

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Gospel, Year C

LOST WITHOUT LOVE

John 13:31-35

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Analysis by Mark A. Marius

31 When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32 If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in God's own self and will glorify him at once. 33 Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Judeans so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' 34 I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.



DIAGNOSIS: Love of Glory

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem): Unavoidable

Judas departs with Jesus' blessing, "Do quickly what you are going to do" (v. 27). Jesus doesn't try and talk him out of it or guilt him into staying with the others. The harsh reality during this passion scene is that we will all do what we can't avoid doing. We will sin against God and one another. We will not act in love, but by holding onto whatever power and glory we desire. And that's a big problem.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem): Unable

We want to go where Jesus goes because we think it will be grand and elevate our standing in the world. But Jesus is headed to a defeat that goes against our very nature. It will be the death of us. We are little children who can't seem to let go of our strong desire to do it all by ourselves. We love the self (self-love, self-preservation) more than we love each other. We have been conditioned to seek our own glory instead of reflecting

God's glory.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem): Unattainable

Our love of self leads to the wrong kind of glory. True glory comes from God, but we would rather be the ones who give glory to God through our so-called successes and victories. But those won't last through the night. God gives glory to those who are faithful and loving over those who seek to exert and hold on to power above all else. In our pursuit of glory, we suffer a deadly defeat.

PROGNOSIS: Glory of Love

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution): Given



“As I have loved you.” Jesus’ love is grounded in serving others—washing feet, healing, forgiving, feeding. Jesus’ love of God and God’s creation leads to death on the cross. This is where God’s power and glory are revealed and given: the cross, the tomb—places the world seeks to avoid at all costs. But this is where God is found and love is given. It is here where we

discover that it means nothing for us to win, and everything for us to love. And it is in love that God gives glory.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution): Glorified

We are glorified not because of anything we have achieved but because of God's love for us. We are glorified through God's gift of baptism. Now, as God's little children, we find strength from our dependence on God's grace instead of trying to break free from God. But even as our will is hard to break, we know Christ won't let it sink us. Because we now trust that through love and forgiveness, our glory is restored.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution): Going Places

As glorified children we are no longer limited by where we can go. In fact, we are sent into the world of fading glory. We no longer disappear into the night but bring life and hope to the dark, where we may encounter those who are holding fast to the power of right and wrong. But propelled by Jesus' command to love, we are undaunted and hold fast to a faith that is rooted in God's love for us and our sharing God's love with others. That love gets noticed as we humbly act as servants of God (true disciples). And that love explains more than we ever could.