

There are times in our lives when we all need reminding about a significant event, the reasons for it, why it happened. The Gospel passage this week takes us back to the events of the Last Supper, of Judas' betrayal of our Lord, and Jesus telling his disciples he will not be with them much longer.

Jesus speaks to the disciples in what is frequently referred to as his farewell commandment. He talks about glorifying God and the importance of love amongst his followers; speaking of what is to come is not to be seen as failure but glory. The greatest glory in life is the glory that comes from sacrifice.

As Judas departs Jesus says, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him." Jesus continues, "Where I am going you cannot come," "I give you a new commandment, "that you love one another." "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

This love must be the basis of our lives, and all who follow Jesus. There was no limit to our Lord's love, he gave himself and all he had for those he loved his 'little children.' This commandment was not just for the disciples but for you and me in 2022. Sadly the Church today is so often seen as remote from many, a sad criticism. It is our responsibility as members of a worshipping community to show the Holy Spirit is active in the life of the church, by our personal lives, our actions, words and prayers. Love needs to be seen by all who have contact with us as a lively expression of our discipleship.

The new commandment is deceptively simple - love one another - yet how difficult Christians have found it is to obey this command. There are times when it is not easy to show love, when people rub us up the wrong way, or misunderstand our actions. We all at some time are guilty of entrenched attitudes towards others and their ideas.

Jesus' words to his disciples that they should 'love one another' were given as a rule of life. Many times Jesus made it very clear to the disciples and followers, the importance to love their neighbour, their enemies and their friends.

Our Lord loved his disciples, as he loves us, a lasting love but one that has to be built on trust, acceptance forgiveness. It is by our actions, behaviour, and attitude to one another that we shall be recognised as his disciples.

The way in which we show our love and our behaviour to others, this is the way we are able to influence the world around us.

What will our influence be in the coming week?

Amen.