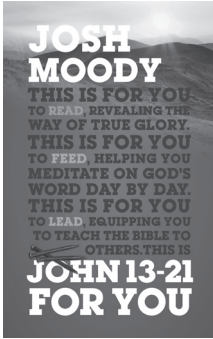




# **The place of greatest glory**

**JOHN 13-21**

by Josh Moody



## John 13-21 For You

If you are reading *John 13-21 For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *John 13-21 For You*:

Study One → Ch 1	Study Five → Ch 6
Study Two → Ch 2	Study Six → Ch 7-8
Study Three → Ch 3-4	Study Seven → Ch 9
Study Four → Ch 5	Study Eight → Ch 10

Find out more about *John 13-21 For You* at:  
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The place of greatest glory

The Good Book Guide to John 13-21

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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Why study John 13–21?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Power to serve</b> John 13:1-38	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Promises for troubled hearts</b> John 14:1-31	<b>13</b>
<b>3. Fruit that will last</b> John 15:1 – 16:33	<b>19</b>
<b>4. A time for glory</b> John 17:1-26	<b>25</b>
<b>5. Betrayal and denial</b> John 18:1-27	<b>31</b>
<b>6. The glory of the cross</b> John 18:28 – 19:42	<b>37</b>
<b>7. Life in his name</b> John 20:1-31	<b>43</b>
<b>8. Breakfast by the sea</b> John 21:1-25	<b>49</b>
<b>Leader's Guide</b>	<b>55</b>

# Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, moms and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That’s why we’ve designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the “big picture” of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let’s take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** Most groups need to “break the ice” at the beginning of a session, and here’s the question that will do that. It’s designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** The Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. The **Leader’s Guide** contains **guidance for questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional “follow-up” questions.
- ⌵ **Explore more (optional):** These questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw; or occasionally look at a part of the passage that’s not dealt with in detail in the main study.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you’ll keep coming across **apply** sections. These are questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. 🗣️ **Getting personal** is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God’s word—in line with his concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader’s Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God’s word.

# Why study John 13–21?

*“These [things] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”* (John 20:31)

Welcome to the second part of John’s Gospel—what is known as the “book of glory”. In chapters 1 – 12, the “book of signs,” John described the miracles that Jesus did that pointed to himself as the Son of God. Now, from chapter 13 onward, the hour has come for Jesus to be glorified (12:23). Yet the place of greatest glory is deeply counter-intuitive: the Messiah’s glory will come through the cross. And it is by believing in him that we have life—life to the full (10:10).

As chapter 13 opens, we are in Jerusalem with Jesus. It is the Passover. Right at the start of the Gospel, John the Baptist declared that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (1:29), and that promise is now going to be fully fulfilled. We will follow along as Jesus prepares his disciples for what is about to happen: washing their feet, promising them the Holy Spirit, calling them to remain in him, and praying for them, and for us. This is some of the richest teaching that we will hear from the mouth of our Lord.

Then we come to the pinnacle of John’s Gospel: Jesus’ crucifixion. Yet through the twists and turns of the narrative, we see that it is not a tragedy but a victory. But it is a victory that comes about through a most unlikely event: the sacrificial death of the hero of the story. And it is a victory that is ultimately displayed by Jesus’ wonderful, death-defeating, peace-bringing resurrection three days later.

John 13 – 21 calls us to follow Jesus in order to have the life to the full that he offers. That following will involve sacrifice—dying to ourselves—as Jesus tells Peter in the Gospel’s powerful closing chapter. But we’ll see that life in Jesus’ name is the only life worth having; indeed, it is the only real life at all.

So read on and enter into the book of glory: a glory which the world has never known, but which those who believe in the Son of God will have an eternity to look on, face to face.



## BIBLE TIMELINE

Where does the Gospel of John fit into the whole story of God's word?

