

## B. The Prize

1. Knowledge—there comes a knowledge of the Divine Mind when we follow the steps of Jesus.
  - a. There is also a warning implied here—knowing the right and failing to do it brings not blessing but curse.
2. Blessedness (literally, happiness)—the road to true happiness and joy is service motivated by love.
  - a. Man's ultimate purpose is to glorify and serve God—when he does not he is out of harmony with his purpose.
  - b. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).
  - c. Bearing fruit brings joy (Jn. 15:1-11).

## C. Prophecy of the betrayer.

1. Given as predictive prophecy so that when it is fulfilled the disciples' faith in the deity of Jesus would be strengthened.
2. Another attempt by Jesus to penetrate the hardened heart of the hypocrite (play actor disciple) Judas.
3. Also it indicates to the disciples the divine omniscience of Jesus then and there—He knows His destiny all the time—He controls and is Master of the events.

## III. THE SELFISH SERVANT OF SIN 13:21-30

## A. Frantic Soul Searching.

1. The personal grief of the Master as He reclined in the room and at the same table with the greedy and hypocritical betrayer.
  - a. Jesus' grief was mostly His concern over Judas.
  - b. Jesus was deeply concerned over the spiritual immaturity of all the disciples.
2. The disciples are at first incredulous, then stunned, and then perplexed.
  - a. There was a period of soul searching (but they did not look deep enough).
  - b. Then they began to look around suspiciously at one another.
  - c. They all were betraying Him, in a sense, by their dullness of heart concerning His true mission.
3. Simon Peter, the impetuous, dared to know who, but was hesitant about asking aloud.

## B. My Familiar Friend, the betrayer.

1. Jesus quoted Psalms 41:9 in verse 18 to show that His betrayal was prophesied.

- a. David knew that the disloyalty of friends is the sorest of all hurts.
- b. Here is one who had companied with Jesus, eaten with Him, slept with Him, had been trusted with the purse—was even then dipping sop with Him (cf. Psa. 55:12-14).
- 2. The offering by the host of a special morsel dipped in the sop to a particular guest was a sign of special concern (cf. Ruth 2:14).
- 3. HOW MANY PROFESSED FRIENDS OF JESUS WHO MEET WITH HIM ABOUT THE SUPPER TABLE GO OUT IMMEDIATELY AND BETRAY HIM BY UN-CHRISTIAN DEEDS, WORDS AND HABITS.

#### C. Fooled Followers.

- 1. Judas was a master at deception.
  - a. Outwardly one could recognize no difference between him and the other eleven.
  - b. He faked a concern for the poor (Jn. 12:4-5).
  - c. He innocently asked "Is it I, Lord?" (Matt. 25:25).
  - d. He acted the deception out to the end, brazenly taking the morsel offered.
- 2. When men deliberately "exchange the truth of God for a lie," (Rom. 1:25), God gives them up to their desires (cf. Rom. 1:28; II Thess. 2:10-12).
- 3. None of the disciples knew what was transpiring.
  - a. They did not know Judas was the betrayer.
  - b. But Jesus knew!
  - c. THERE ARE HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH TODAY, AND SOME MAY GO UNDETECTED BY THE OTHER FAITHFUL DISCIPLES . . . BUT GOD IS NOT BLIND . . . HE KNOWS.
  - d. Notice: none of the disciples deserted the band later when they did find out there was a hypocrite among them.

#### IV. THE SACRIFICING SERVANT 13:31-38

##### A. Glorified in His sacrifice.

- 1. "Now" means that in His humiliating (to the world) death the Son would be glorified, exalted.
- 2. The Father would also be glorified because of the love and obedience of the Son.

3. This glorification also included the marvelous resurrection and ascension.
4. **GIVING AND LOVING** are the attributes which bring glory.

**B. Going away.**

1. Even at the near hour of His own cruel death His concern is for the soon-to-be bereaved disciples.
2. But they may know the presence of His living Spirit within their hearts by keeping the new commandment which He leaves with them.
  - a. The newness of the commandment is in the newness of the self-sacrificing love which He exemplified.
  - b. No such love could be commanded before, because no such LOVE had been exhibited before! (cf Eph. 3:17-19) and (I Jn. 2:8-11).
  - c. The contrast is between the self-sacrificing love of Christ and the love of self on the part of Judas and even the other disciples this night.
3. **THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION BUT THAT BROTHERLY LOVE IS A MARK OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP.** One cannot say he knows and loves God and not have love for his brethren!

**C. Grieving disciples.**

1. Peter is grieved at the thought that the Master must leave and that he cannot follow.
2. Peter is no coward—he will gladly engage in physical combat on behalf of the Master and His glorious Messianic kingdom.
  - a. Peter would shed his blood for the Jewish throne.
  - b. But this is not the type of sacrifice which Jesus desired.
3. Peter would deny the Lord.
  - a. Not because he was physically afraid.
  - b. Because he was ashamed of what he thought was a humiliating way for the Messiah to surrender without a fight.
4. **SO MANY CHRISTIANS ARE TOO READY TO WIELD THE SWORD IN SUPPORT OF THEIR OWN CONCEPTS OF CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT FIRST STUDYING TO KNOW WHAT THE WILL OF GOD IS!**

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

### CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Chapter fourteen has been read, quoted and preached for nearly two thousand years at times of sorrow, stress and bereavement. It has been a constant source of strength and consolation. This is exactly the purpose it was intended to serve when Jesus uttered it.

These are words of tenderness from a loving Father to His soon-to-be bereaved children. He is about to leave them, suffering a shameful and agonizing death and they will be scattered like lambs. The tenderness of Jesus is revealed here as nowhere else. Although He knows that they will soon desert and deny Him, He very patiently and tenderly explains that in His going He will not leave them desolate, but He will send the Strengthener. He explains that even in His leaving them He is going to prepare a place for them.

The whole theme of this chapter is "My Departure Will Bring Blessing—not Grief." In fact, Jesus plainly tells the disciples that if their faith be strong enough they can *rejoice* at His return to the Father! One notices throughout this discourse Jesus concentrating on what His going will mean for the disciples and not for Himself. Even within the very shadow of the cross His heart goes out to His "little children."

There is a great deal of most important teaching by our Lord Himself concerning the Holy Spirit in this chapter. Jesus explains plainly Who He is—how He is received—what He does. We must be careful, however, in our exegesis of Christ's promises here lest we expect to receive that which He promised exclusively to the apostles. Some of His promises in this fourteenth chapter are for the apostles only—while other promises apply to all believers of the Christian age.

Keeping the theme—a purposeful departure—in sight, we have outlined the fourteenth chapter thusly:

#### III. The Word Manifested to The Disciples and Their Acceptance of Him, 13:1—20:31.

##### A. Private Instructions and Encouragements, 13:1—17:26

(continued)

##### 2. His Going Will Bless All Men, 14:1-31

- a. He's going to Prepare a Place, 14:1-7
- b. He's going to Make the Disciples Co-Laborers With The Father, 14:8-14
- c. He's going to Send the Holy Spirit as The Strengthener and Revealer, 14:15-24
- d. He's going to Leave Men a Peace That Overcomes the World, 14:25-31

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN  
GOING TO PREPARE A PLACE

14:1-7

*Text 14:1-7*

- 1 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.
- 2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- 4 And whither I go, ye know the way.
- 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?
- 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- 7 If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

*Queries*

- a. What and where are the "mansions"?
- b. Which "coming again" is referred to in v. 3?
- c. What is the significance of verse 6?

*Paraphrase*

You must not let your hearts become distressed and discouraged within you over the things that are about to happen. You do believe in God, the Father; you must therefore trust in Me also as the Son of God. In Heaven, the house of my Father, are many permanent resting places. If there were no such places and no possibility of preparing them, I would most certainly have told you because the very purpose of My leaving you is to go and prepare a resting place for you. It is true that I am going away to prepare a place for you, and it is just as true that I am coming again to receive you into my own home, so that you may be where I am. You know where I am going and you also know the way! But Thomas interrupted, saying, Lord, we do not even know where you are going so how can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I, Myself, am the way and the truth and the life and no man is able to come to saving relationship with the Father unless he comes through My Mediatorship. If you had been learning of My true personality and nature you would have been recognizing my Father also. From now on you will know more fully that I and the Father are One and you will know that you have seen the Father.

*Summary*

A departing Father fortifies His children. He goes ahead to prepare them a place. He will come again to take them to the prepared resting

place. He alone is able to provide the way. Yet, the children are not ready to place complete trust in Him. Their knowledge of Him and trust in Him will be completed soon.

### *Comment*

One writer has paraphrased this first verse, "Let not your heart be tossed and agitated like water driven by winds . . ." Jesus knew that the impending storm of the cross would rage upon their hearts with a fierceness that would test their faith severely. He then seeks to remind them of His intimate, co-equal relationship to God the Father in Whom they believed. The word "also" in verse 1 indicates that Jesus knows of their belief in God's omnipotence but also knows their faith in Him and in His mission needs to be strengthened. The way the original Greek is written in this first verse both "*believes*" might be imperatives or both might be present indicatives or a combination of both. We believe the context necessitates that Jesus is saying, "You are believing in God (present indicative), you must believe in me also (imperative)." With only cursory attention to the context of the fourteenth chapter the reader should realize that the burden of the exhortation is to establish Jesus' divine omnipotence as equal with God's.

The next two verses (2, 3) contain one of those statements of Jesus which, this side of His resurrection, grips and electrifies the heart with love and hope because of the tenderness of the words. Of all the words quoted beside the death-bed, the open coffin and the grave-side these would probably be repeated most often. And well they should be, but as words of Life and Strength they should be preached, believed and practiced before the time of the open coffin.

The word translated "mansion" is *monai* in the Greek and means literally "an abiding place; a resting place; a dwelling." The English "mansion" as it is connoted today does not represent what *monai* meant in New Testament times. The word originally meant a place to abide in, and was used of a resting place, a refuge, and in later ecclesiastical Greek a monastery.

The emphasis, as the context indicates, is on the abundance of eternal places of rest and refuge in the Father's house (Heaven). The kingdom of God is often referred to as a place of rest both here on earth and in Heaven (cf. Isa. 11; Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 3 & 4; Rev. 14:13). The contrast is between the transitoriness of life and place on this earth with the permanence of the dwelling places in Heaven. The contrast is between the tribulation and wandering in this world with the sweet rest and refuge in the next world (cf. Jn. 16:1-2; Heb. 11:13-16).

Albert Barnes has a comment on this section which is worthy of consideration (Mr. Barnes paraphrases Jesus' words):

"The universe is the dwelling-place of my Father. All is his *house*. Whether on earth or in heaven, we are still in his habitation. In that vast abode of God there are mansions. The earth is one of them, heaven is another. Whether here or there, we are still in the house, in one of the mansions of our Father, in one of the *apartments* of his vast abode. This we ought continually to feel, and to rejoice that we are permitted to occupy *any part* of his dwelling-place. Nor does it differ much whether we are in *this* mansion or another. It should not be a matter of grief when we are called to pass from one part of this vast habitation of God to another. I am indeed about to leave you, but I am going only to another part of the vast dwelling place of God. I shall still be in the same universal habitation with you; still in the house of the same God; and am going for an important purpose—to fit up another abode for your eternal dwelling."

This paraphrase is in harmony with the Scriptures. Paul the apostle says that the church corporate and individual members may be habitations of God in the Spirit (cf. I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20). The same apostle says that God has prepared for us another "tabernacle" (dwelling-place) eternal in the heavens; that God dwelt in Christ (cf. II Cor. 5). In John 14:23, the only other place where *monai* is used, we are told that God, the Son and the Holy Spirit will "abide" in us.

These are words to strengthen in an impending hour of despair. They are intended to promise the apostles the reality of security, refuge, rest in spiritual dwelling places more concrete and real than earthly "tabernacles" and dwelling-places. The reality of these eternal places of abode are based upon the divine omnipotence of Jesus Christ. One thing is certain, there are *places* of abode—Heaven is not just an idea or an ideal. The places may or may not be material places (remember, "a new heaven and a new earth")—but they will be *where Jesus is!*

It is nothing short of perversion of the Scriptures to contend that the "many" of v. 2 means men of all kinds of opinions, convictions, religions, beliefs will have a place in Heaven. It is manifestly clear from the context that only those who believe and obey Christ will be with Him there, for He is the *only* way!

Another important truth revealed by Jesus here is that *Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people!* God prepared a Passover lamb and delivered His nation under Moses. Then He prepared a land of rest and led them into it (cf. Ex. 23:20). This was all to typify the

One Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who was given a prepared body (Heb. 10:5-10) that He might prepare a resting place for us. One of the greatest preachers of a few years ago, Alexander Maclaren, points to three steps in the preparation process of Christ's going away. (1) He must go away (die upon the cross) to prepare our salvation. Only His meritorious sacrifice is sufficient atonement for our sins. Only by offering Himself as a prepared sacrifice may we be saved by grace. (2) He must go away (by His resurrection and ascension) to take captivity captive (Eph. 4:8) to triumph over principalities and powers (Col. 2:15) and allow us even now to "sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). (3) He must go away (unto the right hand of the Father's throne) to constantly minister for us.

All three of these ideas are strongly inferred throughout chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17 of the gospel according to John. It goes without saying that Christ's substitutionary death and conquering resurrection prepared a place of atonement, forgiveness and salvation for all who will accept. And so, He looks forward to His immediate going away (death, resurrection and ascension) here in John 14. But He also looks forward to His High Priestly preparation of these places of rest for all believers. We suggest a few of the preparations Jesus is now making as our Leader, Forerunner and High Priest. He is preparing both the places of rest and the people who hope soon to rest in them:

- (a) He succors the weak (Heb. 2:14-18).
- (b) He intercedes (Heb. 4:15-16; I Jn. 2:1-2).
- (c) He chastens (Heb. 12:7-11).
- (d) He sends ministering angels (Heb. 1:14).

In this fourteenth chapter of John, Jesus promises two returns. Here in the third verse He speaks of His bodily return when time will cease with the general resurrection of the saints and the judgment (cf. Acts 1:9-11; I Thess. 4:13-18, etc.). The other promised return is the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and subsequently into the life of each Christian through the preached and obeyed Word of God and this promise is in John 14:18. We shall discuss this in our comments on verse 18. John does not record much of Jesus' teaching on the Second Coming. In fact, the only specific words of Jesus on the subject, recorded by John, are in 14:3 and 21:23. Here in 14:3 Jesus bases the reality of His bodily return squarely upon His "going away" which is His death, resurrection and ascension. In other words, men are to look forward to the reality of the Second Coming on the basis of historical, eyewitnessed evidence to His divine omnipotence. If Jesus could "go away" (conquer death and ascend bodily into the



heavens) and men could see it with their eyes (cf. I Jn. 1:1-4) then men could know with certainty that He would return bodily just as He promised.

We notice in verse 2 that the reality of Heaven and His preparations there are based on His claim to absolute knowledge and complete trustworthiness! "If it were not so, I would have told you," says Jesus. In other words, "I have demonstrated to you disciples prior to this by miracle and prophecy that I am completely trustworthy and that what I say is divine truth. I have never misled you, I have never lied, I have never been mistaken. Therefore, if what I now say were not true I would not be telling it to you."

We do not believe it ever redundant to repeat that all the promises Jesus makes concerning Salvation, Heaven, Hell, Judgment, Second Coming, etc., are to be believed upon the basis of historical, eye-witnessed demonstrations of His Deity (cf. I Pet. 1:3-5). The gospel according to John is, perhaps, the greatest of all writings on the deity of Jesus Christ and it is replete with one discourse after another on that one central theme. All life worth living here and all hope for the future life of glory has its foundation in this fact—Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

The words of Jesus in promising to come and take believers into His presence (v. 3) remind us of the words of Paul when he wrote that Christians would, at His Second Coming, be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be always with Him there (I Thess. 4:16-18).

The place (Heaven) to which Jesus is about to go has a Way that must be traveled. And the disciples know that Way. Jesus has been teaching them this Way, leading them upon this Way ever since they joined themselves to Him. They had once acknowledged that only He had the words of eternal life (Jn. 6:68-69). He told them that His way was the cross and any man who follows Him in this Way must take up his cross daily (Lk. 9:23), but they rejected that as out of harmony with their concept of the Messianic kingdom.

So the problem with Thomas (and the other disciples) is that, clinging to their hopes for a temporal kingdom, they could not (or would not) understand His "going away" (His death). And if they did not know where He was going and why, how could they know the way? Their problem was, not knowing the goal they could not know the way. They knew that Jesus was headed in the direction of establishing the throne of God the Father in a Messianic kingdom, but they had no idea where it would be and how it would be.

In verse 6 we have one of the great seven "I AM's" of the gospel of John (cf. Jn. 6:48; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25, and 15.1). When

Jesus said "I am the Way . . ." the original Greek is so written to place heavy emphasis on the pronoun "I" and would literally read, "I, even I Myself, am the Way." He does not merely show the way, but *He is* the Way. He is the Way in His own Person. As others have said, we are not saved by a principle, but by the Person, Jesus Christ. By His personal meritorious work we are saved by grace through faith—*HE* is the Way. This Way was prophesied in Isaiah 35:8 and described in its fulfillment in Hebrews 10:19-25. Since the Way is a Person being in the Way demands a personal relationship to the Way. We have access *by faith* into this grace in which we stand (cf. Rom. 5:1-2). We are in Him (the Way) when we *love* Him and *keep* His commandments (cf. Jn. 14:21-24). Trust (faith), love and obedience are commitments of one personality to another, they are the bonds of living fellowship and they are what Jesus seeks in every believer.

