

April 16, 2025 – Maundy Thursday

## ***The Sovereign Preference by Pastor Julio Romero***

### **Gospel: John 13:1-35**

This Gospel tells us about the Last Supper that our Lord Jesus had with His disciples, and what took place in the upper room where He celebrated the Passover meal with His friends.

It was a gathering full of drama and deep emotion. The Lord spoke of His betrayal and glorification. He took the time to teach a powerful, visual lesson about humility and service by washing the disciples' feet.

That night, He gave them His final commandment: **to love one another as He had loved them.** It was a profound and intense moment shared between the Lord and His closest followers.

The emotions of that night ran high. On one hand, the Lord Jesus rejoiced in celebrating the Passover with His friends. On the other, His heart was heavy, knowing that one of them would betray Him—handing Him over to the Jewish priests and the Romans for trial and crucifixion.

The intensity of the evening didn't end in the upper room. Shortly after, we see Him praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. His anguish was so great that His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

The night of His Last Supper and arrest was the most terrifying night of Jesus' earthly life. And yet—**He took the time to wash His disciples' feet, to speak to them about love.**

Imagine if you had a day like that. What would you do? How would you behave?

Most of us, facing such a burden, wouldn't want to talk to anyone. We'd likely say, *"Excuse me, I'm not in the mood. Leave me alone."*

If we think a bad day at the office is the end of the world, consider this: Jesus knew that His last night on earth would be filled with betrayal by a close friend, interrogation and imprisonment by His enemies, and the certainty of an impending death the next day. And yet—He spoke about love.

**Love**—a small, four-letter word, yet so hard to define and live out. Maybe that's why we give chocolates, flowers, and cards on Valentine's Day—to help express something that words often fail to capture.

Someone once said:

*"Love is difficult to define, but the working definition I would like to give is that love is the sovereign preference of my person for another person—embracing everyone and everything in that preference."*

The night of Jesus' suffering and the events of Good Friday reveal that **His sovereign preference was not just for some people—it was for the entire world.** On the cross, He embraced every person—past, present, and future. In Jesus' heart, there is always room for one more.

He showed us that one of the most powerful ways to express this love is through service—by putting others before ourselves, even when it's difficult or painful. His example teaches us to endure a roller coaster of emotions, highs and lows, for the sake of others.

Through the washing of the disciples' feet, and the patience He showed Peter—who at first refused to be served—Jesus demonstrated how love works. As the Apostle Paul said, *"Love is patient."* Considering the agony Jesus was under that night, the patience and control He showed is an extraordinary model of love.

Brothers and sisters, let us not forget the night Jesus was betrayed, arrested, denied, and tried. **It was on that night that He gave us a new commandment: to love one another as He has loved us.**

It was on that night that He taught us to become small so others might be honored. He taught us to be patient, to show that sovereign preference for others, to embrace everyone and everything in love.

Tonight, we remember that night in the life of our Lord Jesus—the night God made a new covenant with us, a covenant of His body and blood, which we celebrate tonight in remembrance of Him.

And another way to remember Him is when we follow His commandment:

**To love one another as He loves us. Amen**