
him,
3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came from God and
was going to God,
4 arose from supper, and laid aside his outer garments. He took a towel and wrapped a towel around
his waist.
5 Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the
towel that was wrapped around him.

John 13:1–5, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus knows His hour has arrived and loves His own to the end. His deliberate action comes from full knowledge of His divine mission, not from uncertainty about His authority.

He rises from the meal, lays aside His outer clothing, and washes His disciples’ feet. In this setting foot washing was ordinarily a lowly task; the Lord assumes a servant’s place.

John sets the humility of Jesus against the approaching betrayal. The chapter invites us to see His majesty and His service together.

My observations:

A — Application

What task of humble love am I avoiding because it seems beneath me?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, You possess all authority and yet chose to serve. Give me a humble heart and willing hands.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:6–11

Peter Resists the Washing

S — Scripture

6 Then he came to Simon Peter. He said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”
7 Jesus answered him, “You don’t know what I am doing now, but you will understand later.”
8 Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I don’t wash you, you have no part with me.”
9 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”
10 Jesus said to him, “Someone who has bathed only needs to have his feet washed, but is completely clean. You are clean, but not all of you.”
11 For he knew him who would betray him; therefore he said, “You are not all clean.”

John 13:6–11, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Peter is stunned that his Lord would wash his feet. Jesus tells him that the significance of His action will become clearer later and that Peter must receive His washing to have a part with Him.

The distinction between being bathed and having feet washed illustrates cleanness and ongoing need, though John does not provide a complete sacramental system here. Jesus also warns that not everyone in the room is clean, pointing to betrayal.

Faith must receive Christ’s gracious work. We cannot make ourselves clean by religious pride or insist that Christ serve us only in ways we understand.

My observations:

A — Application

When have I resisted receiving grace because I wanted to remain in control?

P — Prayer

Father, teach me to receive the cleansing only Christ can provide and to trust Him beyond my understanding.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:12–17

The Example of the Teacher and Lord

S — Scripture

12 So when he had washed their feet, put his outer garment back on, and sat down again, he said to
them, “Do you know what I have done to you?
13 You call me, ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord.’ You say so correctly, for so I am.
14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.
15 For I have given you an example, that you should also do as I have done to you.
16 Most certainly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, neither is one who is sent greater than
he who sent him.
17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

John 13:12–17, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

After washing the disciples’ feet, Jesus resumes His place and asks if they understand. They call Him Teacher and Lord, and He confirms that both titles are true.

Because the Lord served them, His followers ought to serve one another. The command has the weight of His example: knowing humble love is insufficient without practicing it.

The passage gives an ethical pattern for Christian fellowship; the example does not imply that our service can purchase salvation.

My observations:

A — Application

How will I put Jesus’ servant-hearted example into practice with a specific person this week?

P — Prayer

Lord, help me turn knowledge into acts of patient, practical love.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:18–20

Scripture and the Sender

S — Scripture

18 I don’t speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be
fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with me has lifted up his heel against me.’
19 From now on, I tell you before it happens, that when it happens, you may believe that I am he.
20 Most certainly I tell you, he who receives whomever I send, receives me; and he who receives me,
receives him who sent me.”

John 13:18–20, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus distinguishes His knowledge of His chosen disciples from the betrayal that fulfills the Scripture about a close companion who turned against the speaker (Psalm 41:9).

He tells them ahead of time so that, when betrayal takes place, they may believe His identity and confidence in God’s purpose.

Receiving those truly sent by Jesus is connected with receiving Jesus and the Father. This is not permission to treat any modern leader as unquestionable; true messengers remain accountable to Christ’s word.

My observations:

A — Application

How does Jesus’ knowledge of events strengthen my confidence without making me excuse sinful choices?

P — Prayer

Father, strengthen my trust in Your faithful word and keep me discerning about those who claim to speak for You.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:21–25

Troubled in Spirit at the Table

S — Scripture

21 When Jesus had said this, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, “Most certainly I tell you that one of you will betray me.”
22 The disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom he spoke.
23 One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was at the table, leaning against Jesus’ chest.
24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said to him, “Tell us who it is of whom he speaks.”
25 He, leaning back, as he was, on Jesus’ chest, asked him, “Lord, who is it?”

John 13:21–25, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus is deeply troubled and openly testifies that one of the disciples will betray Him. The disciples are confused about who He means.

John identifies one disciple by the description “whom Jesus loved.” Tradition often identifies this disciple as John, but the narrative does not name him here.

Jesus is not emotionally indifferent to betrayal. His truthful warning takes place amid the fellowship of a shared meal.

My observations:

A — Application

How can I respond faithfully to painful truth without pretending it does not hurt?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, You understand betrayal and grief. Help me to speak truth with patience and courage.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:26–30

Judas Goes Out into the Night

S — Scripture

26 Jesus therefore answered, “It is he to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.
27 After the piece of bread, then Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”
28 Now nobody at the table knew why he said this to him.
29 For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus said to him, “Buy what things we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.
30 Therefore having received that morsel, he went out immediately. It was night.

John 13:26–30, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus identifies the betrayer by giving a dipped piece of bread to Judas. John then reports Satan entering into Judas. Jesus tells him to do quickly what he is about to do.

The other disciples still misunderstand the exchange and assume it may concern purchases for the feast or alms for the poor.

Judas departs, and John adds, “It was night.” This is a real time marker that also resonates with the Gospel’s theme of darkness and rejection; the text does not remove Judas’s responsibility.

