



## ***That you may believe...*** **Leaders Guide for Week 11**

(Times are approximate) – start time: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Welcome**

- You might ask people to share one new discovery, encouragement, or challenge as a result studying John.

(+6 min)

### **Opening prayer**

- A good idea as always is to seek the Holy Spirit to guide you and your group through this lesson.
- His words, His teachings, His revealing, His guidance.

(+2 min)

### **Opening Comments**

- Chapters 1-12 John has described the teachings and signs of Jesus.
- From this point (Chapter 13) on, John describes the Glory of Jesus Christ.
- We need to read the final chapters with a feel for the tension and emotion of Jesus and His disciples.
- We need to *understand, identify, and feel* the context of Jesus' teaching.
- Chapter 13 opens with Jesus alone with His disciples and having a private meal together.
- The synoptic gospels refer to this as the Last Supper.
- What does Jesus **know** about Himself and His disciples at this point?
- He **knew** it was His time (**13:1**) to be humiliated, but He also **knew** it was His time to be glorified.
- A mere man may have become prideful but we see humility not pride in Jesus.
- He **knew** His own position, that He had been given all authority.
- He also **knew** that He came from His Father and would return to Him. (**13:2**)
- He **knew** the one who would betray Him – Judas Iscariot. (**13:2,11**)
- Even knowing all these things, Jesus dearly loved all 12 of His disciples!
- In Jesus' time, the Roman custom of reclining on couches at supper had been adopted by most people.
- The Roman table was combined with couches called a *triclinium* – a U shaped table, the center was open for the server, around three sides of the U shape were cushions.
- Reclining was done beside one another with the upper body resting on the left arm, head raised, a cushion under the arm and the body stretched out.
- If they wanted to speak in secret they would lean upon the man's breast next to them and no one could hear what was said.
- It was not like the painting of Leonardo De Vinci's Last Supper.
- Not having a slave present, the disciple's feet hadn't been washed as they entered (the custom).
- They weren't about to wash one another's feet!
- So they reclined with dirty feet – surely they were above washing feet!
- What happened next is the fullest expression of love from our Lord besides His dying on the cross.
- He removed His outer garment and left his inner tunic on and wrapped Himself with a towel – He was now dressed as a slave!

(+5 min) What enabled Jesus to do this? He **knew** who He was – He didn't have to prove anything!

- He was God Almighty and wanted the disciples to see what He was willing to do for them!
- There is much symbolism in this act of Jesus washing the disciples feet:
- 1) Jesus rose from the table -> Jesus rose from His throne of glory in Heaven.
- 2) He removed His outer garment -> He laid aside His glory and came from His Father in heaven.
- 3) He girded Himself with a towel -> He girded Himself with mans humanity.
- 4) He pours water into a basin -> in just a few hours; He will pour out His blood to cleanse sinful hearts.
- 5) When He finishes washing their feet, He clothes Himself again -> He returns to His Father.
- Jesus wasn't doing theatrics – He was teaching these 12 men He loved the need to have a *servant spirit*!
- Peter loves Jesus and therefore, being Peter, he asks that his feet, hands, and head be washed.
- Jesus identifies the difference between a *bath* and a *foot washing* to Peter.
- Regarding a *bath*, Jesus is saying we become totally, fully cleansed when we accept Him as our Lord and Savior, repent (turn away from our sins) and ask His forgiveness of our sins.
- He can do this because of His shedding blood on the cross.
- Jesus said not all were clean within this circle of disciples.
- Regarding the *foot washing* Jesus said only Peter's feet needed cleansing – this symbolized our need to ask forgiveness for the sins we commit daily – we must come to Jesus and ask for His symbolic “*foot*” cleansing.
- We cannot walk in this fallen world as humans and not expect to pick up dirt on our feet (sin).
- Jesus taught we are to *wash one another's feet (13:14)* meaning believers are to serve one another.
- We see that none of the disciples knew who Jesus was talking about when He mentioned a betrayer.
- Judas had fooled the disciples for nearly three years now.
- Do you see Jesus' love for Judas? He doesn't expose him, He doesn't reprimand him.
- Jesus chose Judas to be with Him, He taught him, gave him responsibility – treasurer.
- In the KJV verse **13:26** uses the word “*sop*” – it was custom for the host at a banquet to take a piece of bread, dip it in the sauce, and present it to the guest of honor.
- Jesus made Judas His guest of honor by this gesture.
- He is extending to him the token of friendship.
- Judas was at a crossroad – Jesus keeps the door open for Judas up to the very end!
- Even in the garden Jesus will call Judas “*friend*” (**Matt. 26:50**) – still keeping the door open!
- Judas, for unknown reasons, allowed Satan to have him and he left to do the devil's dirty work.
- Jesus set a remarkable example for how we are to treat betrayers: He didn't expose Judas, He gave him responsibility, He washed Judas' feet, He offered a truce with the piece of bread, He made him the guest of honor, and He continued to call him friend even in the garden!
- What a wonderful chapter – let's move into our study lesson now:  
(+7 min)

### Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~31 min)

**This week's title:** Passion Week “*I Am The Way*” - **John 13:1-14:14**

**Highlighted verses:** “*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another.*” **John 13:34**

**Jesus answered,** “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*”  
**John 14: 6**

### Day 1: Read John 13:1-14:14

1. Read John 13:1–14:14 at least once, jotting down initial observations.

- Share what people discovered in doing this scan of these verses.

(<+3 min)

### Day 2: Read John 13

- You may want to encourage people to ask themselves the questions in this helpful hint as they study and see if the hint improves their understanding.
- Highlight *briefly* some points you find helpful (and maybe want to try or have used).

(+2 min)

In the last two study hints *reading* and *understanding* were discussed. At the *read* stage a question we ask is, “What does this say?” The *understanding* stage listed several resources that may help you have a better *understanding* for answering the first question. The next stage is *comprehension* and a question we ask here is, “What does this mean?” To answer this question, we *look for biblical principles* that transcend time and are transferable to our day. If we neglect this stage we run the risk of misinterpreting, and therefore misapplying, the passage. Moving from *reading/understanding* to *comprehension* is a big step and sometimes seems unmanageable. So we need to take smaller steps. We do this by identifying the following where applicable: *people, place, theme, main idea*, and finally one or more *principles*. Identifying *people* and *places* is rather simple. **A good question for the theme is, “What’s happening?”** This is where a study Bible or commentary may help. For **identifying the main idea**, ask these questions: “What was the intended message for the original audience?” “What did the people in the passage learn?” “What did God want them to do?” and “What was God’s solution to the situation?” After discovering the *main idea*, the next step is identifying one or more *principles*. Questions to help do this are: “What is the message for all people?” “What are the timeless truths?” and “What is the moral of the story?” Once you have discovered one or more *principles*, what do you do with that knowledge? That will be our next helpful hint, *application*.

1. Why do you think Jesus washed His disciple’s feet instead of simply giving them a sermon? What do you think Jesus is teaching them?

- Part 1: The old saying, “A picture (personal action) speaks louder than words.”
- Once heard it said, “Share the gospel with others and use words when necessary!”
- Part 2: Humility and servitude

(<+2 min)

2. Why do you suppose it was difficult for Peter to let Jesus wash his feet? What did Jesus mean when He said, “Unless I wash you, you have no part of Me”? (13:8)

- First part: Unknown for sure but could have been pride, love for Jesus, reverence for Jesus, etc..
- Second part: Unless the Lamb of God has taken away a person’s sin, has washed that person, he or she has no part with Him.

(<+2 min)

### Day 3: Read John 14:1-14

1. Read John 14:6. What did Jesus mean when He declared:

a) *"I am the way?"*

- Jesus is the only way to God. The way to God is through the person of Jesus.

(<+2 min)

b) *"I am the truth?"*

- Jesus embodies the supreme revelation of God. What Jesus teaches is absolute truth.

(<+2 min)

c) *"I am the life?"*

- Eternal life only comes through believing in Jesus.

(<+2 min)

2. **Read John 14:6-7.** How do these verses answer the question, *"Are there many ways to God?"*

- D. A. Carson: *"No One, Jesus insists, comes to the Father except through me. That is the necessary stance behind all fervent evangelism."*<sup>1</sup>

(<+3 min)

### Day 4: Read John 20:31

Consider how **John 13:1–14:14** relates to John's purpose in writing this Gospel. *"...that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).*

1. One of the prevalent themes in Jesus' teaching is eternal life. What do you observe about eternal life from **John 14:1-4**?

- Jesus is going away to prepare a place for them and He will come and get them.
- *"My Father's house"* refers to heaven
- Ample provision has been made for every believer
- When Jesus says, *"you know the way"*, He means His disciples know Him.

(<+4 min)

2. **Read John 14: 8-14.** Jesus says to Phillip, *"Don't you know me?" (14:9)* What did Jesus want Phillip to believe?