The arrangement of this phrase (v. 6) in the original Greek is interesting. All three predicates are preceded by the definite article which means that the subject and the predicates are both identical and interchangeable . . . "I am the Way and I am the Truth and I am the Life; the Way is Me and the Truth is Me . . . the Way is the Truth . . . The Truth is the Life, etc."

What is said of the Person of Jesus being the Way also applies to His being the Truth and the Life. In His Person He embodied the Truth. The Word became flesh (that is, the Divine Personality was expressed or revealed to man in the flesh, cf. Jn. 1:14-18). Truth is a representation of the reality of things. The life, and teaching of Jesus Christ is the most complete and perfect fulfillment of the types and figures of all other revelations concerning the reality of all things that can ever be presented to man, this side of Heaven (cf. Col. 2:3; Heb. 1:1-3).

He is the Life. Not merely physical life nor is He merely the source of the spiritual life of every man although He is the source of both of these. But He is the Life as opposed to Death. Only by faith in Him may men be assured of Eternal Life and fellowship with the Father. Without Him men are assured of eternal death and separation from God and all that is good and right. He is the Bread of Life; He is the Light of Life; He is the Resurrection and the Life; and those who believe in Him shall Live (cf. Jn. 5:25; Eph. 2:1-7).

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Immanuel, The Word made flesh, is the Way, the Truth and the Life. There can be no other Way to God except through His Only Unique Son. He is the New and Living Way and this access to God is made through His meritorious accomplishments in the incarnation of fleshly service (cf. Heb. 10:20-23; Acts

4:12). There are two aspects of our approach to the Father through the Son. We must accept by faith His sacrificial death in our place as an atonement for our sins which we could never accomplish by any merit of our own. Then, "if one died for all, then were all dead . . ." That is, our "old man" was punished in Christ and died there on His cross. But those who accept this death by faith, also are alive by faith and "henceforth live not unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (cf. II Cor. 5:14-21). Christ's death took away our sins and by His sacrifice we come unto the Father, but by faith we are to abide in His Word and live unto Him and thus by our new life in Him we also come unto the Father.

As Hendriksen puts it, verse 6b teaches unequivocally "both the absoluteness of the Christian religion and the urgent necessity of Christian Missions . . ." There is no religion on the face of the earth that can save a man's soul except faith and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Moslems are lost, Buddhists are lost, Jews are lost, all who have never come to a personal commitment of faith, love, trust and obedience to the Divine Personality, Jesus Christ, and to His revealed Word, are LOST! They have no access or communion with God their Father and Creator.

The disciples' comprehension of the fullness of His deity is not yet complete. Their minds are still cluttered with the cobwebs of the Jewish concept of a Messiah separated from God the Father, ruling in an earthly kingdom. Their understanding of His true personality and nature was still limited. This limitation was due both to God's own plan in giving a progressive revelation and to their preconceived ideas about the Messiah. Jesus indicates that if they had really given themselves to knowing and experiencing His personality and nature (instead of speculating about their idea of a Messianic kingdom), they would have had some knowledge of the personality and nature of God the Father in respect to the way of salvation by grace and faith. Jesus also promises that from that night onward they will know more fully that He and the Father are One. From that night forward they shall know that they have seen God incarnate and have walked with Him and talked with Him (cf. I Jn. 1:1-4). For a discussion of the oneness of Jesus and the Father see our comments on Jn. 10:30-38.

### Quiz

1. What is the primary objective of the whole discourse by Jesus in this 14th chapter?
2. What is the meaning of the word "mansion" in the text?
3. What is the contrast Jesus probably intended to make when He

told of going away to prepare a "place" for the disciples?

4. If Heaven is a prepared place, what of its inhabitants?
5. Give four preparations Jesus is now making as our Living High Priest in His ministry in Heaven.
6. How many returns are promised by Jesus in this 14th chapter? What are they?
7. Since the emphasis in v. 6 is on the Person of Jesus, what is demanded of those who desire to follow Him?

### GOING TO MAKE THE DISCIPLES CO-LABORERS

#### *Text 14:8-14*

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do.

#### *Queries*

- a. How fully did Jesus expect Philip to know Him as God Incarnate?
- b. What are the "greater works" which believers shall do?
- c. To whom were the promises of vs. 13, 14 made?

#### *Paraphrase*

Philip said to Him, Lord, give us a manifestation of the Father which we may see with our eyes and we shall be satisfied. Jesus turned to Philip and said, Have I been such a long time with you and you do not really know Me and see the Divine Personality of the Father in Me, Philip? Any man who has come to recognize My deity has seen the revelation of the Person of the Father which is far better than a physical manifestation; why, therefore, do you still say, Show us

the Father? Do you not believe that I am abiding in the Father and the Father is abiding in Me and We are One? The words that I speak to you are not of human origin, but the Father dwelling in Me is performing His redemptive works by speaking in Me, the Son. Take Me at My word and believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. But if my Person, my life, my words do not command trust, then at least follow the way of reasonableness, and from the supernatural character of My works realize My supernatural Personality. I say to you truly, he who believes in Me, the works which I am doing he will do also. And even greater works than these miracles of nature will my disciple do, because I am going to the Father and My going supplies an even greater power. And whatever you shall ask, if it be in accordance with the will of God and in my name, I will do it in order that the Father may be glorified in what the Son does. If you shall ask Me anything, in My name and according to My will, I will answer your request.

### Summary

Jesus speaks plainly and lovingly to a despairing and misunderstanding band of disciples of His intimate oneness with the Father. He tells them plainly that He is the Incarnate God. He points them to His teaching and His works and promises to do for them anything that the Father can and will do. These are designed to be words of strength.

### Comment

The preceding words of Jesus about the *house* of the Father and the *dwelling places* being prepared there have stroked a familiar heart-string within the bosom of Philip. All men who believe in God (and those who believe in many gods, for that matter) have longed to "see" Him with the physical eye. Especially would a Jew desire to be so honored with a manifestation of God to his sensory perceptions as had some of his ancestors (Moses and Isaiah) (cf. 24:9-11, 33:18; Isa. 6).

The heart of Jesus was grieved at Philip's "little faith" just as the heart of God was grieved at the unbelief of the Israelites in the desert (cf. Psa. 78:40, 95:10; Isa. 63:10). Yet one can almost feel the pathos and tenderness of Jesus as he answers Philip. God has been in their midst in the person of His Son and yet they ask to see God; they have eyes to see but they see not. They have seen Jesus and His Messianic kingdom only through earthly eyes. They have not opened their spiritual perception and looked at Him with eyes of faith. They were walking by sight and not by faith (cf. II Cor. 5:7). Have all

the long days and nights spent teaching this select group of disciples been in vain? Do they still not see that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him? We have no right to question the loyalty and understanding of the disciples so far as it has come. They have confessed His Messiahship (cf. Jn. 6:68-69; Matt. 16:15-16, etc.). But, due to their Jewish background, they still separated the Messiah from any equality with Jehovah-God. As wonderful as Peter's confession is (Matt. 16:16), we do not believe Peter understood the oneness of Jesus and the Father at that time as he did after the resurrection of Jesus. None of the disciples comprehended the Incarnate God in Jesus until after His glorification.

Jesus plainly declares that to "see" Him is to "see" the Father. Here, we believe, the word "see" is used in a sense to mean spiritual comprehension and not sensory perception. To learn and come to know the character and nature of the Personality of Jesus is to learn and come to know the real character and nature of the Personality of God. To *know* Jesus is to *know* God—to know God as completely as it is possible to know Him this side of eternity. Furthermore, to know the Personality of God as He has revealed it is to know Him more fully than any physical manifestation could afford. We may look physically at the outward appearance of our fellow mortals day after day and never really "*know*" them until they take us into their confidence and reveal their innermost personalities (cf. I Cor. 2:9-16). But Jesus knew that He had made sufficient revelation through His teaching and His works that these men should have recognized the Incarnate God in Him! Why, then, should they still say, "Show us the Father?"

Verses 10 and 11 are basic to a true understanding of the nature of Christianity as a revealed religion. As Mr. Hendriksen says, "This passage shows that all knowledge with respect to the facts of redemption is based on genuine, Christian faith." The redemptive purposes of God for man are revealed. The oneness of Jesus Christ and God the Father is revealed. Reason unaided by revelation could not possibly have discovered this. The existence of God, and perhaps certain attributes of His nature, may be revealed in nature (cf. Rom. 1), but redemption is known only as it is revealed in His Son and the Holy Spirit guided apostles.

Whenever Jesus speaks, the Father works by means of this speaking. And for men to believe the words of Jesus is to do the work of God (cf. Jn. 6:28-29). Jesus implies here that He expected the disciples to believe in His oneness with the Father through the words which He spoke for "never a man spake like this man." He spoke as one having authority and not as the scribes. His words, charged with

authority, tender with compassion, astounding in their truth and wisdom, should have, on their own, commanded the belief of the disciples that He was one with the Father. But if His person and His words do not engender faith in His oneness with the Father, then let these disciples at least follow the reasonable consequences of the supernatural signs and wonders which He performed before their very eyes. Let them believe in His oneness with the Father by the miracles which He did (cf. Jn. 5:36-37, 10:37-38). The Christian religion is founded squarely upon the deity of Jesus Christ which has been proven by supernatural, miraculous deeds, performed in history witnessed by the eyes and ears of men. Having thus established empirical proof of His deity Jesus demands that all other truths and doctrines which He taught be believed, trusted and obeyed by FAITH!

In verse 12 Jesus gives another of the purposes in His soon "going away." Using the discussion of His "works" as a springboard, He proceeds to promise the disciples that they will carry on His work in a much greater way. He promises that the disciples will do miraculous works of a supernatural character just as He did during His earthly ministry. But greater works than these miracles of nature would they do because of His going to the Father. By His going He means, of course, His death, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Spirit of Truth. The greater works which they would do were the works of preaching the gospel to thousands of people, both Jews and Gentiles, and winning the surrender of their hearts to Jesus by the power of the gospel. There is power in the gospel far more commanding and revolutionary than any miracle over nature, for it is a power that is capable of bringing the free will of man into harmony with the will of God. This power in the gospel came in its fullness only after the "going away" by Jesus (His complete glorification).

He promises further that anything they shall ask in His name will be granted. He not only promises that they shall do great and wonderful things by the power of God, He sets up the "power lines" through which this power shall flow. The power is not in prayer, per se, but is in the Holy Spirit who shall come and grant every request made in the name of Jesus. Prayers are the "communication lines" to the source of power. To pray "in the name of Jesus" means far more than the utterance of a ritualistic formula. It means the prayer must be first and foremost in the interest of the kingdom of God. Their requests must be in harmony with the will of God (cf. Lk. 11:2; I Jn. 5:14-15). Lenski says, "In all the connections in which this important phrase occurs (*to onoma*) (the name), denotes the revelation by which we know Jesus. This revelation covers his person

as well as his work." To pray "in His name" does not mean "on the basis of My name," but it means "in UNION with My (name) person and My revelation."

A major question of interpretation of this passage is "to whom is Jesus speaking here?" There is no doubt that He speaks primarily to the 11 disciples in the upper room. We believe that according to other New Testament Scriptures portions of these promises are for all believers.

Hendriksen says, "It is certainly worthy of notice that, according to this great saying of our Lord, the *greater* works are the *spiritual* works. The miracles in the physical realm are subservient to those in the spiritual sphere; the former serve to prove the genuine character of the latter. Does Jesus, perhaps, by means of this very comparison, which places the spiritual so far above the physical, hint that miracles in the physical sphere would gradually disappear when they would no longer be necessary?"

We believe that I Corinthians 13, taken in the context of chapters 12 through 14 (all three chapters speaking of the same thing—miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit) teaches that very thing. "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." Thus we believe that the promise of Jesus that anyone who believes in Him will do greater works than physical miracles applies to all believers who by preaching and teaching the gospel convert sinners. Love and preaching the gospel are greater works than speaking in tongues and healings.

In I John 5:14-15 the promise is made to all believers that if they ask anything according to His will they shall have it. There are enough parallel passages in the New Testament to show the discerning reader that Jesus made certain promises of powers and miracles to His chosen apostles which He did not intend that all believers should exercise.

Jesus' going away meant that believing disciples would forever after become His co-laborers in God's purpose of redemption. Some (the chosen apostles) would need for awhile to do works (miracles of nature) similar to the ones which Jesus did. But these were secondary and only foundational for the greater works which would be done, not only by the chosen apostles, but by all believers. All believers are "stewards" of the power resident in the gospel and are admonished to administer it wisely (cf. I Pet. 4:10-11; II Tim. 2:1-2).

Again, the words of Jesus are pointed toward strengthening the disciples there who shall soon be without His bodily presence and for the strengthening of all disciples down through the ages who must



walk by faith and not by sight. These things are spoken by Jesus and recorded by the apostles that men might truly believe (trust) in Jesus and believing have eternal life (Jn. 20:31).

### Quiz

1. Why might we expect Philip to long for a physical manifestation of God?
2. How was the heart of Jesus probably touched by Philip's request?
3. How may we "see" God if we "see" Jesus?
4. In what way does man know the redemptive purposes of God?
5. Primarily, how did Jesus expect the disciples to recognize His oneness with the Father?
6. How important are the historically witnessed miracles of Jesus and the apostles?
7. What are the greater works promised by Jesus? Who would do them?
8. What does "in My name" mean?

### GOING TO SEND THE STRENGTHENER AND REVEALER

#### *Text 14:15-24*

- 15 If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.  
16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever,  
17 even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you.  
18 I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you.  
19 Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me: because I live, ye shall live also.  
20 In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.  
21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.  
22 Judas (not Iscariot) saith unto him, Lord, what is come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?  
23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.  
24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

*Queries*

- a. Who is the "other Comforter"?
- b. Why so much stress in this section on "keeping His commandments"?
- c. What did Judas (not Iscariot) want to know?

*Paraphrase*

If you really love Me and desire to carry on My work and receive answers to your prayers, you will keep my commandments. And if you abide in My commandments I will ask the Father to give you another Strengtheners and Helper and the Father will send Him. He is the Spirit of truth and He will dwell with you forever. The world cannot receive Him into fellowship because the world does not love or understand His divine Personality, just as it rejects My divine Personality. You know and love this divine Personality. He is the same Personality who is dwelling in your presence now in bodily form and shall soon dwell within you in spiritual essence. I will not desert you nor go away and leave you destitute of help like orphans. I, the Son, the same Personality who has been with you in bodily form, will come unto you in the Spirit. In just a very short time the world will not even be able any longer to see Me with physical eyes, for I will very soon be gone from the world in bodily form. But you who love Me and obey Me will truly see and know Me for I will be as equally alive and active in the Spirit as I am in bodily form. And when I have accomplished man's redemption and return to you alive in the Spirit then you shall also be alive indeed in the Spirit. In the day when you are born again in the Spirit you will know fully and completely that I am in My Father, and you will know that you are alive forevermore in Me, and that I am alive and dwelling in you. I affirm again, he that continues to know my commandments and continues to keep them is one that manifests his love to Me. The one that so loves Me shall be loved by my Father; and I will love him and will reveal Myself unto him in the Spirit. Judas (not Judas Iscariot the betrayer) said to Him, Lord, you have previously indicated that you would soon manifest yourself to the world in all your Messianic glory. Now you speak of manifesting yourself only to us. What has happened to so limit your intended manifestation? Jesus said, Judas, when a man loves Me he will continue to keep My word. And my Father will love him and the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit will come unto him and make our dwelling place within him. The opposite is also true, he who does not love me will not keep my words. And to reject my commandments is not to reject the com-

mandments of a mere man for the words which you hear Me speak are the very words of God the Father who commissioned Me and sent Me into the world.

### Summary

The strong emphasis of this section is upon Jesus' return to the disciples in the Spirit on the condition that they love Him and keep His word. The Holy Spirit helps and strengthens and abides in men through the Word of Christ.

### Comment

Love is the incentive for obedience and obedience is proof of love and trust. The one who keeps the word of Christ has the mature, complete love of God in him (I Jn. 2:5; 5:3) and is assured that he knows God and is known by God (I Jn. 2:3). But the one who professes to know God and does not keep the commandments of Christ is a liar and the truth is not in him (I Jn. 2:4).

Jesus makes this statement (14:15) in connection with what He has said before and what He will promise after. Their obedient love is a condition of their being called and empowered to serve as co-laborers in the redemption of man. Their obedient love is also the condition necessary for Jesus to send them "another Helper," the Holy Spirit.

Verses 15 through 24 are of great importance to the Christian in his understanding of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead. Verse 15 not only indicates the condition necessary by the disciples in order to be given the Holy Spirit, it also indicates the agency (the Word of Christ) through which He comes into the believer. Verses 21 and 23 are reiterations of this for emphasis.

Verse 16 clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person, not just an idea or a feeling. He is "another" divine Strengtheners and Helper and Teacher just like Jesus who was the Word become flesh. He is not *different* from Jesus (except that He comes not in the flesh), but He is exactly like Jesus in word and in deed. The word "Comforter" is *parakleton* in the Greek and is transliterated "Paraclete." Literally it means "one called alongside to strengthen or help." He is not one who brings luxurious comforts as we think of "comfort" today. He gives strength that we may bear our tests and trials. He testifies of the promises of God whereby we might be partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world (cf. II Pet. 1:3-4).

