

CHRIST CHURCH SMALL GROUPS

The Fifth Sunday of Easter – The Week beginning May 18, 2025



Read John 13:31-35:

At the last supper, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Background: This gospel is taken from John’s account of the last supper. It differs from the others because John leaves out any mention of the bread and wine and speaks rather of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. Our text begins with Judas departing the scene and continues with Jesus’ words to his disciples. He is explaining to them that the events that are about to unfold, i.e., his passion and death, are not a disaster but rather the culmination of his life’s work. His faithfulness to his task of revealing God has brought him to this point, and so God is glorified in all that will unfold. Even though it appears at first sight that evil triumphs, nothing could be further from the truth, for on the cross, Jesus will reveal the glory of God who has “loved us to the end.” That is why the commandment that Jesus now gives is so important. The disciples must love one another in the way that Jesus has loved them. This is what his life’s work has been: to draw the disciples into the relationship of love that Jesus shares with his Father.

Talking Points:

- The word “glorify” is a Biblical term indicating the “victory of God’s power.” Compare and contrast Jesus’ glorification with previous examples from the Old Testament.
- This speech is part of Jesus’ “Farewell Discourse” to his followers. How would they be reacting to his words? Why does he tell them that they cannot come to where he is going?
- Jesus gives them a new commandment “that you love one another.” Can you remember the ten commandments? How are they related to this new commandment?
- How do we love one another? When is it easy? When is it hard? Is there a hierarchy of loving?

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father’s sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.