



John 13:31-35

31 When Judas had gone Jesus said:

‘Now has the Son of Man been glorified, and in him God has been glorified. 32 If God has been glorified in him, God will in turn glorify him in himself, and will glorify him very soon.

33 My little children, I shall not be with you much longer. 34 I

give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. 35 By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.’

Other readings: Acts 14:21-27; Psalm 144(145)Apocalypse 21:1-5

One of the particular features of the Gospel of John is the discourse given by Jesus at the Last Supper. It is remarkable that five whole chapters of the gospel are dedicated to these words of Jesus, which are often referred to as the ‘farewell discourse’. Along with other extensive teaching of Jesus in the Gospel of John, these speeches provide rich material for Christian reflection throughout the Easter period.

This passage is in two parts. Verses 31 and 32 follow on from the departure of Judas from the company of the disciples and of Jesus. John had written in verse 30: ‘As soon as Judas had taken the piece of bread he went out. Night had fallen.’ Judas departs into the night, where evil is plotted. By contrast, Jesus speaks of his glorification.

The word for ‘glory’, *doxa* in Greek, appears in the Prologue to John’s gospel. Contemplating the whole mystery of the coming of the Son of God, the evangelist writes that ‘we have seen his glory’. The ‘glory’ of Christ is the whole mystery by which he reveals the true nature of the Father, the true nature of God. This ‘glory’ is not fully revealed until the ‘hour’ of Jesus, the time of his cross and resurrection. In his death and resurrection the ‘glory’ of God, the self-giving, loving-kindness of God, is indeed revealed. Verse 31 uses words related to ‘glory’ on five occasions. The glory of the Son shows the glory of the Father.

Since we have been reborn in the death and resurrection of Christ, since we too have somehow ‘seen his glory’, then our lives are changed. We live according to the ‘new commandment’ Jesus speaks about in the second part of the gospel. The love we practise imitates the love of Christ, the love seen in the glory of his death and resurrection, a self-giving love which is lived out in daily commitment. Verses 34 to 35 contain four uses of the word ‘love’. Through this love, ‘everyone will know that you are my disciples’.

What does the death and resurrection of Christ mean to me?

How can I imitate the love of Christ more fully?

We pray for a true understanding of the glory of Christ.

We pray that our example will draw others to Christ.