He is also the Spirit of truth. He is the Revealer of divine truth. Verse 17 does not mean that it is impossible for man to exercise his will in surrender to God's revelation and thus receive the Holy Spirit; that man must be irresistibly overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus

is saying much the same thing He said in John 3:18-21 (see our comments there, Vol. I). As Lenski puts it, "He speaks of the inability of willful obduracy . . . one in which men neither "behold" nor "know" the Spirit although He is present with all His grace." Jesus is speaking of the worldlings who refuse to have God in their knowledge (Rom. 1:18-32) and who take pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thess. 2:8-12). The Pharisees who would not believe in Jesus *because* He told them the truth (Jn. 8:44-45) are such. There are many such worldlings in many degrees of ignorance concerning the Holy Spirit. And many of them are ignorant of Him because they wish to remain ignorant of Him.

These disciples "knew" Him. He is the same Personality as Jesus except for the fleshly body. These disciples were learning of Him. Their knowledge of Him was not yet full and mature. They had their childish and selfish concepts of Him but they were growing and would soon mature in their knowledge of the Godhead and His purposes. Jesus makes it very plain here that He and the Holy Spirit are identical in Personality. He was with them in bodily presence but would soon be absent in bodily presence but "in them" in His Spiritual Personality.

Another touch of pathos comes from the heart of Jesus as He tells the disciples, "I will not leave you orphaned, for I am coming to you." The word translated *desolate* is the Greek word *orphanous* from which we get the English word *orphan*. Christ promises that He will not go away and leave them destitute of help like orphans. Orphans have no home but Jesus has already spoken of the dwelling place in the Father's house which He goes to prepare for His loved ones. Orphans feel lost and desolate but Jesus has shown His loved ones the Way—He is the Way home. Orphans have no "comforter" but Jesus promises to send the "Comforter."

In a few short hours Jesus would be gone from the eyes of the world, physically speaking. But those who love Him and obey Him will truly see and know Him. Christ is as alive and active in the Spirit as He was in the flesh. The Holy Spirit through the Word is living and active and powerful and moves in the hearts of men convicting and converting their stubborn wills. The Holy Spirit through Providence "works out all things together for good to them that love God . . ." When Jesus has accomplished atonement and justification by His death and resurrection and ascension and when He returned in the Spirit they would truly behold Him. When they should surrender and be born again by faith in Him and obedience to His word they would be truly alive. In the day when they should be born again by

the Spirit they would know more completely that He was in the Father, that they were alive forevermore in Him (Eph. 2:1-7), and that He was in them.

Again, in verse 21, Jesus repeats the conditions and the agency of receiving the Holy Spirit. Again He instructs them that the One who is to be sent will be but another manifestation of His Spirit. He and the Father are One; He and the Holy Spirit and the Father are One. There can be no mistake about how men and women are to be led to obey the Lord's commandments—they are to be led to love Him. There can be no mistake about how men and women are to show their love to Christ—by keeping His word.

During His last week of teaching in Jerusalem and near the city, Jesus talked often of the "coming of the kingdom," "the coming of the Son of man with power and great glory" (Lk. 21:25-28, etc.). Now He says to the disciples, "I am going away . . . the world will see Me no more . . . I will manifest Myself to those who love Me and keep My word." Judas (not the betrayer) manifests the immature concept of the kingdom of God that is still within the minds of the disciples. He is still full of the worldly notions of the Messiah and His kingdom. He seems to say, "This very week you talked of your coming with all the holy angels when the nations of the earth should be gathered together. Now you speak of manifesting yourself to us but not to the world. What has happened to so limit your Messianic program?"

Jesus replies to Judas as if to say, "Judas, I am speaking of an intimate fellowship of My Spirit with men who love me. It is a living union to bring strength, joy and peace. The return and manifestation I spoke of before is unto judgment; the return and manifestation I speak of now is unto those who love Me and keep My word."

This verse (v. 23) is one of the most profound, yet simple and lucid verses of the New Testament. In it is explained, as far as man can understand, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within everyone who loves and obeys Christ. It is simple enough for a child to understand yet it contains truth so profound that the most brilliant intellect cannot fully fathom. There are no requirements of mystical rites to be performed, to place one in a mood to receive the Holy Spirit. There are no promises here of any ecstatic trances or emotional fits that one may know he has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him. The very simple and plain promise is that the one who believes, trusts, loves and obeys Christ will be indwelt by the Spirit of God. We shall have more to say of this verse in later comments.

This section closes in verse 24 with Jesus emphasizing again that

He is trying to teach the disciples of the perfect oneness of the Son and the Father and the Holy Spirit. His emphasis is that the disciples should love Him and keep His word as they would keep the Father's word—for the words He speaks are the very words of the Father. Although He is soon to go away they may trust Him to fulfill His promises just as surely as God has fulfilled His words in the past. Any man who does not love Jesus nor keep His word is rejecting God! He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father (cf. our comments on Jn. 5:23).

We pause in our sequence of verse by verse comments here to consider briefly that divine Personality, the Holy Spirit. The context of Chapters 14, 15 and 16 of John's gospel teach more than any of the other gospels about Him. Jesus is concerned more here with instructing the disciples as to how the Holy Spirit takes up His dwelling within the believer. As a starting point we quote, "The Spirit is not a mere impersonal force or influence which we somehow get hold of and use; but He is a personal being, wise and holy, who is to get hold of us and use us. He is one with whom we may have the closest friendship, or fellowship" (Phil. 2:1; II Cor. 13:14). He enters into our personalities, and we become new persons, with renewed minds, affections, desires and wills." (Seth Wilson, in, "Who or What Is The Holy Spirit?")

The question is, how does He enter into our personalities and get hold of us and use us? Do we absorb Him through the pores of our skin? Does He overwhelm us by some mystical, direct, irresistible saturation? How do we know that He is in us—by some emotional thrill or ecstatic trance?

We believe there are two spheres in which the Holy Spirit moves and works today—through His Word and through Providence. We believe that the Holy Spirit's Personality penetrates and enters into our personality as He expresses His mind, will and personality through His word. When we know His will in His word, believe and trust Him, love and obey Him and surrender our wills to His will, we believe He has come to make His abode with us. We believe this is plainly taught in the New Testament. In John 14 Jesus repeats twice this very idea (14:21, 23).

Again, we quote, "The Holy Spirit enters today into those who hear and obey the Apostles' written word even as He did into those who heard the oral word. The power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life today is limited only by the lack of faith in the written word! The power of the Holy Spirit will be manifest as the Christian saturates his very life and being with the precepts and principles taught in the

Bible, which is the living voice of the Holy Spirit, and puts them into practice in his life. As the Christian has the mind to surrender to the instructions of the Holy Spirit as He speaks through the written word, the Holy Spirit possesses him, leads him and uses him and to just that extent (cf. Gal. 4:19; Col. 3:16)." (Walter L. Spratt, in, "The Holy Spirit in The Christian Life.")

Jesus said much the same in John 6:48-63 (see our comments in Vol. I). He is the Bread of Life. If men desire eternal life they must partake of His flesh and blood (His very nature). But how? Jesus answers, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." *We partake of Him by assimilating His word into our mind and heart.* He is then *in* us. Peter said the same thing when he wrote that we have been granted by God's divine power *all things* that pertain to life and godliness *through knowledge* of Christ. Furthermore, we may *partake of the divine nature* through His great and precious promises (II Pet. 1:2-4).

The Holy Spirit as a new Person and a new Life is born within us through the Word of God. We quote, "Before a child can be born it must be generated or begotten by its father. The same is true of the new birth. Before one can be born again he must be begotten again. This means there must be a *life-causing seed* to generate the new life. Is there such a seed? 1. Lk. 8:5-8 record Jesus' parable of the sower who "went forth to sow his seed." Christ Himself explains the story. "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God." 2. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." I Pet. 1:23. 3. "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth." Jas. 1:18. All of this means that the Holy Spirit inspired word is the life-causing seed that is planted in our hearts. How true it is that "belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." Rom. 10:17.

The Person of the Holy Spirit is born and grows within us through constant communion with Him by knowing His will, obeying His word and doing His work.

1. We are to drink of Christ's spirit (Jn. 7:37-39).
2. He is to dwell in us by faith (Eph. 3:17).
3. We are to be filled with the Spirit by understanding what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17-19).
4. He lives in us by faith (Gal. 2:20).
5. We receive Him by the hearing of faith (Gal. 3:2, 14).
6. We put on Christ by faith and obedience (Gal. 3:26-27).
7. The new man which is put within is renewed in knowledge after

the image of him that created him (Col. 3:10).

Our lives bear fruit when we allow the Spirit to lead us through His will as expressed in His word. The fruit of the Spirit is exhibited in the personal transformation of mind and character (hence conduct) of each individual who grows in Christian faith as he should (cf. Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 8:2-4, 8:12-14, 14:17; I Cor. 6:9-11, 6:17-20).

To obey the Word is to be "led by the Spirit." The man who obeys the gospel is a child of God. The Spirit tells us to believe, repent and be baptized into Christ. Our spirits tell us that we do believe, have repented, and have been baptized. Therefore His Spirit and our spirits testify with each other to the same thing—that we are children of God (Rom. 8:14-17). By the same token, when we read, understand and do the will of the Spirit as expressed in the written word, we do put to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13).

One thing is certain—the Holy Spirit will not come and dwell with us unless we "hear" His voice and "open the door" and allow Him to come in (Rev. 3:20). He may be rejected, resisted, despised, blasphemed, lied to, and grieved, if we do not want Him. Or, He may be heard, trusted, loved, received, obeyed, followed, fellowshipped if we desire Him and allow Him by exercising our faith to take hold of us and use us.

The only dependable agency available to man by which he may be certain that he *knows* the Holy Spirit or *feels* Him or that He *controls* him is obedience to the written will of the Holy Spirit in His word, which is the Bible! We may be sure we know Him if we keep His commandments (I Jn. 2:3). All who keep His commandments abide in Him, and He in them (I Jn. 3:24). Whoever knows the Spirit of God listens to the apostles' doctrine and this is the only way man may know the difference between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error (Satan) (I Jn. 4:6). If we love one another and confess Christ, His Spirit abides in us (I Jn. 4:12-15). Anyone who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son (I Jn. 9-10). A man is on dangerous ground when he must depend upon human emotions or human creeds or human concepts to know the certainty of his possession by the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within him.

The Spirit does not operate independent of His Word in possessing a man and dwelling within him. Just as a father's personality penetrates and bears fruit in the lives of his children through the father's teaching and deeds, so the Personality of the Heavenly Father, His Spirit, penetrates and bears fruit in the lives of his children through



the Father's word and deeds as they are witnessed to in the Bible. Through His Word, written and spoken, He has striven with men. Through His Word, written and spoken, He convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment. The Spirit, through His Word, when men allow Him by faith and obedience, comes into a person's heart and mind and possesses him, leads him and uses him.

There are, of course, many other attributes of this wonderful, divine Personality which we have not discussed here (i.e., His characteristics, His miraculous gifts, His providential working in nature and history every day, etc.). This has not been our purpose. We are concerned here only with the entrance into and possession of the believer by the Holy Spirit. If the reader desires more discussion of other attributes of the Holy Spirit we suggest Don DeWalt's book, "The Power of The Holy Spirit," Vol. I, published by College Press. Ozark Bible College also has a number of mimeographed essays by Seth Wilson, Walter L. Spratt and others for sale—simply write to the OBC Bookstore and ask for as much mimeographed material as they have on the Holy Spirit.

This divine Person was promised in the Old Testament (Ezek. 36:27). He was promised by Christ, the Incarnate Word (Jn. 7:37-39). He comes to every obedient believer today (Acts 2:38, 5:32). He brings strength, joy, peace, wisdom, power and fruitfulness.

### Quiz

1. Why does Jesus emphasize "love and keep my commandments"?
2. Who is the Holy Spirit like? What are some of His characteristics?
3. Why can the world not receive Him?
4. Why is verse 23 of such significance?
5. How is the Holy Spirit received into our hearts? Name 4 ways the Scriptures say He comes to us?
6. Is there any way man may be sure that the Holy Spirit is in him? How dependable is it?
7. When the apostles preached, what did they say was necessary for the coming of the Holy Spirit into the individual? Acts 2:38, 5:32.

### GOING TO LEAVE PEACE AND OVERCOMING POWER

#### Text 14:25-31

25 These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you.

26 But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you,

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the

world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.

28 Ye heard how I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you. If ye loved me, ye would have rejoiced, because I go unto the Father: for the Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe.

30 I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of the world cometh: and he hath nothing in me;

31 but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

### *Queries*

- a. Why is the "peace" which Christ gives not like "peace" for which the world strives?
- b. How is the Father greater than Jesus?
- c. What had Jesus prophesied before it came to pass (v. 29)?

### *Paraphrase*

A great many of My doctrines I have taught you while I have been with you in the flesh. Furthermore, the Father will soon send in My name the Helper, the Holy Spirit. He will teach you everything that is necessary for preaching redemption and establishing the church as well as infallibly recalling to your mind all that I have taught you while with you in the flesh. I am going soon but in My going I will leave you at peace with God. It will not be merely outward peace and physical security as the world sometimes gives, but it will be the peace which I, Myself, have—this peace of heart and mind which trusts in the Father in all circumstances and brings rest unto the soul—I give unto you. Therefore, you must not let your heart be anxious and troubled nor should you be cowardly and fearful. You have heard me say repeatedly, I am going away to My Father and then I come again to you in the Spirit. If you had grown in love for Me as you should you would have rejoiced at My going home to the Father. In My incarnation I became a little lower than the angels and became a servant and the Father, who is greater than I am in this respect, is waiting to reward and glorify Me. And I have told you of all this and predicted it now, before it actually happens, so that when it does come to pass, your faith in Me may be increased. I have very little time left to speak and teach you many things because the prince of the world and his evil cohorts are coming to accuse Me. This evil one can find no sin or guilt in Me—he has no part of himself in Me. But I will not resist nor escape but I will do as the Father gave me command-

ment so that the world may know that I love the Father. Arise, let us go forth to meet them.

### Summary

Time in which to strengthen the disciples is nearly over. He thinks of them before Himself. He promises again the Helper; gives them His peace; strengthens their faith in Him by prophetic utterance. He seems saddened that they are so dim of understanding His going away is a matter for rejoicing.

### Comment

By "these things" in verse 25, Jesus undoubtedly means all that He has taught the disciples concerning His divine mission while He has been in their company. He is about to promise the disciples further revelation from the mind of God through the Holy Spirit.

Bro. R. C. Foster calls verse 26 the "key" to understanding of the production of the New Testament. Certainly without the knowledge of the divine inspiration of the apostles one who reads the New Testament would utterly fail to comprehend much of it. This is not the only place Jesus made such a promise (cf. Lk. 24:49; Jn. 16:13, etc.). Jesus promises that not only by the power of the Holy Spirit will they infallibly recall all that He has taught them, but that the Holy Spirit will deliver unto them "all truth" which God has designed in His purposes of redemption. The apostle Paul makes clear in I Corinthians 2 just to what extent they received God's truth.

- a. They received the "hidden wisdom of God" (I Cor. 2:7).
- b. Man could never have known what was revealed to them (I Cor. 2:9).
- c. The Spirit revealed to them the "deep things" of God (I Cor. 2:10).
- d. Paul claimed that the "mind of Christ" had been revealed unto him and that this is what he taught (I Cor. 2:16).

The Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets of the Old Testament (I Pet. 1:11), but He did not lead them into "all truth" as He did the apostles. He spoke through them only in "divers portions and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1). John later testifies that the only objective test whereby men may know the difference between truth and error concerning God's message for man is to "hear" the apostles. The apostolic message, and *only the apostolic message*, is the truth of God for man's salvation. All else is incomplete, erroneous or deliberately false.

The theory of just how this infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit over the writers of the New Testament was accomplished is another subject. Suffice it to say here that the Bible itself indicates the "verbal

plenary" theory. Paul says the Scriptures were "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16-17). Peter says no prophecy of Scripture is of any private, human origin, for prophecy came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were "borne along by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:20-21). The Spirit put the very words of God into their minds and mouths, as He did in the Old Testament, but the Spirit allowed different writers to use their own peculiar style in writing. John's style is much different from Luke's and Paul's, for example.