- Jesus was both pleased and saddened by Philip's request: pleased by Philip's earnestness and saddened by his obtuseness.
- Jesus' union with the Father was so natural that He was astonished that Philip had not observed it.
- *"I am in the Father, and ... the Father is in me" (14:10)* was His description of the relationship both in instructing the public and in His final prayer to the Father.
- For this reason He could say, *"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." (14:9)*

(<+3 min)

### Day 5: Read John 13:1–14:14

1. Consider what Jesus was teaching His disciples by washing their feet. How do you apply this teaching?

- Personal question but one we all need to answer.

(<+3 min)

2. These passages teach us to love one another. They also teach us the truth of who Jesus Christ is, *"I am the truth...no one comes to the Father except through Me."* How does love always affirm truth? How does truth always affirm love?

- An opinion question but allow some discussion – suggest they use the Scriptures as their standard for answering the question. May even suggest they share some verses from this chapter to support their answers.

(+3 min)

### Closing Comments

- Due to a lack of time we are not able to cover, in much detail, this wonderful Gospel of John.
- Here are two verses that should not be overlooked in chapter 13:
- **13:31-32** there are four statements of glorification: 1) *Son of Man is glorified* – Jesus is glorified as man's new humanity begins with Him, like a new Adam; 2) *God is glorified in Him* as His purpose for man is seen in Jesus' perfection; 3) *God will glorify the Son* Himself since Jesus Himself had His own glory before becoming a man, but now God is about to give Him a second glory, that of being the Son of Man; 4) *Will glorify Him at once* refers to His resurrection and ascension which are in succession without interruption.
- You may have wondered why **Chapter 14** opens with Jesus' statement about not being troubled.
- Remember just a few verses back Jesus Himself was troubled – **13:21** concerning His betrayer.
- *"Set your heart at ease"* is a better translation – the disciples were becoming discouraged – there was a betrayer in their midst, Peter's denial, and they can't go where Jesus is going!
- Next we see Jesus' *purpose* for His departure: To make a permanent place where He could welcome them and His *promise* that *"I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am"* (**14:2-3**)
- Notice, we don't go there on our own but He takes us there! His return is as certain as His departure!
- We have seen "calculating Philip" during the feeding of 5 thousand where he calculated the cost, where to buy food, how much food to buy – many are like practical "calculating Philip."
- Jesus gives Philip two reasons why he should know Jesus as God: 1) Jesus said to believe His words because He said they were not His own but the Fathers' (and Philip heard them); 2) Jesus says to believe in the works *"miracles"* themselves (Philip had seen them).
- In closing, **14:13-14** is a great promise of Jesus, it's a thrilling promise and it applies to each true believer.
- Often there is confusion with what Jesus said in verse **14** so maybe this will help.
- *"The power of the disciples originated in prayer. Jesus could hardly have made more emphatic the declaration that whatever they should ask in His name, He would do. The phrase "in my name," however, is not a talisman for the command of supernatural energy. He did not wish it to be used as a magical charm like an Aladdin's lamp. It was both a guarantee, like the endorsement on a check, and a limitation on the petition; for He would grant only such petitions as could be presented consistently with His character and purpose. In prayer we call on Him to work out His purpose, not simply to gratify our whims. The answer is promised so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. The disciples' obedience to Him will be the test of their love."*<sup>2</sup>
- We must be careful we don't get carried away with this statement because there are four conditions to actually enjoy Christ's promise:
- 1) We must have *faith in Jesus* – **14:2** – this means more than just believing He existed – it means He must be your Savior – you must surrender your life to Him – He must be at the center of your life.
- 2) We must *pray* – we need to pray specifically and expect God to answer – we need to *believe!*

- 3) Our lives should be marked by *an obedient love for Christ* – we are to bring glory to Him in what we say, what we do, how we act, in the many facets of our lives.
- 4) We must be *empowered by Christ's own Spirit* - this is the (*Holy Spirit*) – we will study about Him in chapters 16 – 17, but here is the point, Jesus said it was not His words He spoke but those of His Father (**14:10**)
- It seems His teachings are that we should echo what He says – “the words we speak are not to be our own, but from the Spirit who dwells in us” – Do you know that if you are a true believer, the Holy Spirit dwells in you?
- You received Him the instant you received/accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
- A last remark for all of us – “believers should desire to do greater things for the Kingdom” Do we? (+8 min)

### Closing Prayer

- Try to include something you have heard from your group as an encouragement, strengthening, or application for all to apply. (+1 min)

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<sup>1</sup> D. A. Carson, “The Gospel According the John,” page 492

<sup>2</sup> Zondervan Reference Software, Zondervan Publishing House, “Expositor’s Bible Commentary, New Testament,” 1998