



## Week 21 Discussion Questions

**Text:** John 13:21-38

Icebreaker: If you had to define/describe "love" in only three words, what would they be?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out from the text or sermon?
2. In John 13:34-35, Jesus tells his disciples he is giving them a new commandment. Look back at Leviticus 19:18 and 19:34 and discuss what makes this a "new commandment" from Jesus.  
The newness of this commandment comes in the fact that we now have a perfect example of what it means to love. The commandment is expanded from "loving as yourself" to "loving as Jesus has loved you."
3. How should we define "love" with Christ as our example? In this case, what does it mean to love others as Christ loved us?  
Jesus love is sacrificial, self-giving, toward the glory of God, to the point of laying down his own life. Loving others in this way may take a radical reorientation of how we move through life. Our world is set up in such a way that promotes putting oneself first and seeking one's own glory. Loving as Christ loved us is seeking God's glory and possibly putting other's needs above our wants.
4. Assess the actions of Jesus' disciples in these verses. What is considered a faithful disciple of Jesus and what is considered betrayal of Jesus?  
"people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." This expects a self-less love. Judas' actions display a selfishness, in which he looks out for himself over and above those around him. His self-seeking glory is what blinds him and leads him to betrayal.
5. Both Judas and Peter will betray Jesus, and ultimately, we all betray him in one way or another. What difference do you see between Peter and Judas' betrayal and the ending of both their stories?  
While both (all?) disciples betray Jesus, after his resurrection when all truth was revealed, Jesus truth drew Peter and he once again sought after Jesus' glory, but Judas betrayal lead to despair and he never turned back toward Jesus.
6. Judas was one of Jesus' twelve disciples, was in close proximity to Jesus' for a significant amount of time, and witnessed all the signs Jesus performed throughout his ministry. What does Judas' story reveal to us about what it means to follow Jesus?  
Proximity to things of Jesus is not the same as proximity to Jesus. Attending church and reading your Bible do not save you. Recognition of Jesus' truth and allowing his Spirit to change and shape your heart will also change the way you live. As we will see in John 15, our faith in Jesus will bring fruit.

7. What does Jesus' knowledge about Judas' and Peter's actions reveal about his character?  
Jesus, like God, is fully sovereign. He is in control of all things, and nothing comes to pass that he does not know.
8. What does it look like to recognize God's complete sovereignty and simultaneously hold Judas (and ourselves) accountable for his actions?  
While it is difficult for us to fully grasp how this works in our finitude, it is important for us to recognize that Scripture claims God's sovereignty overall. It is a characteristic of God we affirm. Yet, Scripture also makes it obvious that we are held accountable for our actions. There are various views on how these things work together, and you can discuss those if you'd like. But at the end of the day, it is important that we affirm both of these truths from Scripture.
9. What has betrayal of Jesus looked like in your own life? What hope do you have in Jesus in the midst of that betrayal?
10. What keeps you from laying your life down for the Lord as he has done for you?
11. John 13:35 says, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Sometimes loving others is difficult because it always requires sacrifice. Who comes to mind when you think of someone difficult to love and what would it look like to lay yourself down to love them despite that?
12. Reflect on your own experiences in life. What difference has the love of Jesus made in your life, whether through his life or through his love in others toward you?