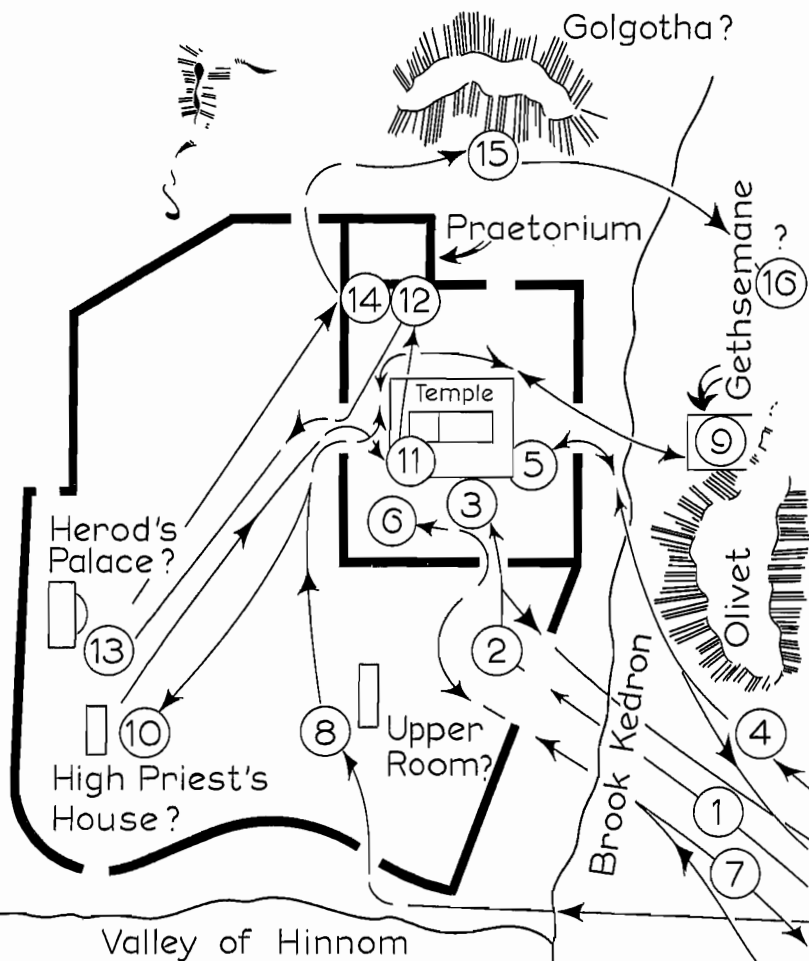
Yes, the disciples would have the divine Helper sent to them. He would lead them into all truth and remind them of all that their Master had taught them while with them. This Helper would also, by testifying of man's salvation and home in heaven, bring them the peace which Jesus Himself knew. It would not be the physical or economic or social security which the world calls peace (cf. Matt. 10:34; Lk. 12:51). The world may give outward peace but it can never give that peace and rest of the soul which belongs to the Christian because his life is hid with Christ in God (cf. Matt. 11:28-30). There will never be real peace on earth as worldly-minded men define "peace." In the first place, men are trying to promote peace without even consulting the directions of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. In the second place, the Bible teaches that there will be enmity and war on the part of Satan against the church of Christ as long as the world remains (see the book of Revelation). As long as there is evil there will be unrest; as long as there is sin, there will be rebellion and war.

But thanks be to God, Jesus Christ has made peace between man and God. Jesus, in His going to the Father (including His death, resurrection, ascension) accomplished man's atonement, paid man's penalty and accomplished reconciliation (cf. II Cor. 5:17-21). If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature and is at peace with God. But it requires faith and obedience on man's part to be "in Christ," for man is justified by faith and has peace with God through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1), (see also Eph. 2:14-15; Col. 1:20).

This objective peace between God and man is but one aspect of the "peace" of which Jesus speaks. There is also the subjective side of "peace" which comes as a result of the first. It is the peace which drives anxiety and trouble and fear from the heart of the believer. God keeps in perfect (complete) peace all whose minds are stayed on Him, because they trust in Him (Isa. 26:3). It is a peace that brings cheer (Jn. 16:33). It is the peace which passes all understanding and guards our hearts and minds and rules in our hearts (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15). It is the peace which is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

# MAP NO. 7—LAST WEEK

1. Bethany—Feast, Mary anoints Jesus, Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 13:3-9; Jn. 12
2. Jerusalem—Triumphal entry (Sunday) Mt. 21; Mk. 11; Lk. 19; Jn. 12
3. Temple, enters, looks around, says nothing, leaves, Mk. 11:11
4. Curses fig tree (Monday), Mt. 21; Mk. 11
5. Temple—cleanses 2nd time (Monday), Mt. 21; Mk. 11; Lk. 19
6. Temple courts?—Great day of discussions (Tuesday)—Mt. 21-22-23-24-25; Mk. 11-12-13-14; Lk. 20-21-22
7. Retirement to Rest?—(Wednesday), Judas plots to betray Jesus, Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22
8. Upper Room—(Thursday), 4th Passover, Lord's Supper, Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22; Jn. 13-14
9. Gethsemane—(Thursday night), Parting discourses, agony, betrayal and arrest, Jn. 15-16-17; Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22
10. Trial before Annas and Caiaphas, Mt. 26-27; Mk. 14-15; Lk. 22-23
11. Trial before Sanhedrin, Jn. 18
12. Trial before Pilate
13. Trial before Herod
14. Trial before Pilate (2nd)
15. Golgotha—(Friday), Crucifixion, Mt. 27; Mk. 15; Lk. 23; Jn. 19
16. Garden—(Sunday), Resurrection, appears to Mary, other women, Mt. 28; Mk. 16; Lk. 24; Jn. 20





The peace which Christ brought to the world was prophesied (Isa. 9:6-7) and preached (Acts 10:36) and is relevant for a strife-torn world today. God give us the courage to preach it with conviction and simplicity.

Again the pathos of the night is painted for us as the Lord speaks the hunger of His aching heart for sympathy and understanding. Later, in Gethsemane, He will desire their fellowship in His agony but find them asleep. Here He desires the fellowship of their understanding concerning His going away, but they do not seem to be able to share in His feelings.

Many times already He had spoken of His return to the heavenly Father. If they had only grown enough to understand the humiliation of His incarnation, they would have rejoiced that He was soon to return to the Father for this would mean glory for Him. When Jesus said "the Father is greater than I," He did not mean that He was an inferior deity or that He was not deity at all but just the highest accomplishment of humanity. He is one with the Father, co-equal and the only-unique Son. But He was sent forth from the "Ivory Palaces" by the Father, and willingly took upon Himself the form of a servant (Phil. 2:5-8). He became a "little lower than the angels" in order to bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:9-18). When Jesus willingly became the Incarnate Word He simply divested Himself of the glories resident in the bosom of the Father. The Father then prepared the reward and glory which the Son was to receive upon completion of His earthly mission\* (cf. II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 12:2). The Father both glorified Him on earth and would glorify Him in heaven (Jn. 12:28, 17:5). In this sense only is God greater than the Son. If the disciples had realized the fullness of the glory that was to be His they would have rejoiced with Him.

In verse 29 Christ tells the disciples that He had made all these prophetic utterances concerning His death, resurrection, ascension and return in the Spirit before they come to pass in order that they will believe in Him. Fulfilled prophecy is one of the Bible's major evidences to its divine inspiration. Jesus Himself demonstrated His omniscience by foretelling His own death and resurrection as well as other historical events which came to pass in detail just as He had spoken them.

Jesus had spoken much and taught much in the last weeks and especially during this particular evening. Washing their feet, the Pass-over, the prophecies concerning Judas, Peter and the Eleven, institution of the Lord's Supper and the doctrines taught in Chapter 14 all have been spoken this Thursday evening. But the hour appointed by the

Father in which the prince of this world would be allowed to do his worst—to His beloved Son was fast approaching. The adversary was coming to bring his accusations and there would be very little time left for Jesus to speak much with this little band of eleven. No doubt His heart was heavy, knowing their misunderstanding and dullness of heart. He could speak much more but the hour was almost here.

He must prepare to face His darkest hour. His foes would accuse Him and the prince of this world would rail at Him and slander Him through the mouths of men, but no sin or guilt would be found in Him (Jn. 18:23; Lk. 23:22; Mk. 14:56-59, etc.). The prince of this world could find no sin or guilt in Jesus and Jesus knew it. There is no doubt from this passage and others that Jesus was aware of His own sinlessness. No critic of the Bible has the right to say that Jesus did not know whether He was sinless or divine—or, that He never said He was without sin—because it is plain that Jesus both knew it and said it.

He had the power at His command to resist the evil crowd coming for Him—He had the power to refuse the cross, but in order that the world might know of His love for the Father and for mankind He would keep the Father's commandment to lay down His life upon the cross. He will prove His love by keeping His Father's commandments and so will all those who profess to know God prove their love by keeping His commandments (cf. Jn. 15:10).

### *Quiz*

1. To what extent did the Holy Spirit reveal "all" things to the apostles?
2. What is the peace which Christ gives to all believers? What does it do?
3. How is the Father greater than the Son?
4. Why does the prince of this world have nothing "in" Jesus?
5. How does a person prove his love to God?

## EXPOSITORY SERMON FOURTEEN

### A HAPPY GOODBYE!

John 14:1-31

### *Introduction*

#### I. BACKGROUND

A. Jesus had just spoken of "going away" where the disciples could not then follow (Jn. 13:36-38).

1. They were perplexed.
2. They were ready to die for him in a physical battle (cf. also Jn. 11:16).



3. They did not know what was about to come to them at His dark hour of Calvary.
  - B. Jesus knew that they needed to be strengthened and warned.
    1. There is a deep pathos underlying the words of Jesus—the reader of these three chapters (14-15-16), may almost feel the urgency and tenderness of Jesus.
    2. Jesus desires to prepare them for the shock of what is soon to follow.
      - a. Due to their dullness He cannot speak too bluntly and plainly.
  - C. Jesus also knew that His going would bring eventual joy to the disciples.
- II. PREACHING OF THIS NATURE NEEDED TODAY
- A. Christian people need to be encouraged and strengthened.
  - B. Paul wrote to the people of Thessalonica—"comfort (strengthen) one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:18).
  - C. Some preaching on the present ministry of Christ as High Priest and "Preparer" needs to be done today.
  - D. Christian people need to be taught the Biblical doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Not just "about" Him, but instructions as to how He may be allowed to dwell in them and how they may be filled with Him more fully.

### *Discussion*

- I. HE GOES TO PREPARE A PLACE OF PERMANENT REST FOR HIS LOVED ONES
- A. This prepared place is not necessarily a "mansion" as we think of "mansions" today.
    1. The Greek word *monai* (used also in Jn. 14:23) is better translated, "dwelling place," "abiding place," "resting place."
    2. The kingdom of God (whether on earth or in Heaven) is a "dwelling place of rest."
      - a. The kingdom of Christ (the church) is figuratively spoken of as a place of rest, peace, security (Isa. 9 & 11, etc.)
      - b. The new dispensation is spoken of in the epistle to the Hebrews as the fulfillment of the rest which God had planned and typified in Joshua and did not fulfill in David (Heb. 3 & 4).
      - c. Jesus spoke of giving rest (Matt. 11:28-30).
      - d. Heaven, of course, is the ultimate abode of rest (Rev. 14:13).

3. Jesus, in His "going" (death, resurrection and ascension) prepared a "resting place" both temporal (the church) and eternal (Heaven).

B. Jesus, Himself, is the Way.

1. He does not merely show the Way, *He is* the Way.
2. By His personal, meritorious work we are saved.
3. This Way was prophesied (Isa. 35:8) and finds its fulfillment in Heb. 10:19-25.
4. He is the Truth and the Life (see our comments on this verse).

## II. HE GOES TO MAKE THE DISCIPLES CO-LABORERS WITH GOD

A. He has the authority to do so.

1. He and the Father are One.
2. He has revealed unto the disciples the Father.

B. He promises these eleven disciples that they will do the great works which He has done while on earth.

1. Speaking the words of God through the Holy Spirit.
2. Performing miracles.
3. Even raising the dead.

C. But they, and those who should later believe in Him, would do greater works even than Jesus.

1. They would preach the gospel to the whole world.
2. They would exercise, in the gospel, a power far greater than power over nature.

- a. To convert men, possessed of the freedom of choice, is to do a greater work than walking on the water.

3. Preaching the gospel is the "greatest work in the world."

D. Jesus sets up the "power lines" through which the believer may receive power to do this "greatest work."

1. If we ask anything IN HIS NAME, we shall have it.
2. We believe this to be a promise to all Christians conditional upon the requests being IN HIS NAME.
  - a. (See our comments on this verse.)
  - b. (cf. I Jn. 5:14-15.)

## III. HE GOES TO "COME AGAIN" IN THE SPIRIT

A. Keeping His commandments is reiterated as a condition necessary for the sending of the Spirit.

B. He will be a Strengtheners and Helper and will not leave them "orphans."

C. He will be the Spirit of Truth.

1. The world cannot receive Him because it refuses to have

God in its knowledge.

2. Worldlings will not believe *because* God's Word tells them the truth (Jn. 8:44-45).
- D. He will dwell in all believers (14:21, 23).
  1. All believers will not receive the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.
  2. But His personality will dwell in men and women through His will as expressed in His word (see our special comments on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, pages      ).
  3. THERE HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND ERRONEOUS TEACHING ON THIS SUBJECT.
    - a. As a result many millions of Christians are not availing themselves of the POWER of the Holy Spirit for their daily lives by "partaking" of the Spirit (Jn. 6:63).
    - b. Too many people are waiting for the Holy Spirit to do some irresistible work upon them apart from the revealed will of the Spirit in the written word. They want to be compelled to be good without any effort or surrender on their part!
    - c. The only dependable agency available to man by which he may be certain that he *knows* the Holy Spirit or *feels* Him or that He *controls* him is obedience to the written will of the Holy Spirit in His word, which is the Bible!

#### IV. HE GOES TO BRING PEACE

- A. The Holy Spirit will come and lead them into all truth.
  1. This will bring the final, complete revelation of God concerning man's redemption: this will bring the kingdom of Peace (Isa. 9).
- B. This will be a Peace quite unlike any peace the world knows or seeks.
  1. The foolish world rejects the Prince of Peace when it seeks even its temporal peace.
  2. There can never be lasting peace on earth among nations and men as long as there are men at enmity with God, unregenerate and unsaved.
- C. Christ's peace is twofold, one aspect of it absolutely necessary to cause the other.
  1. First, mankind had to be reconciled to God. Man the sinner becomes an enemy of God when he transgresses God's law.
    - a. Jesus Christ became the Lamb of God to suffer man's penalty.

- b. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (II Cor. 5:17-21).
- c. He was our peace, breaking down the barrier of sin and law (Eph. 2:14-15) (cf. also Col. 1:20).
- d. Man, however, must exercise faith and obedience in order to avail himself of this peace (Rom. 5:1-2).
- 2. When man has thus availed himself of this peace through the access of faith it brings that peace of mind and soul which is subjective and inner.
  - a. It is a perfect (complete) peace (Isa. 26:3).
  - b. It brings cheer (Jn. 16:33).
  - c. It passes understanding (Phil. 4:7).
  - d. It rules our hearts (Col. 3:15).
  - e. It is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- 3. Both aspects of it to be preached (Acts 10:36).

### *Conclusion*

#### I. ALTHOUGH HE MUST SAY GOODBYE FOR AWHILE, IT IS A DEPARTURE THAT BRINGS HAPPINESS, FRUITFULNESS, PEACE

##### A. He does not leave His disciples as orphans.

- 1. They are not fatherless, for their Father came and manifested Himself to them—demonstrated His love and care for them.
- 2. They are not homeless because their Master is preparing a dwelling place for them of permanent rest.
- 3. They are not lost for they are walking in Him, the Light, the Way, the Truth and the Life.
- 4. They are not deserted for they have a divine Helper.

##### B. All who do not believe and obey Christ are the most pathetic orphans the world has ever known.

- 1. They have no Heavenly Father—their father is the devil.
- 2. They have no home but must face eternal unrest and torment in the hellish abyss.
- 3. They are even now lost and are wandering as blind men in the darkness.
- 4. They have no Helper.

#### II. HIS GOODBYE WILL RESULT IN THEIR CARRYING ON THE WORK WHICH HE BEGAN

- A. They, and all believers, will become co-laborers with God in the redemption of the world.
- B. They, and all believers, will be crowned with the victor's reward for faithful service.

### III. HIS GOODBYE MEANS THE SPIRIT WILL COME AND TAKE RESIDENCE IN ALL WHO BELIEVE AND DESIRE HIM

A. He will bring joy and fruitfulness into men's lives.

B. He will make the hidden wisdom of God known to men through the apostles.

### IV. HIS GOODBYE MEANS PEACE FOR ALL MEN WHO WILL ACCEPT IT BY FAITH

A. A peace more wonderful than anything the world can ever offer.

B. A peace which passes all understanding.

C. A peace and calm which overcomes all the storms of this life.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

This chapter contains one of the many rhetorical masterpieces of Jesus found in the gospels. Speakers strive for a lifetime to attain the profundity, simplicity, beauty and practicalness expressed in the allegory of the Vine and the branches (Jn. 15:1-11), and find that simply to quote what Jesus said is better than all their own eloquence. Had Jesus never uttered these beautiful words the world would have been much poorer in literary genius, let alone divine wisdom.

The main theme of this chapter is the Living Union of Christ and His Disciples. There are, of course, a few specific promises and instructions which apply strictly to the eleven apostles. But most of the instructions are ageless in their application and they are for the edification of all Christians.

The relationship between Christ and the Christian is not organizational but organic, vivifical, living. Even the societal relationship between Christian and Christian is dependent first and foremost upon the living union between Christ and the individual Christian. There is no life, no beauty and no fruitfulness except in living union with Christ. Apart from Him, even though an organizational status be maintained, there is only withering, decay and death.

We commend every Christian who is interested in knowing and feeling the reality of a closer walk with God to this fifteenth chapter of John. To every Christian who desires joy and satisfaction and fruitfulness we say, "put the teaching of this chapter to practice." To every preacher and teacher who desires to communicate more effectively we say, "imitate the simplicity and earnestness of the Master in John 15!"

This fifteenth chapter lends itself to excellent continuity when being outlined. We continue our outline of the third main division of the Gospel according to John:

III. The Word Manifested to The Disciples and Their Acceptance of Him. 13:1—20:31

A. Private Instructions and Encouragements, 13:1—17:26  
(continued)

3. The Living Union of Christ and His Disciples, 15:1-27

a. Vital Union of Vine and Branches, 15:1-11

(1) The Vine the source of vitality

(2) Pruning needed to produce

(3) Reward of the relationship

b. Frank Union of Friends, 15:12-17

(1) Unlimited Love

(2) Communion of Confidants

(3) Access to Abundance

c. Persevering Union of the Persecuted, 15:18-27

(1) Participation brings persecution

(2) Greater revelation—greater responsibility

(3) Comforter will come

VITAL UNION OF VINE AND BRANCHES

*Text 15:1-11*

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

3 Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned:

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples.