**JOHN** written c. AD 80-85

# 1

John 13:1-38

# POWER TO SERVE



## talkabout

1. Have you ever seen someone in a position of power do something unexpected? What was it, and what made it so surprising?

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## investigate

### ▶ Read John 13:1-17

This whole section of John begins with a time marker: “It was just before the Passover Festival” (v 1). John’s first readers knew that Jesus had died at Passover, so John uses this phrase to turn our minds toward that event as we read this episode.

#### DICTIONARY

**Passover (v 1):** annual festival to remember the Israelites’ rescue from Egypt (see Exodus 12).

2. What is it that is moving Jesus both to go to the cross and to wash his disciples’ feet (v 1)? Why is this extraordinary?

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3. Look at the way John describes this moment in verses 3-5. What is so shocking about what Jesus does?

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4. Why does Peter object to having his feet washed, do you think (v 6-8)? What has he misunderstood about Jesus?

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- What is it that makes him change his mind (v 8-9)? What has he rightly understood about Jesus?

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5. In what way is this footwashing...

- a picture of the love Christ will show on the cross (v 10-11)?

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- an example of the love he expects his people to demonstrate (v 12-15)?

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Verse 10 is a little complicated but readily explicable. The Christian does not need a “bath” anymore—they have been born again by God’s Spirit and are in Christ. But they do still need on occasion to receive forgiveness through regular repentance and confession of their sins (as in 1 John 1:8-9).

 **apply**

Jesus is showing his disciples how God’s authority and power should be revealed in loving, humbling service: “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you” (13:15).





6. Think about some of the things you do for others at church, home or work. How can we tell whether our actions are genuine acts of service?

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7. What two motivations does Jesus give for us to serve others in this way (v 16-17)?

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- How will these help you to be increasingly servant-hearted?

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### getting personal

Jesus laid down his power for the sake of his disciples. Think about the “power” that you have, in the various spheres of your life. What would it look like for you to lay that power down in loving service of others this week?



### investigate

▶ Read John 13:18-30

8. Why does Jesus tell his disciples that he is going to be betrayed (v 19)?

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9. How does this incident show God's total sovereign control over the events that are about to unfold?

- Verse 18

- Verse 21

- Verse 26

- Verse 27



## explore more

optional

Why did Judas do it? There are many possible explanations for Judas' betrayal of his Lord. At a human level, we know it was at least partly done out of greed (John 12:6). But there was another level of motivation too—a spiritual dynamic; the devil was at work (13:2, 27).

### ▶ Read 1 Peter 5:8-11

*What does Peter warn Christians about?*

*Do you, and Christians you know, give much thought to this prowling lion? Why is that, do you think?*

*What does Peter tell us to do?*

One of the great tragedies in John 13 is that, at least in principle, Judas could have repented. But now the die is cast and it is too late. There can come a moment when you so harden your heart to the

truth of God that the course of your life is set. Be warned—when you say no to Jesus and yes to evil, there may come a time when you can no longer say yes to Jesus.

➤ **Read John 13:31-38**

**DICTIONARY**

**Son of Man (v 31):** Jesus often used this title to refer to himself (see Daniel 7 v 13-14).

**Glorified (v 31):** Christ's greatness would be revealed at the cross.

10. Where and how will God's glory be most clearly displayed (v 31-32)?

- How is this different to the way we normally think about glory?

11. Jesus has clear foreknowledge of both Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial. How does this make his earlier foot-washing even more remarkable?

➡ **apply**

"A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (v 34-35)



12. To what extent is your church characterized by this kind of love?

- Instead of love, what other things are you in danger of prizing more dearly as a church?

- What would it look like for you to move closer to the vision that Jesus has for his church?



## pray

- Praise Jesus for his power—he is the one who has “all things under his power” (v 3).
- Thank Jesus for his love—that he was willing to lay down that power in order to love his people “to the end” and to make them clean (v 1).
- Pray that, as a church, you would also be those who use your power to serve and to love one another.