

I WILL COME AGAIN

JOHN 13:31-14:6

(Prepared by Gene Thompson using ETB Materials from LifeWay)

1. When was it hard for you to say goodbye to someone? (Leaving for a yearlong deployment in the military. Sending our kids off to college or to a job in a different state or country.)

2. How does knowing the time of a person's return from a trip, deployment, or errand ease anxiety? (Somehow knowing a general time or a specific time eases the anxiety.)

Assurance of a return produces the confidence to endure. We also should have confidence as we anticipate Jesus' return. In today's session, Jesus let His disciples know He would be leaving, but He also promised to come back.

3. What is your favorite hymn about Jesus' second coming? ("Coming Again.")

Today's study takes place the night before Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus shared some last words with His disciples as part of His "Farewell Discourse." The meal likely took place in what has come to be known as "The Upper Room." Here Jesus initiated the first "Lord's Supper."

After everyone was comfortable at the table, Jesus got up and washed all of the disciple's feet. Then He sat down and as they were eating predicted who would betray Him. Then He began to teach them.

HONOR THROUGH LOVE! Read John 13:31-35

1. How is the Son of Man glorified? (Through His obedience to the Father's will. The Father is glorified by the honor the Son's obedience brings to Him!)

During our study last week, one of our teachers (Brenda Jagger) pointed out that in the center of "obedience" is the word "die." We learned last week that true disciples must die to self in order to live for Christ through obedience to the Father's will.

2. What did the cross have to do with Christ's glory? (He was obedient unto death, even death on a cross. See Phil. 2:8.)

The crucifixion would destroy Satan's power and pave the way for sinners to find forgiveness. Through His death, both the Son and the Father would be glorified.

3. How does the term "little children" in verse 33 characterize the relationship between Jesus and His followers? (It gives a feeling of intimacy, as a father would address his family. We can certainly relate to the intimacy of a parent with their children.)

4. How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus said they could not come with Him? (This was a very difficult time. They had sacrificed everything to follow Jesus and now I can't go with Him. What are we to do?)

5. What was the new command did Jesus gave them? (To love one another!)

6. What is the new standard for loving others? (Jesus said, "Just as I have loved you.")

Wow! Jesus upped the ante! I might be able to love you like you love me, but the way Jesus loved, I'm not too sure about that. Who am I willing to give my life for? It's like someone inviting me to jump across the Grand Canyon.

7. Who is “one another?” (One writer says, “He is talking about loving other people who have committed their lives to following Him.” I personally don’t think Jesus loves me any more than He loves lost people. So, I believe Jesus meant we are to love everybody as He loves them! That is even more difficult.)
8. What does the way we love indicate about our relationship to Jesus? (Others will see and know that we are His disciples.)

Here is the key: Jesus gave us this seemingly impossible challenge not to discourage us but to lead us to find the power to love others in Him. If I’m going to love as Jesus loved, I need the power that only Jesus can give.

Jesus challenged His disciples to love Him and to love one another. Sometimes we think we love Jesus until we face an opportunity to compromise.

HONOR THROUGH LOYALTY! Read John 13:36-38

Peter tried to validate his loyalty to Jesus.

1. Do you think Peter was sincere?

In Matthew and Mark Peter’s statement is even more emphatic than it is here.

2. How might a person’s good intentions get derailed? (We engage our mouth before we engage our brain. We may even be sincere but fail when called to action. We might find ourselves in a situation where everyone else is opposed to Jesus and His teachings and we are asked to voice what we believe.)
3. How can we honor Jesus through our loyalty to Him? (Giving our all to Him in all situations shows our love and commitment to Him.)
4. When have you made a promise, you really couldn’t keep?
5. How did that make you feel? (Like I have betrayed that person.)

Jesus knew that Peter did not yet grasp what laying down His life entailed. Jesus declared that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed.

6. While we know the rest of the story, the disciples did not. What do you imagine they were thinking as Jesus and Peter talked? (I’m keeping my mouth shut!)

Jesus’ conversation with Peter revolved around his desire to follow Jesus and Jesus’ insistence that he couldn’t. But Jesus wasn’t closing the door forever. He promised a day when they would all be together again.

HONOR THROUGH BELIEVING! Read John 14:1-6

1. What are some things we learn about Heaven from these verses? (Jesus is preparing it. There are plenty of rooms. Jesus will escort us to our rooms and welcome us there. We will be with Him.)

Heaven is indeed a place, but even more, it is an eternal relationship with our Creator. As Adam and Eve fellowshiped with the Father in the Garden of Eden, so shall we fellowship with Him in Heaven forever!

2. Did Thomas have a valid concern?

3. Why is Jesus trying to console His disciples? (Have you seen the look of uncertainty in the eyes of a toddler when his mom leaves him with a friend or relative for a few hours? She assures him, "Don't worry, in just a little while I will be back for you." That's Jesus here.)

4. What are some things that challenge our belief as we try to live out our faith? (Prayers not answered as we wanted or expected. While earth is but a speck of dust in the infinite universe, why should God care for me?)

Even though the disciples couldn't grasp it at the time, millions of believers have found peace in these verses.

5. Why is verse 6 so threatening to so many people, even some so-called Christians? (It is exclusive to all other beliefs. And yet it is inclusive of all mankind who choose to trust in and follow Christ.)

6. How does Jesus being the way, the truth, and the life define why a person must believe in Jesus alone for salvation? (He is not just the only way there is nothing to be added. His sacrifice on the cross is all sufficient!)

All people have eternal existence (some, unfortunately, will exist in separation from God in hell), but only those who believe in Christ have a quality of life called "eternal life."

SUMMARY AND CHALLENGE!

1. What are some things people do to honor God? (Live a morally upright life. Serve others. Attend church services and Bible studies.)

2. What can we do to bring honor more fully to God?

3. Is there a time that you made a total commitment of your life to Christ and His mission for your life?

4. What changes might you need to make in order to live up to that commitment?

Close in prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to teach us how to live. Ask Him to help us love others, remain loyal, and strengthen our belief in Him while waiting.