9 Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

### *Queries*

a. How were they cleansed through the word which He had spoken?  
v. 3

b. How are His disciples to abide in Him and He in them? v. 5

c. What was His joy? v. 11

### *Paraphrase*

I, Myself, am the Vine, the real one. My Father is the Vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes and cleanses that it may yield more fruit. You have already received your initial cleansing through faith and obedience to the word which I have spoken to you. Now continue to remain in Me and let Me remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit unless it remains in living union with the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in living union with Me. I, the Vine, am the life-source; you, the branches, are the agents for bearing fruit. The man that dwells in Me and in whom I dwell in this living union, this man bears much fruit. Apart from Me you can do nothing fruitful. If a man is not dwelling in Me in living union, he is thrown away as a branch that is withered and dead and is gathered up with the others, and thrown into the fire and burned. If you continue to abide in Me and let Me abide in you through My words, you may ask whatsoever you will for My sake, and it shall be given unto you. This is the way My Father is glorified and exalted—when you produce much fruit by dwelling in Me. This also is the way you continue to become My disciples—when you continue to produce much fruit. Just as the Father loved Me and His love sustained Me, I also love you and My love for you will sustain you if you dwell in My love. If you keep My commandments you will live and dwell in My love even as I keep My Father's commandments and live and dwell in His love. All of these things I am telling you that you may come to know the same joy that I know and that your joy may be one of fullness.

### *Summary*

Jesus teaches that fruitfulness, adoration of the Father and discipleship is dependent upon living union with Christ, the Vine. All of this results, in turn, in a fullness of joy which Christ Himself knew.

*Comment*

Let us keep constantly in mind the central theme of these last fleeting hours of private instruction to the disciples: the living union between Christ and His disciples. From the opening of the Passover supper that night until He is arrested in Gethsemane, He uses many different figures of speech and different approaches to illustrate the absolute necessity of this intimate union.

The Passover celebration was always pregnant with Messianic prophecies, types and symbolism carried over from the Jewish Scriptures into the rituals of the night. Jesus had just referred to Himself as the fulfillment of the shadowy sacrifice of the Passover lamb. He had just plainly told them that He came as a ransom for the sins of many. He had referred to the "fruit of the vine" as a symbolic memorial of His blood. Perhaps they had gone out into the night (14:31, "Arise, let us go hence") and on their way from the upper room to Gethsemane had passed the Temple. Now the Temple, as Herod had restored it, had a great vine made of gold entwined and hanging around the door into the Holy Place. The vine is a figure employed prolifically in the Old Testament to typify the chosen Messianic people of God:

- a. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel (Isa. 5:1-7).
- b. I had planted thee a noble vine . . . (Jer. 2:21).
- c. Israel is an empty vine . . . (Hos. 10:1).
- d. "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt" (Psa. 80:8).
- e. See also, Ezek. 15; 19:10.

The vine had actually become the symbol of the nation of Israel. The emblem on the coins of the Maccabees was the vine. It may be that the minds of the disciples, already dwelling on their idea of the temporal Messianic kingdom, were being drawn into further materialistic meanderings as they thought of the Old Testament symbols of Israel, the Lord's vine. They were contemplating their position in this kingdom because of their national heritage as Israelites. But Jesus would have them know that He was the Vine, the *real* Vine, in contrast to the typical vine. Membership in the Messianic kingdom, and all the glorious blessings promised by the prophets, is to be found not by national inheritance but by personal faith and intimate communion in the Person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and True Vine. It is the same as all the nations of the earth being blessed in Abraham . . . in The Seed (singular, Gal. 3:16) of Abraham.

Whatever prompted the allegory of the Vine, it is one of the most beautiful pieces of rhetoric available for man to feed his soul upon.



And its purpose is to explain both the idealistic and practical sides of the vital union between Christ and all who would be His disciples.

He begins with the emphatic verb-pronoun linking which translated literally means, "I, Myself, am the Vine, the real Vine!" The only fruitful, saving relationship is intimate communion by the disciple with the Person of his Master. He, the Vine, is the source of life for the branch. There is no other source of life for the branch—apart from the Vine the branch not only does not bear fruit, it withers and dies and is burned.

The Father is the Vinedresser, the Husbandman. The Greek word for husbandman is *georgos*, meaning farmer or vinedresser. It is the same word from which we get the proper name in English of *George*. Notice the twofold work of the Husbandman. Every disciple (branch) who does not produce fruit after his own kind (other disciples) is cut off completely, cast forth and burned (v. 6). The whole idea of the allegory is that if there is any real union between the disciple and the Master, there will be some life, and if there is any life there will be some fruit. Therefore, the disciple who has no fruit has no life because he has no real union with his Master. God grant that preachers may be raised up to preach the Word of God with a fervency, purity and communicativeness which will draw all who profess to be "branches" into this intimate, personal union with the Vine. Preachers may organize, delegate and create a furor of activity, but there will be no real fruit until each Christian is in this life-supplying union with Christ.

The "branch" that does abide in the Vine and produce some fruit is cleansed by the Husbandman in order that it may produce more fruit. The vine is grown all over Palestine. It is a plant which needs a great deal of attention if the best fruit is to be produced on it. Each year the vine is drastically pruned that it may produce more and better fruit. We quote Maclaren here:

"We all, in our Christian life, carry with us the two natures—our own poor miserable selves, and the better life of Jesus Christ within us. The one flourishes at the expense of the other; and it is the Husbandman's merciful, though painful work, to cut back unsparingly the rank shoots that come from self, in order that all the force of our lives may be flung into the growing of the cluster which is acceptable to Him . . . let us understand the meaning of all that comes to us. The knife is sharp and the tendrils bleed, and things that seem very beautiful and precious are unsparingly shorn away, and we are left bare, and, as it seems to ourselves, impoverished. But oh! it is all sent that we may fling

our force into the production of fruit unto God. And no stroke will be a stroke too many or too deep if it helps us to that . . ."

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us, "All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11).

The word "cleanse" comes from the Greek word *catharoi* from which we get the English *catharsis* which means to purify. This continual purification of the Christian comes when his faith is put to the test through the chastening of the Lord and tribulations. The branch which continues to draw his life from the Vine not only endures the pruning but is made stronger and more fruitful as a result. We also must be diligent to purify our souls by our obedience to the truth (I Pet. 1:23) and follow after peace with all men and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14).

In verse 3 Jesus tells the disciples that they have already been cleansed ("pruned") to a certain degree through the word which He had taught them. Already, through their reception of His word, certain of the "rank shoots" of worldliness had been cut out of their lives. Already they had accepted the call to discipleship and had sacrificed much and had borne some fruit. The same principle applies here as was stated by Jesus in John 13:10—see our comments on that verse.

Verses 1 through 3 have concentrated on the pruning and cleansing of the branches in order that they might produce much fruit. Now in verses 4 through 7 the concentration is upon the vital union of the branch in the Vine. The branch is *powerless* (Greek here is *ou dunatai*: meaning literally, *no dynamic*) to bear worthwhile fruit apart from the life which the Vine supplies. In the first three verses the great fundamental facts are presented (a) the Vine, (b) the branches, (c) the Vinedresser working for fruit. Upon these three great facts rests the imperative admonition, "Abide in Me . . ." All that is good and true and just and holy in word or deed coming forth from the Christian, originates not in him as branch but has its origin and motivation and power in Jesus Christ, the Vine. If anything good comes from us it is "the mind of Christ in us" (Phil. 2:5-8; Eph. 2:8-10; Col. 1:27-29). Apart from the love of Christ we can do nothing pleasing to God, even though we "give our body to be burned" (I Cor. 13:1-3; Matt. 7:21-23) and "perform miracles."

Not only is it impossible to bear fruit apart from Christ, it is impossible to live! The assumption is that Jesus is warning these disciples who are now "in Him" not to sever that relationship lest they wither and die and be cast into the pyre (Greek *pur*; meaning *fire*).

Being cast into the fire undoubtedly means being cast into hell (cf. Matt. 3:8-12, 7:19, 13:42, 25:41). The wood of the branch has the curious characteristic that it is good for nothing when severed from the vine. It is too soft for any use. At certain times of the year the Jews were required to bring wood offerings to use in the fires on the Temple altar (Neh. 10:34, 13:31). The commandment (Lev. 6:8-13) was that wood of trees were to be burned upon the altar. The wood of the vine was fit for nothing (Ezek. 15:1-5). The only thing that could be done with the wood pruned out of a vine was to make a bonfire of it and destroy it (cf. Isa. 27:11).

Now the important question is: "How may we abide in Him in the Vine-branch relationship of which He speaks?" Is it completely mystical and must we wait upon a mystical revelation apart from the written revelation?

The authoritative word of Christ speaks the only answer in verses 7 through 10. Let us here quote Dr. Maclaren again:

"His abiding in us is . . . the abiding of His words in us; or, to speak more accurately, the abiding of His words in us is . . . the means of His abiding in us. What is meant by Christ's words abiding in us? . . . It means the whole of the conscious nature of a man being, so to speak, saturated with Christ's words; his desires, His understanding, His affections, His will, all being steeped in these great truths which the Master spoke."

If Christ's words are your desires then your desires will harmonize with His will, and "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Christ knows what is best for us. He loves us too much to give us our selfish desires and so the abundance of His riches is withheld until our wills are brought into conformity to His will.

To abide in His love (v. 10) is the same as abiding in Him. And how are we to abide in His love? By keeping His commandments just as He kept the Father's commandments. Christ in us is our "hope of glory" (Col. 1:27) and He dwells in us through His word (cf. our sermon notes on the Holy Spirit).

Bearing fruit (which is a result of abiding in Him) is also one of the ways to go on abiding in Him. The word "be" in verse 8 would be better translated "become" (from Greek *ginomai*) indicating that discipleship is a continuing process. We never so much *are* disciples as we are in the process of *becoming* disciples. Bearing fruit has, of course, the highest of all purposes, to bring glory and honor to God the Father. We are to let our lights shine before men in such a way that men may see our fruit and glorify the name of God (Matt. 5:16;

Jn. 3:21; I Pet. 2:12). All of our fruit-bearing and glorifying of God is prompted by our intimate union with Him in keeping His word. Lenski says, ". . . this is how we remain in Jesus: by receiving and permanently holding his utterances, the *hremata* (words) that come from his lips. He in us, and we in Him, the medium and bond of His spiritual union being His spoken Word" (cf. Jn. 15:7-10 with Jn. 8:31).

Verse 11 is the crowning point of this whole discussion. Jesus has laid down the divine formula for finding and filling oneself with joy. It is not a joy of frivolity which the world gives and takes away. It is joy "unspeakable and full of glory" it is the joy which Christ Himself knows. Though He was a man of sorrows while on the earth, there was in His soul that deep and abiding joy which no tribulation could smother. It was prophesied that He would be anointed with the oil of gladness (Psa. 45:7; Heb. 1:9). He found joy in the fact of God's revelation to men (Lk. 10:21); He found joy in saving the lost (Lk. 15); but most of all His joy was in the glory that was set before Him (cf. Heb. 12:2; Jn. 17:3). His joy on earth was found in complete self-surrender in love (Jn. 4:34) and this is where His disciples shall find the same joy (Jn. 13:17).

The plain path which leads to a cup of joy that runneth over is: (a) Abide in Him, (b) bear fruit, (c) glorify the Father. Why are so many Christian people not finding joy and fulfillment in their Christianity? Why are they withered and dead? Because they have not allowed the life-giving, fruit-bearing sustenance of the Word of God and the Spirit of Christ to flow through them. Further, they do not allow the Word to flow out of them as a river of living water, quenching the thirst of the souls of the unsaved; nor are they lights unto the world; nor are they the salt of the earth. They are unfruitful. They are unhappy and bereft of the joy of Christ!

### Quiz

1. What background probably prompted Jesus to use the allegory of the Vine and the branches?
2. What is the main purpose of the allegory?
3. What part does the husbandman play in the allegory?
4. Do works and busy activity always indicate fruitfulness? Why?
5. What good is a branch if it does not bear fruit? What happens to it?
6. How do we abide in the Vine?
7. What is the joy of Christ and how may His disciples find the same joy?

## FRANK UNION OF FRIENDS

*Text 15:12-17*

12 This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you.

15 No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye may love one another.

*Queries*

- a. May love be commanded (vs. 12, 17)?
- b. When did Christ call the apostles, "servants"?
- c. How would their fruit abide (v. 16)?

*Paraphrase*

My one basic precept and commandment is that you continue to love one another in the same kind of love, having the same motive and purpose, with which I have loved you. The world over, men recognize as the supreme evidence of love that a man will voluntarily give up his own life for the sake of his friends. You are My friends if you are willing to let your love for one another rise to such self-sacrifice and thus keep My precepts. You have not been treated as bondslaves. The bondslave is not taken into his master's confidence but simply receives orders and carries them out without knowing the master's plans or purposes. But I have treated you as My friends, for all the plans and purposes which I heard from My Father I have revealed to you. Furthermore, this friendship is of My choosing and development. Our friendship is not on the basis of mutuality and reciprocity, but on the basis of My divine sovereignty and love. I chose you and appointed you as My friends that you may go and produce results from your labors that will remain forever, and that whatever you need from the Father to glorify His name in your labors and carry out His will you know He will give it to you. What I have said to you about My calling you by My divine sovereignty and not from any merit on the part of any of you—and what I have said to you concerning taking you into My confidence as friends—and what I have

said to you about My ultimate love for you has all been said in order that you may keep on loving one another as brothers in Me.

### *Summary*

To prompt the disciples to love one another Jesus tells them: (a) He willingly sacrifices His life for them; (b) He takes them into His confidence as His bosom friends; (c) He does both of these by His own divine election.

### *Comment*

May love be commanded? Can love be ordered into existence? We are sure that it cannot. As one writer has said, "The two ideas of commandment and love do not go well together. You cannot pump up love to order, and if you try you generally produce . . . sentimental hypocrisy, hollow and unreal." Nevertheless, we are able to direct our attention to things or persons outside ourselves and we are able to do battle against self-absorption and self-love. This ability of directing the conscious thoughts and feelings away from self which is under our control may also be commanded. Therefore, if we will concentrate on and give our attention to Jesus and to others, love will be motivated. Hence we will be following His command to love one another even in the same way He loved. He counted the being on equality with God a thing not to be grasped, but emptied Himself and took the form of a servant and became obedient unto a self-sacrificing death (Phil. 2:5-10). If we follow in His steps we shall be carrying out His commandment.

There is an air of completeness and all-sufficiency about this commandment (v. 12). It seems as if Jesus were saying, "This is all that you, as a group, will need to carry out My appointment." They needed no rank or complicated organization amongst them to bear fruit for Him; they needed only to love one another with the same kind of love, having the same motive and purpose, as the love which Jesus gave to them. It is to be a brotherly love that is "unfeigned" and "fervent" (I Pet. 1:22, 3:8; I Jn. 2:14-18, 4:7-11). This love of the brethren is the mark by which the world discerns those who are the disciples of Jesus (Jn. 13:34-35). It is still the one all-sufficient requisite for His disciples today. The church of the living Christ is more apt to bear abundant and abiding fruit today if its members love one another from the heart fervently, than it is through all the superstructure of world-wide ecclesiastical organization. Lack of brotherly love is the symptom of an even deeper evil—hate for God (I Jn. 4:20-21), and how is a man to bear righteous fruit for the glory of God if he hates both God and his brother?

In verse 13 Jesus states a principle that is generally accepted among

all men as the ultimate love. Man has no greater gift to offer, no greater sacrifice to make for another than his very life. It is the most here deeper than mere sacrifice of the physical life. What Jesus desires is laying down of "self" upon the altar of love. A man may even give his body to be burned and have not love (I Cor. 13:3). One may even lay down his physical life from a self-glorifying, self-gratifying motive. The love of which Jesus speaks is a love which "counts others better than self," which *denies self* even if the physical body remain alive.

Jesus takes another of the forms of mortal love, friendship (vs. 14-15), and glorifies and exalts it by exercising it to the divine degree. Jesus glorified the estate of family love when He taught, "He that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother and sister and mother" (Mk. 3:31-35). He glorified the estate of husband-wife love when He inspired the apostle to write the *great* dissertation on Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22-32). But the important thing to notice here is the reciprocal nature of the friendship. First there is the divine condescension that Christ chooses to allow men to be His friends. Then there is the condition which men have to fulfill to come into this relationship of *friendship-by-grace*. We are His friends only on the condition that we do the things which He has commanded.

But what a friendship that is once the circle has been completed! There are no limitations in that friendship on His part. He sacrifices self (vs. 12-13). And we are taken into close fellowship with Him, we are made to become confidants of His. Those who believe and trust Jesus and keep His commandments find that their relationship to Him grows into one of friendship rather than the drudgery of slavish and unintelligent oppression. The slave is given orders and is never taken into the confidence of his master as to the master's purposes and plans. But Jesus tells His friends everything He can concerning the plans and purposes of the Father. There is much that all of His friends cannot understand (Jn. 16:12), for His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are not our ways (Isa. 55:8-11). But what we can understand He *frankly* and *plainly* tells us. And even in those things which He withholds (things which we think we would be better for knowing) He does so out of love. A friend exercises reticence as well as frankness, when reticence is to the loved one's profit. But, of that which we most certainly need to know, He is very frank to say, "If it were not so, I would have told you!"

