

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*  
John 13:34-35

## **Relevant Studies—“24!” (Hours Before the Cross)**

### **Lesson Two—Betrayal and Denial**

In Lesson One (covering the first half of chapter 13 in the Gospel of John) we saw Jesus lay aside His royalty and take the place of a slave by washing His disciples’ feet. (Recall that this is a picture of our ongoing need for forgiveness and cleansing.)

Now as we study the second half of chapter 13 in Lesson Two, we will see that Jesus clearly understood what was about to happen to Him—He was fully aware of Judas’ betrayal (that would lead to both their deaths: Judas’ by suicide, and Jesus’ by crucifixion).

### **Days One and Two—The Heartbreak of Betrayal**

**Just as when Judas betrayed Him, when anyone betrays the Lord, His heart is cut to the core, because a soul is being lost.**

1. Read John 13:18-38, referring back to verses 18-21 as you work through Days One and Two.
2. Read 2 Samuel 16:20-17:4 along with Psalm 41:4-9.

**Jesus’ quote: In John 13:18, Jesus quoted from Psalm 41, using David’s betrayal by a close and trusted friend as an analogy of His own betrayal by Judas—one of His 12 chosen and trusted disciples. It is likely that David was referring to Ahithophel, his close and trusted friend who betrayed him in the account in 2 Samuel. Notice the similarities in the outcomes for each of the betrayers (Judas and Ahithophel)? Judas hung himself and Ahithophel hung himself. Each man died alone, ruined, hopeless, and in their sin. Betrayal is an ugly sin and has ugly consequences.**

3. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend? This friend may be very close to you—perhaps even a spouse. Nothing is quite like the heartbreak of betrayal. Share a time when you were betrayed and how you dealt with it. Can you identify just a little with Jesus? Explain.

4. Have any of you ever betrayed Jesus in your hearts? That is a horrible question—of course not! Well, let’s think about this a little: We love Jesus and follow Him, but are there times when we choose to reject Him and His Word and go our own way? The Bible calls this adultery. The Church is “the Bride of Christ”, and we sometimes choose to walk away from Jesus—our “Groom”—and turn to someone or something else. Frankly, no one is innocent of this. You do not need to write this down (unless you choose to), but think of a time when you knew you were betraying Jesus in your heart and how you felt.
  
5. Rather than despair and self-condemnation (like Judas and Ahithophel), according to 1 John 1:9, how are we to handle times like these?

### **The Prediction of Betrayal**

6. Referring to John 13:21, how do you think Jesus felt knowing Judas was going to betray Him? (When you answer this, remember Jesus’ humanity and empathize with how “troubled” He was.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Read Matthew 27:3-5. Do you think Judas knew what was going to happen to Jesus? Write your thoughts below.

### **Day Three—A Chance To Repent**

1. Read John 13:21-27 once more. (Remember—the more you read a chapter, passage, or verse, the more its truth will come to light.)
  
2. I will talk about this more in the lecture, but does it seem like the disciples just didn’t get it about Judas? Even after Jesus told John, did he really get it? Why do you think this is?

**John 13:26-27 is a very important passage, although it is puzzling to some because it appears that the disciples still did not know who the betrayer was. This was the last chance for Judas to repent—there would be no more opportunities. Jesus was appealing to him in a very special way:**

**Jesus’ giving of the piece of bread to Judas has special significance in this encounter. Traditionally done by the host to the guest of honor at the table, Jesus was showing special attention and affection toward Judas. (Notice that Judas was also given the place of honor beside Jesus at the table.) Jesus’ act of affection actually turned suspicion away from Judas, because by doing it, He was in effect saying “Judas means something special to Me.” The act also gave Judas a chance to repent: he would either turn to Christ, or to the world—the decision was his.**

3. Read Acts 3:19 and 8:22 and comment on what Jesus would have been saying to Judas. Then read verse John 13:27b and explain what Judas’ choice was.
4. Read James 1:13-15. Will you prayerfully examine your own heart at this time? Is the Lord calling you to repentance in any area of your life? If so, maybe it is a seemingly small thing that you do not want to let go of? Possibly it could be leading to some larger things, and the Lord is warning you. Look beyond the “now” and play out the worst possible consequences. Make a decision to humble yourself before the Lord and ask for forgiveness. This can be just between you and Jesus.

### **Days Four and Five—The Safeguard Against Betrayal: Love One Another**

1. Read John 13:31-38. Refer to verse 31, and see if you can, explain what Jesus is saying. (This is a challenge.)
2. Read 1 Peter 2:24 and explain what this means in light of what Jesus (in His last day on earth) is about to do.

3. Read John 13:33-34. Write in your own words what Jesus is saying to His disciples in these two verses. Why do these verses need to be read together? (This may seem hard to answer but I want you to think about it. If it is too difficult, leave it blank and fill it in when you go to class.) .
  
4. There are times when believers feel a need for Jesus' physical presence. Jesus even told the disciples that they would seek His presence. Because we are human, we sometimes need a brother or sister in the Lord who is there for us, and loves us with the supernatural love of Jesus. That is why we are commanded to love one another.
  - a. Do you have a friend that you know loves you with a supernatural love—someone who would lay down his or her life for you? Who is there when you need her? Share a time when a friend (or friends) was there for you in your greatest time of need.
  
  - b. Are you that kind of a friend to others? Ponder this in your heart and think of times when possibly you could have been a better friend. What will you do in order to improve?
  
  - c. We have the Holy Spirit, and He leads us and guides us. But sometimes we need someone with skin—Jesus knew this. Churches and Christians are known for their tendency to fuss and argue (with each other and outsiders). What does this tell us about Jesus' admonishment to love one another (v. 35)?
  
  - d. "As I have loved you" is the key phrase in this verse. What is Jesus saying in light of the context of both of these verses?
  
  - e. Do you want people to believe your story and your message? What is the best way to guarantee this? Write out any thoughts you have in the context of Jesus' love.

### **Betrayal versus Denial**

5. Read John 13:36-38. These closing verses between Peter and Jesus reveal important differences between Peter and Judas. Earlier we saw Judas coldly betray Jesus, and now we see that Peter is going to disown Him. Read John 13:10 once more, then list the differences between Peter and Judas.
  
6. Peter did not yet understand the supernatural love of Christ. He thought he loved Jesus, and he did—but with human understanding and emotions. What did Peter say to Jesus when he was told that he could not go where Jesus was going (verse 37)? Did Peter mean that? Explain.
  
7. When Jesus told Peter that he would disown Him three times, do you think Peter believed Him?
  
8. Do you believe you would die for the Lord? I am not speaking of physical death—but simply dying to your own desires, needs, and ambitions, to live for Christ above all? What would it take to be able to answer this in the way you would like? What would you have to give up, change, or omit from your life?