

The Gospel of John John 13

Memory Verse: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another” (John 13:34 ESV).

Background Helps:

In John 13–17 we find Jesus’ private ministry to his twelve apostles the night before his crucifixion. These chapters are often called the Upper Room Discourse in which Jesus prepares his disciples for his coming death and resurrection and his departure from them to heaven. This passage will give you an opportunity over the next four weeks to teach your Christian students how they are to live between the time of our Lord’s departure and his return.

In John 13 he teaches his disciples by demonstration, washing their feet (vv. 1-17). He also predicts his betrayal by Judas (vv. 18-30), gives them a new commandment (vv. 34-35), and predicts his denial by Peter (vv. 36-38).

Lesson Helps:

Here are some possible aims for your lesson (choose one or craft your own):

1. My students will learn about Jesus’ washing of his disciples’ feet, so that they will follow his example of humble service. You could demonstrate your own humility by shining a few pairs of shoes in class (if the students permit you – or will they react like Peter?!). See the questions included in the home Bible reading schedule. This emphasis would make a great Advent or Christmas lesson, incorporating the parallel passage, Philippians 2:3-11. Be sure to explore practical ways of “washing one another’s feet” today.
2. My students will learn about Jesus’ two “one another” commands (“wash one another’s feet,” v. 14, and “love one another,” vv. 34-35), so that they will humbly serve and love each other. This lesson would combine the foot-washing lesson above and a look at the new commandment in verses 34-35 (including the memory verse).
3. My students will learn about Judas’ betrayal and Peter’s denial of Jesus, so that they will take warning not to betray or deny the Lord. In this lesson you could combine Jesus’ prediction of Judas’ treachery (13:10-11, 18-30) and Peter’s denial (13:36-38) with the actual events themselves in John 18:1-11, 15-18, 25-27. This would involve looking ahead in our study of John. (Of course, you could also wait until we reach John 18 and then look back at Jesus’ predictions in chap. 13.) How might we betray or deny Jesus today?

Home Assignment:

 Read: John 14

 Memorize: John 14:6 ESV