And in elevating those who believe in Him from slaves to friends He also took off them the chains of their bondage to ignorance, sin

and fear. His yoke is easy and the burden light (Matt. 11:25-30), but the weight of ignorance, guilt of sin and fear of death before He took us as friends was unbearable (Matt. 23:4; Acts 15:10; Heb. 2:15).

Actually, the relationship of Master and slave is not broken when Jesus chooses us to be His friends. The "slaves" remain slaves of their own choice. They serve Him as freed men bringing themselves into slavery to Him of their own volition and love for Him (cf. Rom. 1:1; II Pet. 1:1; Jude 1).

Verse 16 makes it very plain that our relation to Him as friends is dependent first and foremost upon His divine willingness and grace. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6, 8). We were apprehended by Him (Phil. 3:12). We were divinely elected, but that was made eons ago potentially "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3-14). Potentially all men are elected to be saved, but only "In Christ." Man then must exercise his freedom to choose whether he desires this election or not by coming "into Christ" or remaining out of Him by obedience to His commandments (I Jn. 2:3-6, 2:27, 5:1-4, etc.). Even among these first disciples they were chosen by election but they themselves had to choose whether or not they wished that election. One (Judas Iscariot) refused the divine election. Even here they must go and bear fruit if they desire to "make their calling and election sure" (cf. II Pet. 1:2-11). Yes, the Shepherd always seeks the lost sheep before the sheep seeks the Shepherd, but the sheep must hear and follow the voice of the Shepherd to realize the safety and bountifulness of the fold.

And so, the disciples were chosen and appointed (or commissioned) with special gifts of the Holy Spirit in order that they might go and bear fruit. They were to go and sow the precious seed of the Word and reap a harvest of souls. This harvest of souls and the establishment of the church of Christ on earth was to be an abiding monument to their faith in Christ. The church itself, upon its establishment, was to be henceforth eternal, made up of living stones. And so is the fruit of the labors of every evangelist and Bible teacher who has ever had any part in winning a soul to Christ or of strengthening a soul in Christ. They are laying up for themselves treasures in heaven which are eternal, they will receive an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away.

And now, in summation, all that He had said to them of their election by grace—His taking them into His confidence as friends—about His own self-sacrificing love—all this has been said to provoke them



Because what they ask will be in His name, in accordance with His will and desires for man. When we make our wishes and desires Christ's, and Christ's desires ours, we shall be satisfied.

### *Quiz*

1. How may we carry out the command to "love one another"?
2. What must a man "lay down" to love ultimately?
3. What is the condition on man's part in friendship with Christ?
4. What are two differences between a slave and a friend according to the Scriptures?
5. How are men elected by God? Is man involved in this "divine election"?
6. May men today bear "abiding fruit"? How?
7. How may we "have whatsoever we ask in the Father's name"?

### PERSEVERING UNION OF THE PERSECUTED

#### *Text 15:18-27*

18 If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me:

27 and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

### *Queries*

- a. How had Jesus chosen the disciples "out of the world"?
- b. How does Jesus' speaking to the people bring sin (v. 22)?

c. In what way would the Comforter bear witness of Christ?

### *Paraphrase*

Do not be overcome with despair when the world hates you, but take courage by understanding why the world hated me before it hated you. If your nature and character were worldly, the world would love you. But because your nature is not now in harmony with the world, due to My word which is now in you and has set you apart from the world, for this very reason the world despises you. You must keep on remembering the precept which I have taught you: A servant cannot hope to enjoy a better life than his master. If the worldlings have persecuted Me, the Master, they will most certainly persecute you, the servant. If any of them have kept My word, they will keep your word also which will be the word of the Master's appointed servants. And all of these persecutions they will bring upon you due to their hatred of Me because they do not know and love the One who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them the plain and final revelation of God they would not have been so acutely aware of their sinfulness. But now that I have come and they have rejected Me and My word they shall be condemned more severely, for they have no excuse whatever for their unbelief. Whoever hates Me, hates God My Father also. Moreover, if I had not proved My deity and Messiahship to the Jews through the works which I did—and no other messenger of God has ever done such works—they would not be guilty of the terrible sin of rejecting the Messiah. But now they are compelled by the miracles to recognize that the Father is with Me and so in hating Me they hate both Me and My Father. And the Father is using all this hatred to fulfill His plan of redemption in Me which He prophesied in their Scriptures, "They hated me without a cause." But when the Helper comes, the Person whom I will send from the Father to be with you, I mean the Spirit of Truth, He will be a divine personality bearing witness to Me and sustaining the witness which you, who have been with Me from the beginning of My ministry, shall also make concerning Me to the world.

### *Summary*

His disciples will be persecuted because the world hates Him. The world hates Him because of the perfect piercing revelation He made of God's righteousness. God will use the world's hatred to fulfill His redemptive purposes. They are not to despair in their persecution for they will have the divine Helper to sustain them in their work of witnessing.

precious possession he has. And if any man will lay down his life for a friend he has loved him as fully as he is able. But there is something

*Comment*

The vital union between Christ and His followers results in a fellowship of fruitfulness (vs. 1-11); a fellowship of confidence and communion (vs. 12-17); this union also results in a fellowship of suffering! Because this unity binds them into one sanctified body, it separates them from all those who do not wish to participate in this holy calling. Jesus came to call men apart from the world. This naturally results in enmity on the part of the world (Matt. 10:34-39).

The "if" of verse 18 does not mean "there may be the possibility that the world will hate you." In the original Greek idiom it means "there is no question but that the world hates you."

Why should the world hate those whose very purpose is to do good? First, those who seek to do good must seek to propagate truth. What the Christian believes and teaches to be precious, the world regards as valueless. Much of what the Christian regards to be wrong, the world regards as right. Second, the righteous life of the Christian is a constant rebuke and judgment on unrighteous living and is, therefore, in direct opposition to the worldly life. All of this is because the world is out of harmony with the will of God. Men of the world walk by sight and not by faith. Their main interest is in satisfying the desires of the flesh and the pride of life. They have no concern for the hereafter. They are only after the "here." It all depends upon what a man judges to be valuable—it depends on where the treasure is, for there will the heart be also. If a man loves darkness, he will hate the light (cf. our comments on Jn. 3:18-21).

There is an alternative! If the follower of Christ would escape the hostility of the world and become one of the world's "hail, fellow, well met" children, all the Christian need do is lower his flag, cover up his badge and "do as the Romans do" and he will be loved by the world. As Maclaren puts it, "A half-Christianized world and a more than half-secularized Church get on well together . . . why should the world care to hate or trouble itself about a professing Church, large parts of which are only a bit of the world under another name?" When Christian people and churches become vain, earthly, sensual, given to pleasure, wealth, and ambition, the world will not oppose them . . . BUT GOD WILL!

But true disciples of Jesus are not of the world. When Jesus calls men out from the world and sanctifies them by His word, His Spirit abides in them (cf. Jn. 17:13-19). Henceforth they seek to make their every thought and deed captive to His will. Because they have overcome the world by faith and Christ now lives in them, the world hates them and makes war upon them (cf. II Tim. 3:12).

There are three approaches Jesus makes to prepare and arm His "little children" for their trying hours ahead. First, He tells them plainly that they must expect persecution. Fore-warned is fore-armed. Had He disguised or tempered His warning it would have been the worse for them when the persecution, in all its terribleness, came upon them. He told them plainly that they would be betrayed by parents and brethren and even put to death (cf. Lk. 21:12-17). Second, He tells them that whatever they may have to suffer, they can take heart in the fact that He, their Master, has suffered like persecution and hatred before them. The servant should be proud to share in tribulations with One who is so much greater than he, and regard his suffering a privilege rather than a burden (vs. 18 and 20). (cf. also II Cor. 4:17-18; Phil. 3:10; Jas. 1:2-4; I Pet. 4:12-16.) Third, Jesus tells these men that the world's hatred is a necessary outcome of their being called into fellowship with Him. They may either forfeit the privileges of such a fellowship and go back to the world, or they may retain the peace, hope and love of this fellowship and suffer the tribulations that necessarily accompany such an election. When He said "remember" He was referring to when He first sent them out. He warned them then that they would be hated and persecuted (cf. Matt. 10:16-25).

If men are of the attitude to obey God and His Son, they will obey the words of God's messengers—when God's messengers speak God's word. The apostles were inspired and thus their messages had the inherent authority of God. Men today who are spokesmen for God may expect true followers of Christ to heed their preaching but only so long as their preaching conforms to the written Word of God, the Bible. When men do not heed the word of Christ, it shows that they have not the love of the Father in them (cf. Jn. 5:42-43, 8:43-47).

In verses 22 through 25 are some of the most solemn words to ever fall from the lips of the Saviour of men. He plainly declares that by both His teachings and His miraculous works He demonstrated enough proof of His Sonship, Messiahship that men who reject Him have absolutely no excuse. In comparison with the sin of not listening to His words, and being taught by His works, all other sins dwindle into nothing. Jesus does not mean to say that these men would have been clear of all sin. The Jew was condemned by the Law; the Gentile committed sins against his conscience (cf. Rom. 1 and 2). But as black as these sins are, they are white compared with the blackness of the to love one another. He does not merely command love but with the command supplies the motive. And Christ's friends, living close to Him, and bearing fruit will get what they ask from the Father. Why?

sin of rejecting the revelation of God in His Son, Jesus Christ. The rejection of the Messiah was the crowning act of rebellion by the Jews against God which brought down the vengeance of God and caused them to become a "by-word among the nations." They rejected the "Great Prophet" (cf. Deut. 18:15-16; Acts 3:22-23). How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation (cf. Heb. 2:1-4)?

As light comes to a man and increases, so his responsibility to follow and live in the light increases (cf. Lk. 12:47-48). See also our comments on Jn. 9:35-41. "The measure of the guilt is the brightness of the light." No shadows are so black as those which are cast by the brightest noonday sun and no sin is so black as the rejection of the revelation of God in His Son who was "in the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person."

Jesus "spake as no other man" had spoken; He did works which no other prophet had ever done—not even Moses. The proof is so clear that men cannot plead ignorance. To most men the gospel has been so often presented that they cannot say they have had no opportunity. There is no excuse for their sin. They do not know the time of their visitation (cf. Lk. 19:41-44).

And the terribleness of this sin of hating Christ and His disciples is made even worse in that it is irrational and unreasonable. It is hatred without a cause. Jesus said that this hatred was foreknown by God and prophesied in the Old Testament. It was all within the purpose of God. It would be used by God to carry out His redemptive plan in Christ, the Lamb, the Suffering Servant. The same hatred by the enemies of God was shown to God's king David, but the final fulfillment of the worst that such hatred could do come from God's enemies against the One of whom David was but the shadowy type, the eternal Son of David. This prophecy is in Psalms 35:19 and 69:4—sometimes the entire Old Testament was called the law (including poetry, history and prophets). But Jesus had broken no law, injured no one, hated no one. To the contrary He sought only to do good to friend and enemy alike. What cause or reason had anyone for hating Jesus? What cause or reason has anyone today for hating Jesus? Some evil words and works have been done by evil men in the name of Jesus and His church, but the Word of Christ proclaimed and lived in the spirit of Christ has always sought the good of friend and enemy alike. What reason can the world give for hating true disciples of Jesus? None!

Now the climax to this section. He has poured out the deepest longings of His heart that they will persevere during the persecution that will inevitably come upon them. So now He promises again the

"Comforter." This is the Holy Spirit, that divine Person He promised and described in the preceding chapter. He will come as the Helper. In their witnessing to the world they will have the companionship and fellowship of this divine One. As eyewitnesses they must testify concerning Jesus (cf. Acts 1:21-22, 4:19, etc.). The Holy Spirit would come to them and guide them infallibly in calling to their remembrance, without error, what they had seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears (cf. I Jn. 1:1-4; II Pet. 1:16-21) and He would guide them into all truth which Christ had not yet taught them. But more than this, the Holy Spirit would accompany the apostles and bear witness to Jesus through the miracles He wrought through them (cf. Heb. 2:4).

If, then, God be for us, who can be against us (cf. Rom. 8:35-39)!

### *Quiz*

1. Why does the world hate Christ and His followers?
2. Name the three ways in which Jesus prepared the disciples for the persecution to come upon them?
3. What is indicated of men today who will not listen and obey gospel preaching?
4. What did Jesus mean when He said "If I had not come . . . they had not had sin"?
5. Why do men, who have had opportunity to hear of Christ, have no excuse for their sin?
6. Why is hatred of Christ irrational and unreasonable?
7. In what ways would the Holy Spirit bear witness to Jesus?

## EXPOSITORY SERMON FIFTEEN

### THE LIVING UNION OF CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES

John 15:1-27

#### *Introduction*

#### I. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE LEADS UP TO THIS

A. Chapter 14 speaks of the beginning or birth of the union between Christ and His disciples.

1. If they love Him and keep His word He will manifest Himself to them, 14:21.

2. If they love Him and keep His commandments, He will be in them . . . He will dwell in them, 14:16-17, 23.

B. He must go away, but He will return to dwell within each disciple who by faith and love keeps His word.

#### II. NOW INSTRUCTIONS ARE GIVEN ON HOW THIS LIVING UNION IS MAINTAINED

A. There is that which the disciple must do to maintain the union.

B. There is that which the Lord does to maintain the union.

C. In each relationship of the Lord and the disciple in this 15th chapter we find that the actions of both are necessary to maintain the union.

### *Discussion*

#### I. VITAL UNION OF VINE AND BRANCHES, 15:1-11

A. Pruning needed to produce, vs. 1-3.

1. This "pruning" comes from the Lord and is to the end that the branch may produce even more fruit than it is producing.
2. The chastening of the Lord yields peaceful fruit and assures us that we are His beloved children (cf. Heb. 12:3-11).
3. The Lord does this by two different methods: He cleanses us of extraneous habits and luxuries by pricking our conscience through the Word . . . we put to death the deeds of the body by the leading of the Spirit in His Word; He also chastens us by His providential operations upon our lives in the events of history and nature.
4. IT IS OUR PART TO "COUNT IT ALL JOY WHEN WE ARE TESTED" (Cf. Js. 1:2-4, 1:12-15) . . . IT IS OUR PART TO LET THE TESTING BEAR FRUIT IN OUR LIVES.

B. The Vine the source of Vitality, vs. 4-6.

1. Apart from the Vine is the source of Life, the branch cannot bear fruit.
    - a. There is no power in our testimony unless we are preaching the "power unto salvation" the gospel.
    - b. There is no power in our witness of life unless we are living with the personality of the Spirit in us.
    - c. In Isa. 55:10-11 the Word of God is depicted as a source of life just as the rain which comes down from heaven.
    - d. In John 6, the words of Christ (6:63) are said to be the living bread come down out of heaven which give life.
- THE REASON SO MANY "BRANCHES" DO NOT BEAR FRUIT IS THAT THEY ARE SO LOOSELY CONNECTED TO THE VINE THEY ARE NOT RECEIVING ANY OF THE VITAL NUTRIENTS NECESSARY TO FRUIT-BEARING!
- WHEN MEN AND WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE "EAT THE BREAD OF LIFE," AND DRINK THE "WATER OF LIFE" ONLY ONCE A WEEK, HOW CAN THEY BEAR FRUIT?

2. Apart from a living union with the vine, the branch *dies*.
  - a. The branch not only ceases to bear fruit if it does not partake of the life that is in the Vine.
  - b. It withers and dies and is cast into the fire (cf. Matt. 3:8-12, 7:19, 13:42, 25:41) see also our comments on page
  - c. THERE ARE NO INACTIVE CHRISTIANS . . . NO FRUITLESS BRANCHES. CHRISTIANS CANNOT STAND STILL, THEY EITHER GO FORWARD AND BEAR FRUIT, OR GO BACKWARD WITHERING AND DYING AND BEING BURNED.

C. Reward of the Relationship, 7-11.

1. Notice that in verse 7 Jesus tells us very plainly just *how* this Vine-branch relationship may be maintained: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you . . ."
2. One of the rewards is that if our wills are in harmony with Christ's will, then we shall have an answer to every prayer we make . . . WHAT A POWER THERE IS IN PRAYER.
3. One of the rewards is that our Heavenly Father is glorified when we bear much fruit. This is our purpose . . . this is our calling . . . when we glorify Him, He will glorify us in Himself.
4. Another of the rewards is that we shall "dwell" in love. LIVING IN HIS LOVE . . . OVERSHADOWED BY HIS MIGHTY LOVE (cf. Rom. 8:31-39).
5. The crowning reward is in v. 11: WE SHALL BE FILLED WITH THE SAME JOY WHICH OUR SAVIOUR KNEW . . . JOY UNSPEAKABLE AND FULL OF GLORY. A JOY, NOT AS THE WORLD THINKS OF JOY, BUT JOY IN THAT WHICH IS ETERNALLY SATISFYING, BEARING FRUIT UNTO HIS KINGDOM!

II. FRANK UNION OF FRIENDS, 15:12-17

- A. First Jesus gives the one great basic precept: His disciples are to maintain unity among themselves on the basis of love—the same LOVE WHICH HE HAD FOR THEM.
  1. The world over, men recognize as the supreme evidence of love that a man will voluntarily give up his own life for the sake of his friends.
  2. This Jesus was about to do. They would be His friends if they were willing to let their love for one another rise to such self-sacrifice and thus keep His precept.