My observations:

A — Application

Where must I resist secret compromise before it develops into open betrayal?

P — Prayer

Lord, search my motives and lead me away from hidden sin toward repentance and truth.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:31–35

The New Commandment of Love

S — Scripture

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.
32 If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately.
33 Little children, I will be with you a little while longer. You will seek me, and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you can’t come,’ so now I tell you.
34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another.
35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:31–35, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

After Judas leaves, Jesus announces the glorification of the Son of Man and of God. The approaching cross is not an accident but the path through which His glory is displayed.

He speaks tenderly to the disciples as “little children” and gives them a new commandment: love one another as He has loved them.

The newness lies in the measure and pattern of love revealed in Jesus. Such love becomes a recognizable mark of His disciples, rather than an optional religious ornament.

My observations:

A — Application

Who needs Christlike love from me, even if it requires an inconvenient sacrifice?

P — Prayer

Jesus, teach me to love others by Your example, with truth and sacrifice rather than mere sentiment.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 13:36–38

Peter’s Confidence and Jesus’ Warning

S — Scripture

36 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered, “Where I am going, you can’t follow now, but you will follow afterwards.”
37 Peter said to him, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”
38 Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for me? Most certainly I tell you, the rooster won’t crow until you have denied me three times.

John 13:36–38, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Peter promises that he will lay down his life for Jesus. Jesus warns that Peter will deny Him three times before the rooster crows.

Peter’s willingness sounds sincere, but confidence in our own courage is not the same as perseverance. Jesus understands Peter’s weakness before it is exposed.

The scene leads toward Peter’s failure and eventual restoration later in John. It warns us against pride while keeping our eyes on the faithful Savior.

My observations:

A — Application

Where am I trusting my promises more than Jesus’ sustaining grace?

P — Prayer

Lord, free me from overconfidence. Teach me to depend on Your strength when my own resolve falters.

Pray this in your own words:

Hard Questions

Why did Jesus wash the disciples' feet when He knew He was their Lord?

John 13:3–5 emphasizes His full awareness of His authority. His humility expresses rather than contradicts His identity. His followers are to serve others without abandoning truth or responsibility.

Does foot washing become a command for every Christian to perform the same ritual?

Jesus commands His followers to imitate His humble service (13:14–17). Some evangelical churches practice literal foot washing; others emphasize the underlying example. Both should make Christlike love visible rather than treat it as a way to earn salvation.

What does "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me" mean?

Peter must receive what Jesus gives rather than assert self-sufficiency. Evangelicals see cleansing and participation in Christ here. The passage does not lay out a full baptismal or sacramental doctrine on its own.

Why does Jesus say that not everyone is clean?

John explicitly connects the warning to His knowledge of Judas's betrayal (13:10–11). It is not an excuse to speculate about the hidden state of ordinary people.

Questions and study notes:

Hard Questions (continued)

Did Scripture force Judas to betray Jesus?

Jesus cites Psalm 41:9 while knowing betrayal will occur (13:18–19). The text affirms fulfillment without calling Judas innocent or inviting fatalism about our choices.

Why was Jesus troubled in spirit?

John 13:21 records His genuine grief before betrayal. The eternal Son is also truly human; faithful obedience does not require emotional numbness.

Who is the disciple whom Jesus loved?

John 13:23 does not name him. Christian tradition commonly identifies him with the apostle John, but the identification is a historical inference rather than an explicit detail here.

What does “Satan entered into him” mean?

John reports spiritual evil working through Judas’s betrayal (13:27). The passage does not provide a detailed mechanism or deny Judas’s responsibility for what he does.

Questions and study notes:

Hard Questions (continued)

Why does John say “It was night”?

The phrase identifies the time of Judas’s departure (13:30) and fits John’s recurring light-and-darkness imagery. Treat the symbolic resonance as interpretation, not as a claim the time reference was fictional.

What is new about the command to love?

The Old Testament already teaches love (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus provides the decisive pattern and measure: “Just as I have loved you” (13:34). His self-giving love defines discipleship.

Does Christian love mean approving everything someone does?

No. John places love alongside truth, cleansing, and faithfulness. Jesus Himself gives honest warnings and exposes betrayal while continuing to act in love.

Why would Peter deny Jesus after promising to die for Him?

Peter overestimates his own strength (13:37–38). Jesus knows this weakness and later restores Peter (John 21). Our confidence belongs in the faithful Lord, not merely our promises.

Questions and study notes:

Reflection

Which act of humble service would best reflect Jesus’ example in my home or church?

Where do I need to receive Christ’s grace instead of defending my pride?

How would others recognize Christ’s love in the way I treat fellow believers?

What can Peter’s warning teach me about humility and dependence on God?

A Prayer to Love as Jesus Loved

Lord Jesus, You are Teacher and Lord, yet You washed the feet of Your disciples. Thank You for Your patient, self-giving love and for the saving work toward which this chapter points. Forgive me for insisting on my own strength when I need Your cleansing. Give me discernment about hidden sin, humility when I am corrected, and courage to practice love when it costs me. Protect my heart from betrayal and careless confidence. Make our churches places where Your truth is spoken and Your love is seen. May people recognize Your disciples by the way we serve one another. In Your precious name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

ONE TRUTH TO CARRY WITH YOU

The Lord of all stooped to serve me; because He has loved me, I must receive His grace and love others as He has loved me.

Final Notes