3. Such a love is unlimited. It has no bounds. Such love is God like love for it loves first (cf. I Jn. 4:7-12).
- B. Next Jesus promises to take His disciples into a communion that is enjoyed only by friends and confidants.
  1. Those who believe and trust Jesus and keep His commandments find that their relationship to Him grows into one of fellowship and friendship rather than the drudgery of slavish and unintelligent oppression.
  2. A slave is given orders and is never taken into the confidence of his master concerning the master's plans and purposes.
  3. But Jesus tells His friends (reveals to them) everything He can concerning the plans and purposes of the Father. Thus we know things which the Prophets did not know—things which angels desire to look into.
  4. But there are things which even friends cannot understand and do not need to know (cf. Jn. 16:12; Isa. 55:8-11). A good friend exercises reticence as well as frankness, when reticence is to the loved one's profit. So does Jesus in our case. But, of that which we most certainly need to know, He is very frank to say, "If it were not so, I would have told you."
- C. Friends have access to one another's abundance. Jesus makes the abundant power and resources of the Heavenly Father's storehouse.
  1. If we ask anything according to His will we know that all the resources of Heaven will be sent to fulfill that request.
  2. What a grand and glorious promise that is!
  3. (cf. I Jn. 5:14-15.)
  4. GREATER THINGS FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD COULD BE WROUGHT THAN ARE BEING ACCOMPLISHED NOW . . . IF CHRISTIAN PEOPLE WOULD JUST BELIEVE AND AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THIS PROMISE FOR THE ONGOING OF THE KINGDOM! BUT WHAT IS THE SMALLEST SERVICE OF THE CHURCH? *PRAYER MEETING!* THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DOES NOT BELIEVE IN PRAYER!!! BUT GOD DOES!!

### III. PERSEVERING UNION OF THE PERSECUTED, 15:18-27

- A. Participation with Christ in this living union will bring persecution, vs. 18-21.
  1. If we are united with Christ and stand for what He stands

for; if we are against what He is against; if we live as He lived; **WE WILL BE PERSECUTED BY THE WORLD.**

2. Much of what the Christian regards to be wrong, the world regards as right; what the Christian believes and teaches to be precious, the world regards as valueless. **THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD ARE DISAGREED AND IN OPPOSITION AS TO WHAT IS GOOD, VALUABLE, RIGHT!!**
  3. The righteous living of the Christian is a constant rebuke and judgment upon the unrighteous living of the worldling.
  4. Men of the world walk by sight and not by faith. They are out of harmony with God's will for their lives. If a man loves darkness, he will hate the light (cf. Jn. 3:18-21).
  5. The servant is not greater than his Lord. The world persecuted Jesus and if we live like Him, the world will persecute us (cf. II Tim. 3:12).
- B. Greater Revelation, Greater Responsibility; vs. 22-25.
1. Jesus does not mean to say that if He had not come they would not have had any sin at all.
    - a. All men have sinned against some law of God. They either sin against a revealed law on tables of stone, or against a law revealed to them in nature and on their consciences (cf. Rom. 1 and 2).
  2. What He is saying is, "compared with the sin of not listening to His words, inasmuch as He came with sufficient proof of His Messiahship, all other sins dwindle into nothing."
    - a. As black as some sins are, none are so black as rejecting the claims of Jesus, because His claims are backed and founded on overwhelmingly sufficient evidence!!
    - b. The works that He did offer evidence which cannot be reasonably and rationally denied.
  3. As light comes to man and increases, so does his responsibility to follow and live in the light (cf. Lk. 12:47-48).
    - a. The proof is so clear that men cannot plead ignorance.
    - b. The gospel has been declared to most men so many times that they cannot plead lack of opportunity.
    - c. Thus there is no excuse for their sin of rejecting Him.
  4. The terribleness of this sin is that it is irrational, unreasonable and, as Jesus says, "without cause."
    - a. Who has Jesus ever injured?
    - b. What law has He ever violated, what evil has He ever done?

- c. To the contrary, He and His true church has sought only the good of man, always!
- d. TO HATE JESUS IS TO HATE HIM WITHOUT CAUSE! TO REJECT JESUS AND HIS MESSAGE IS TO REJECT SOMETHING WITHOUT REASON AND CAUSE!
- C. But the Comforter will come to aid the persecuted disciples of Jesus Christ, vs. 26-27.
  - 1. He will come as Helper.
  - 2. In their witnessing to the world they will have the help of the Divine Personality, the Holy Spirit.
  - 3. He would guide them infallibly (and us today if we will adhere to His word, the Bible).
  - 4. The Holy Spirit helped the first disciples of Jesus by the miraculous works which He did through them in order to verify their message.

### *Conclusion*

IF THEN GOD BE FOR US, IN SUCH A LIVING UNION OF FELLOWSHIP, FRIENDSHIP AND DIVINE ASSISTANCE, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US (cf. Rom. 8:35-39)?

## EXAMINATION, CHAPTERS 13, 14, and 15

### *True or False?*

1. Jesus established "foot washing" as a practice to be perpetuated in the church.
2. Jesus was sometimes troubled.
3. To "love one another as Jesus loved" was a new commandment.
4. Heaven is not a place.
5. Those who believe in Jesus will do greater works than He did.
6. There is no need to keep every little thing Jesus commands, just so long as we love Him.
7. The dwelling of the Holy Spirit within the Christian is known only when felt.
8. The Holy Spirit comes to us unconditionally.
9. One may be a Christian and never convert anyone else.
10. People of the world do not hate Christians.

### *Who said this and Why?*

1. "Thou shalt never wash my feet."
2. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."
3. "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."
4. "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

5. "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?"
6. "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."
7. "No longer do I call you servants . . . but I have called you friends."
8. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin."
9. "They hated me without a cause."
10. "Arise, let us go hence."

### *Multiple choice*

1. Jesus took the basin and began to wash the disciples feet because:
  - a. It was a religious rite of the church;
  - b. They were arguing about their places around the table and He wanted to teach them humility;
  - c. It was a custom of courtesy for the host to wash the feet of the guests.
2. When Jesus said to Judas, "What thou doest, do quickly":
  - a. No one knew why He said this to Judas;
  - b. Everyone understood by this sign that Judas was the betrayer of whom Jesus had spoken;
  - c. Peter and John knew, but the rest of the disciples did not know that Judas was the betrayer.
3. When the people of the era of Jesus and His disciples came about a table to eat they:
  - a. Sat in chairs or on benches as artists have depicted the Last Supper;
  - b. Sat on mats or pillows on the floor in cross-legged fashion like the Arabs do;
  - c. Reclined on couches as the Romans did.
4. Jesus promised joy to His disciples in:
  - a. Bearing fruit; keeping His commandments; glorifying the Father;
  - b. Abiding in His love; being cleansed by the husbandman (the Father);
  - c. None of the above;
  - d. All of the above.
5. Jesus said:
  - a. The world loves the church and wants it to prosper;
  - b. The church should love the world and be as accommodating to the people of the world as possible;
  - c. The church should be separate from the world and be glad to suffer persecution;
  - d. The world hates the church but will not do anything to harm the church.
6. The Lord said of the branch that does not bear fruit:

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

- a. "It is pruned that it may bear more fruit . . ."
- b. "It is cut off and cast into the fire . . ."
- c. "It remains on the vine but does not bear fruit . . ."
7. When Jesus said He would return, after His going away, to manifest Himself to the disciples, He meant:
  - a. He would return and dwell in them by the Holy Spirit;
  - b. He would return and appear to all disciples at the Second Coming;
  - c. He would appear to the disciples after His death (going away) at His resurrection (coming again).
8. Chapter 13 is an incident which took place:
  - a. During the Passover and Last Supper;
  - b. On another night after the Passover and Last Supper;
  - c. One night before the Passover and Last Supper.

### *Make a List*

1. Of five things said of the Holy Spirit in these three chapters.
2. Of three relationships which the disciples have in their union with Christ.
3. Of five things that result from the love which Jesus taught in these three chapters.
4. Of five ways in which Jesus spoke of His relationship to God the Father in these three chapters.
5. Of three figures of speech which Jesus used in these three chapters.

### *Quote or Paraphrase*

1. John 13:13-17
2. John 14:1-6
3. John 15:1-11

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

In chapter fourteen Jesus promised the person of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, both in a miraculous outward manifestation which would be given according to the purposes and will of the Father and an indwelling presence received conditionally and in proportion to the love, obedience and spiritual growth of each disciple. In chapter fifteen Jesus elaborated on the relationship of the disciple to the Master and the indwelling help of the divine Helper. And now, in chapter sixteen, Jesus speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world convicting and convincing and completing the revelation of God's plan of redemption.

The key to the entire discourse of these three chapters is found in 14:18, "I will not leave you desolate, I will come to you." These last precious hours of the Passover midnight are filled with heart-tugging emotion as a Father attempts to strengthen and prepare His bewildered and childish children for the coming hours of despair, shame, separation and persecution. He must leave the little flock and they will become sheep among the wolves. But they will not be left desolate and without help. They will soon know and feel His divine presence among them again in the Personality known as the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Christ living in them and working through them in the Word will be equally as powerful and real as the Incarnate Word was among them and will bring to glorious completion and perfection what the Incarnate Word was not commissioned to do!

The private, personal instruction of the Master to the disciples is coming to an end. The appointed time for His voluntary sacrifice is imminent and He must commune with the Father. His final instructions pertain to the revelatory work of the Spirit. He introduces this work by speaking of what He had already taught them. He then proceeds to speak of the progressive nature of God's revelation. When the Spirit comes He will reveal even more than the Son has been able to tell them—not because of the inability of Son, but because of the incapability of the disciples.

As A. B. Bruce puts it, when Jesus leaves them and goes to His Father, two elements of essential importance for the success of their work as apostles will be supplied. They will then have *receptive hearers*, and they, themselves, will be made *competent to preach*. Neither of these elements exist for the present. The world has rejected Him and His words; and they, though sincere, are very ignorant, and understand not what He has taught them. After His ascension, there will be a great alteration in both respects: the world will

be more ready to hear the truth, and the disciples will be able to declare it intelligently.

Chapter sixteen might be titled, "The Revelational Veil Will Be Rent." We believe the important message of this chapter for us today is that we may understand that what Jesus taught (which is recorded in the Gospels) was not the completed and perfected revelation of God's plan of salvation. What He taught before "his going away" could not be completely understood unless the "going away" be completed and the Spirit come to reveal what it all meant!

We continue in our outline of this great fourth gospel, the "Gospel of Belief:"

### III. The Word Manifested to The Disciples And Their Acceptance of Him, 13:1—20:31

#### A. Private Instructions and Encouragements, 13:1—17:26 (cont'd).

#### 4. The Revelational Veil Will Be Rent, 16:1-33

##### a. He is Teaching Them This Night Many Dark and Foreboding Things, 16:1-11

- (1) To warn them and keep them from falling by showing His omniscience, v. 1-4
- (2) To show them that the darkness is necessary to bring the greater blessing of the Spirit, v. 5-7
- (3) To tell them what the work of the Spirit will be, v. 8-11

##### b. He Is Withholding Many Things Which He, in The Spirit, Will Reveal Later, 16:12-24

- (1) There were many things they could not now understand, v. 12
- (2) The Spirit would later reveal to them the complete glorification of the Father and the Son, v. 13-15
- (3) The Spirit would later reveal to them the perfected plan of God which would make their joy full and complete, v. 16-24

##### c. He Is Speaking in Veiled Figures But Will Speak Plainly Later, 16:25-33

- (1) Soon they will have free access to the Father Himself, v. 25-28
- (2) Now they show their failure to comprehend, v. 29-32
- (3) Soon they will know that He has overcome the world, v. 33

## TEACHING WHICH IS DARK AND FOREBODING

*Text: 16:1-11*

1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be caused to stumble.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God.

3 And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, ye may remember them, how, that I told you. And these things I said not unto you from the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go unto him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.

8 And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement:

9 of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more;

11 of judgement, because the prince of this world hath been judged.

*Paraphrase*

I have spoken to you in these last hours many dark and foreboding things concerning the persecution which is to come your way in order that you may not be caught unawares. They will excommunicate you from the synagogues. They will even go so far as to kill you. And the astounding thing is that those who kill some of you will even believe they are worshipping God and serving Him by such deeds. They will do these things because they have conceived of God as one who would delight in destruction of the followers of Jesus and they have never known the true nature of the Father or of Me. But these things I have spoken to you ahead of time so that when they come to pass you may remember my prophetic revelation and recognize my omniscience. And these things I did not need to tell you so plainly before because when I was with you the world's hatred was directed almost exclusively to-



ward me; but when I am gone that hatred will be directed toward you and so I forewarn you now. And I am about to leave you and return to him that sent me yet none of you are asking me any questions. You were full of questions before but now you do not even ask me where I am going because you are so full of sorrow. Sorrow has filled your hearts but even the most childish question would be better than the gloom of speechless despair. Nevertheless, in spite of your gloom, I am telling you the truth of the matter: It is an advantage for you that I return to the Father for if I do not return to Him the redemptive work of the Father will not be completed and therefore the Comforter will not come and perfect all this redemptive work into one completed message for your sakes; but if I return to the Father, having completed the work, then I will send the Spirit to you with the completed message. And when the Comforter comes He will publicly expose the guilt of the world and call it to repentance by convicting the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: the Spirit will convict the world of sin in all its terribleness by showing that to reject Me is to reject the Lord of glory; He will convict the world of righteousness by showing that in My return to the Father I have completed the plan of salvation for man and there is now available a God-imputed righteousness; He will convict the world of judgment by showing the world the judgment of its own ruler, Satan, teaching the world thereby an ultimate separation between Me and all who persist in unbelief.

### *Summary*

The many foreboding things which Jesus has spoken to the disciples has filled their hearts with sorrow. They are so filled with sorrow that they have lost all interest in what the Master is trying to tell them of the coming Messianic redemption. He tells them plainly that His going will be to their advantage for the Spirit will return to them with the completed Messianic redemption.

### *Comment*

What Jesus had told them previously concerning the world's hatred and what He shall teach them subsequently about this hatred He teaches in order that they not be *skandalizo*, i.e., caught unawares, tripped-up; ensnared. They must be warned that following Him means they will be enduring the same persecution and hatred which the world meted out to Him. And when these dark and tortuous days come upon them they will know that their Master is not only sympathetic with their plight and is aware of it but that it all falls within His omniscient plan for the redemption of mankind. Their faith will not be tripped-up, they will not stumble.

Jesus prophesies that they will be excommunicated from their synagogues due to their following Him. For a Jew to be excommunicated from his synagogue then meant a great deal more than what we think of excommunication today. For the Jew of old, excommunication from the synagogue carried with it ostracization from social, economic, political and fraternal ties with their society as well as religious. They were the same as "dead" to all their contemporaries. In fact even some Jewish families today go through the form of a mock funeral for any member of their family who leaves Judaism and takes up Christianity!

Not only so but Jesus warns these disciples in verse 2 that the hour is soon coming when they will be killed for their Christianity and the almost unbelievable part of it is, their murderers will justify their crimes by thinking they are offering worshipful service to God. Of course the Old Testament taught that blasphemers were to be stoned to death (cf. Lev. 24:10-16) and the Jewish rulers had already accused Jesus (though it was unproven and unjustly pronounced) of this crime. If He was sentenced as guilty then His followers and those who preached His doctrines would also be sentenced as blasphemers. So the Jews in their ignorance and hardness of heart killed Jesus and His disciples convincing themselves that they were doing God a service. Paul the apostle, formerly Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee of the Pharisees, was convinced that he was doing God a service by persecuting and imprisoning Christians (cf. Acts 22:3-5; 26:9-11; I Tim. 1:12-16). The Roman Catholic Inquisitions and the inquisitions instituted by John Calvin and his followers in Geneva followed the same line of bigotry and perversion.

These murderous acts the Jews (and others since then) did because they did not know the true nature of God. They failed to behold that God is love, even when Jesus, the Son of God, came to reveal His perfect love. Their sin darkened, materialistically greedy hearts were hardened against the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Their concept of God and His promises in their Old Testament was one of a God who was going to restore their gloriously prosperous kingdom of worldly blessings. They had made their own God from the thoughts of their own minds like the pagan world around them and like the world of unbelief today. The kingdom of salvation and redemption and regeneration which Jesus preached was not their idea of the kingdom of God. Therefore their God, they believed, would count it a service for them to kill anyone who dared to claim any other type of kingdom. One has only to read the Old Testament Prophets to get a background for the materialism of the Jews of Jesus' time. The people of that day were not, for the most part, interested in righteousness,

justice, regeneration—they were interested in an earthly king and an earthly kingdom of material goods. They were interested in religion only as traditions and outward rituals. They did not even know the meaning of their own prophets of the O.T., let alone the perfect revelation of God in His Son (cf. Jn. 8:34-47).

So Jesus (v. 4) prophesied all these things beforehand so that when they came to pass the disciples would remember that He had foretold them and they would be strengthened in their faith in Him as the omniscient Son of God. Prophecy has always been a tower of strength. When men in the finite limitations can know historically and experientially that future events have been foretold and have been fulfilled they may know historically, empirically and experientially that the Author of such prophecies is omniscient. If the prophecies of judgment and persecution come to pass we know that the prophecies of salvation and victory shall come to pass also. Fulfilled prophecy is perhaps the greatest evidence we have that the Bible is a supernaturally inspired book containing a supernatural revelation from a supernatural God.

Jesus had prophesied persecution for His disciples before (cf. Matt. 5:10-12; 10:16-39) but never quite so plainly as now. And the reason He did not need to reveal them so plainly and openly before was that when He was with them the world's hatred was directed almost exclusively toward Him and they did not feel the brunt of it. But from now on all that will be changed. They will feel all the force of the opposition of evil which He felt. Hendriksen has an interesting note: "One is reminded of Rev. 12:4, 13, 17: first the dragon seeks to devour the child; next he pursues the woman who had borne the child. Angry with the woman, he makes war on the rest of her seed. The book of Acts shows that this prophecy (15:18—16:4) was fulfilled in every detail." Mr. Hendriksen in his commentary on Revelation "More Than Conquerors" believes that the dragon is Satan; the child is Christ; the woman is the early church; and the rest of her seed is the church for the remainder of time.

There was a darkness and foreboding character in all the events and words of the night which caused a perceptible sorrow to fill the hearts of these disciples. The thought of His leaving them and the persecution that was to come to them had so filled their hearts with sorrow and depression that they scarcely heard His promise of the Comforter who was to come at His departure. They were so filled with grief they had not even thought to ask questions. They had asked plenty of questions before when He had spoken of preparing "mansions" for them, but now they were so overwhelmed with sadness at

the *fact* of His leaving them they forgot to be concerned with *where* He was going and *what* His going would mean to them.

But in spite of their gloom and despair Jesus tells them (v. 7) that what they judge to be darkness in His leaving them is, in truth, to their advantage. If He does not return to the Father the Holy Spirit cannot come to them. If He does not complete the redemptive plan in atoning death and victorious resurrection, the Holy Spirit (whose work is that of giving the written revelation and substantiating it with miracles and signs) cannot come. The Holy Spirit was not to be sent to every believer until redemption had been completed (cf. our comments on Jn. 7:37-39). The "greater works" of planting the regenerating word of God in the hearts of men could not come as long as the Word was limited in the Incarnation and as long as the good news had not been consummated in the atonement and resurrection. These "greater works" could only begin when the good news was completed and was preached by mouth and by printed page unto all nations. Thus it was expedient that He return to the Father.

And now in verses 8-11, Jesus gives in essence, the work of the Holy Spirit as it relates to the commission of the disciples to preach the gospel in the whole world. This is what the Spirit will do in assisting these men to regenerate those lost in sin. He will publicly expose the guilt of the world and call it to repentance by convicting the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

The Holy Spirit will come and convict the world of sin because of its rejection of the Savior. A man is not convicted of sin until he is convinced there is a standard between right and wrong and he is not convinced of any standards except his own until he is convinced of the Divine Person who has authority to set a Divine Standard. This is exactly the approach the Holy Spirit used through Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) when he proved the deity of Jesus from O.T. prophecy and from eyewitnessed facts of the resurrection. It was only then that the crowds were convicted of their sin in rejecting the Savior and cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" So the Holy Spirit, working through the Word, oral and written, when the deity of Jesus is preached—when the divine standard is preached, convicts men of their sin. Especially does the Spirit convince men of their utter lostness if they reject Jesus, the only hope of salvation, for "except ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." Unbelief in Christ is the greatest of all sin for such unbelief leaves men dead in their sins. This is what the Holy Spirit was to come and convict the world of through the disciples, (cf. Acts 4:12, etc.).

He is to come and convict the world of righteousness because Jesus

"goes to the Father." What did He mean by this? We think He was referring to the world being convicted of righteousness relative to His completing the redemptive work of the Father on earth and then returning to the Father as man's Eternal High Priest. He will convict the world of righteousness by showing that in His return to the Father He has completed the plan of salvation for man and there is now available through covenant relationship to Him a God-imputed righteousness (cf. II Cor. 5:14-21). He died the atoning death for our sins upon the cross, thus all who by faith accept His death for theirs have their sins forgiven there. When we come into covenant relationship to Him by obedience by burial in baptism we are promised by the Word of God that His death is appropriated to us and also His resurrection and so we become new creatures (cf. Rom. 6:1-11). The Holy Spirit, upon the basis of the deity of Jesus, convinces men of the availability of this God-imputed righteousness. The Spirit also tells man of the terms of God's covenant in order that men may obey the terms and come into saving relationship to Christ.

The Holy Spirit comes to convict the world of judgment because the prince of this world has been judged, (cf. Jn. 12:31; 14:30). At the death of Christ sin was paid for and its penalty erased. At the resurrection the victory over death and the grave was won. Christ triumphed over the principalities and powers openly and spoiled them (cf. Col. 2:15). He destroyed him that had the power of death over men (cf. Heb. 2:15) and delivered men from this bondage of fear. Satan has been bound, he has been cast into the abyss (see Hendriksen's commentary on Revelation, "More Than Conquerors"). He came into the "strong man's house" and bound him (cf. Matt. 12:22-30).

Now if the devil is judged, conquered and despoiled by Christ men must be aware that Christ has won the victory over the world and that the world and all who are children of the devil will some day be judged.

One may turn just a few pages in his New Testament, to the 2nd chapter of Acts and he will see an amazing fulfillment of this prophetic promise of Jesus in action. Three thousand souls were convicted of their sin because of their unbelief in Christ; convicted of a God-imputed righteousness through His redemptive work and accepted a covenant relationship with Him by being immersed in water for the remission of sins; and were convicted of the judgment upon the "perverse generation."

### *Quiz*

1. Why did Jesus have to speak so plainly about persecution that was to come to these disciples?
2. Why would some think they were offering service to God by killing followers of Christ?
3. Why would they do such a terrible thing?

4. Why did He not speak to them before this of the terrible persecutions they would have to endure?
5. Why was sorrow upon the hearts of the disciples?
6. Why was His going away to be advantageous to them?
7. How does the Holy Spirit convict the world of:
  - (a) sin
  - (b) righteousness
  - (c) judgment

THE SPIRIT WILL REVEAL LATER MANY  
THINGS WITHHELD

*Text: 16:12-24*

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.

15 All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you.

16 A little while, and ye behold me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see me.

17 Some of his disciples therefore said one to another, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye behold me not; and again a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We know not what he saith.

19 Jesus perceived that they were desirous to ask him, and he said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves concerning this, that I said, A little while, and ye behold me not, and again a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye therefore now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh away from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me no question. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

### *Queries*

- a. Why could the disciples not "bear" other things which Jesus desired to speak to them?
- b. How would He be seen by them again in a little while?

### *Paraphrase*

- c. How would their sorrow be turned into joy?

There are yet many things I need to say unto you concerning the work of the Spirit and the whole scheme of redemption but because the work of redemption is not yet completed and because of your spiritual immaturity you are not able to bear them just yet. But when the One I have spoken to you about comes—the Spirit of truth—He will guide you into all the truth. And He will not be all by Himself in this speaking but He will be speaking what the Father, Son and the Spirit communicate to one another. He will also give you a message of that which He hears is to come in the future. He will glorify Me because He will take from the Divine Mind all that pertains to Me in the redemptive work and declare it unto you in message form. All that which is Mine is the Father's and all that which the Father has is Mine. It is for this reason—the perfect unity of possession and purpose between Father, Son and Spirit—that I said unto you the Spirit takes of Mine and gives it unto you. In a little while you will not see Me any longer and yet in a little while you will see Me! Some of the disciples, when they heard this, began to say among themselves, What is this riddle He is speaking now—A little while and you will not see Me and yet in a little while you will see Me—and—I am going to the Father? What is this Little While that He talks about? We simply cannot understand Him! Jesus, knowing they wanted to ask Him what He meant, said to them, Are you trying to find out from one another the things I said concerning, A little while and you will not see Me and yet in a little while you will see Me again? I tell you most solemnly that you are going to be so sorrowful that you will sob and wail and all the while the world will be rejoicing! Yes, you will be deeply distressed but your distress will be turned into joy! When a woman gives birth to a child she certainly knows pain when her hour to deliver has come. Yet as soon as she has given birth to the child she forgets her agony for the joy of bringing a man-child into the

world. Now you are similarly going to go through a brief time of pain but I will see you again soon and your Little While of pain will be turned into rejoicing and this rejoicing no one shall ever be able to take away from you. In the day when I am seeing you again I will by the Spirit so teach you all things that you shall no longer be perplexed and wishing to ask Me questions. As regards the knowledge of the truth, asking will not be necessary for the Spirit of truth will attend to that. But as regards petitions of all kinds for all the necessities of life I say to you most truly, the Father will give them to you if you abide in My name. As of yet you have not asked anything in My name because all authority has not yet been associated with My name. You must keep on asking the Father, but in a little while you will ask by authority of My name in order that your joy may be completely fulfilled.

### *Summary*

Jesus turns from His previous (16:1-11) discourse on the work of the Spirit in the world, to the specific work of the Spirit in relationship to the disciples as individuals. The Spirit will reveal to them all the truth and He will turn their sorrow into joy.

### *Comment*

Jesus had spoken only a few things in the three years of His earthly ministry and for the most part the disciples were unable to comprehend and bear up under very little of it. Primarily it was because of their Jewish prejudices and presuppositions of a temporal Messiah and a temporal Messianic kingdom that they were unable to comprehend even the few teachings Jesus gave them concerning His work. They refused to accept the prediction of His death (cf. Matt. 16:21-23; cf. Lk. 24:17-27;) and even as late as His ascension they were still wondering about the establishment of an earthly kingdom in Israel (cf. Acts 1:6-7).

Besides their spiritual immaturity making them incapable of bearing the immeasurable riches of all that Jesus wanted to sell them, the work of redemption had not yet been completed and the other things which Jesus had to tell them would have to await the coming of the Spirit.

Although verse 12 has specific reference to the apostles and the forthcoming miraculous revelation of the Spirit the principle holds true for us today. The principle is that revelation of the nature and work of Christ is measured by the moral and spiritual capacities of men to receive it. Paul the apostle had to speak to the Corinthians as babes because they were spiritually and morally incapable of being spoken to as spiritual grownups. They were carnal. They still thought of Christ



and the church as fleshly and worldly. The more we know intellectually and experientially of the Person of Christ from His Word, the Bible, the more we will grow to be like Him and the more prepared we will be to bear the profound and sublime riches of His Word. The more we abstain from the worldly the better prepared we are to receive His revelation of the spiritual.

Jesus lovingly and wisely withholds what can most beneficently be revealed by the Spirit. When the redemptive work is finished, the Spirit will come to them and lead them into all the truth. This promise of Jesus to the apostles concerning *all the truth* is most important! There have been theologians, church councils, latter day prophets in all ages rise up and challenge this promise. Even in our day some who claim to be conservative, Bible-believing people have taught that the Holy Spirit has more truth than that which was delivered to the apostles to give to men and that He is giving new truth even today. If human language means anything at all, we believe the Bible teaches that what the apostles recorded was all the truth the Holy Spirit was to deliver to mankind for man's redemption and for man's temporal existence. In other words, the Bible itself claims that it is sufficient to lead man to saving relationship to Jesus Christ and is sufficient to guide man in all his relationship to living in this world. Compare the following scriptures with what is taught by those today who claim the Holy Spirit has new truth to reveal:

- a. Many things which Jesus did and said were not recorded but enough was recorded to bring men unto saving faith in Him (Jn. 20:30-31)
- b. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit prophecy, etc. in revealing Christ's Word to the early church (before they had the completed New Testament in writing) were to be done away when *that which* (neuter gender in the Greek and cannot refer to Christ's second coming) is perfect (completed written word) came (cf. I Cor. 13:8-13).
- c. No Word of Christ was to be preached (not even by latter day angels) other than that which the apostles delivered and wrote upon the penalty of being accursed from Christ (cf. Gal. 1:6-10).
- d. The scriptures are capable of making the man of God complete and no other revelation is needed (cf. II Tim. 3:14-17).
- e. The Word which brings us into a new birth abides forever and this eternal word is that which was preached by the apostles (I Pet. 1:23-25).
- f. He has granted unto us *all* things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ and that knowledge comes

through the promises of Christ contained in the apostolic truth (II Pet. 1:1-4; 1:16-21).

- g. The apostles are of God and those that know God do so by hearing the apostles. Those that do not know God do not listen to the apostles. **AND BY LISTENING TO THE APOSTLES IS THE ONLY WAY WE KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRUTH AND ERROR!** (cf. I Jn. 4:1-6).
- h. Who ever goes beyond the teaching of the Christ in the apostolic writings does not have God and those who go beyond the apostolic doctrine are not to be received as brethren in Christ (II Jn. 9-11).
- i. The faith (the complete body of doctrine necessary for salvation and christian living) was once for all time delivered unto the saints in the apostolic books of the New Testament (Jude 3) and that certainly means the apostles were led into all the truth the Holy Spirit deemed necessary for all time!
- j. The book of Revelation was the last book of the New Testament to be written. The last warning and the last invitation is given in this book. The admonition of this book is that nothing shall be added or taken away from what has been written by the apostles lest the judgement of God come upon the usurper.

Christians are commanded to judge between true and false doctrines for many false teachers are constantly teaching false doctrines in the world (I Jn. 4:1). **THE ONLY DIVINE CRITERIA BY WHICH JUDGMENT BETWEEN TRUE AND FALSE DOCTRINE MAY BE MADE IS THE FINAL AND COMPLETE REVELATION OF CHRIST MADE IN THE WRITTEN DOCUMENTS OF THE APOSTLES, INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH WE KNOW AS THE NEW TESTAMENT!**

Furthermore, what the Spirit shall teach the disciples will not be something completely different from what Christ has taught and will teach when He finishes His work. What the Spirit will do is take all that the Incarnate Word accomplished and make it plain and give it in specific commandments in order that men may understand and obey it. In bringing Christ to dwell in the hearts of men by faith the Spirit would cause them to apprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge and be filled with all the fulness of God (cf. Eph. 3:14-19). In so doing the Spirit would glorify the Son and the Father. Thus the Acts and the Epistles become divine commentaries on the Gospels.

Verses 14 and 15 are to remind the disciples again of the oneness of Father, Son and Spirit. The Jewish mind tended to separate the

work of the Father from the Son and both from the work of the Spirit.

And now, in verses 16-24, we hear Jesus speak to His disciples a riddle concerning His return that was made plain only after the Spirit came at Pentecost. The disciples were completely perplexed as to the meaning. To them it sounded as if Jesus were talking in circles—contradicting Himself. Soon they will not see Him any more, yet soon they would see Him again. What does He mean? There are a number of things to be considered in interpreting His meaning: (a) the context—the close connection in what He is saying to what He has said before about the coming of the Spirit; (b) Jesus uses two different words for “see” *theoreite* and *hopsesithe* which may indicate two different manners of vision (physical vs. Spiritual); (c) all believers in Christ are to be the ultimate recipients of the full joy promised first to the disciples; (d) their second vision of Christ was to remain with them. The Christ who should return to their vision after His going away no doubt began with the resurrected Christ (but even then He was difficult for some to see, (cf. Lk. 24:17-27), but was primarily the Christ who returned to them in the Spirit. The Christ who filled them with joy is the same Christ seen by all believers today—the Christ of the Spirit who shows Himself to men through His Word.

Jesus can make it no plainer than he does. But the disciples will not know what He means until He is resurrected, ascended and returns in all the power and truth of the Spirit. They will fall into the depths of sorrow but will be lifted to the heights of joy. Could their faith rest solely in His promises they would not sorrow but rejoice knowing that the cross was not the end. But their faith was not that complete (and ours neither, had we been there, I'm sure). Nevertheless, when He should return in a little while from the tomb and in power on Pentecost, their sorrow would be turned to joy.

The parable Jesus gives to describe the complete change that will take place in their lives is beautifully descriptive. One has only to be a parent, and especially a mother, to know it. The disciples will come from the agony of pain to the sublimity of joy. This is all the parable is intended to teach—the contrast between sorrow and joy of the disciples. One need only see the contrast between the disciples at the crucifixion and the resurrection and Pentecost to see the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction.

Verse 23 shows that this whole discourse concerns the coming of the Spirit. In the day that Christ comes to them again *all* their questions will be answered. There were many questions they had concerning all that Jesus had taught and done while they companied with

Him. Their minds were undoubtedly filled with questions. After His victory over the tomb and the coming of the Spirit the meaning of all they had seen and heard would become clear. They would then see that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3) and that in Him God chose to consummate all things and fulfill all things prophesied and typified in the Old Testament. They would see that in Him all of history—every question of mankind finds its answer. They would see that by faith in Him who conquered all there would be no more questions to ask—no more answers needed.

In verse 23 we have the promise stated again that every prayer for help in the exigencies of life asked according to the will and name of Christ will be granted (cf. our comments on Jn. 14:13-14; 15:7, 16). Verse 24 is a veiled statement (veiled to the apostles before the resurrection and pouring forth of the Spirit on Pentecost) that soon He will bring in a New covenant and henceforward all requests to the Father must be made according to the will and by the authority of the name of Jesus. Those who expect to gain the Father's ear henceforward must abide in the teaching of the Son. Before Pentecost, of course, the disciples prayed to the Father under the Mosaic dispensation and gained the Father's ear as they, by faith, abode in the Mosaic teachings. But after Pentecost the Christian dispensation, the fulfillment of all the promises—the reality of all that had before been only shadow—would make their joy full. Christ would be able to do for them exceeding abundantly above all they ask or think.

May this section be an admonition to us that the Christ we have seen by the Spirit in the Word is more to be desired than the Christ seen with the physical eye. The Christ of the Spirit is the Christ who brings "joy unspeakable and full of glory," because He is the Christ in us, the hope of our glory (cf. II Cor. 3:12-18, 4:16-18; Col. 1:27, etc.).

### *Quiz*

1. Why could the disciples not bear what Jesus had to say later in the Spirit?
2. Is what the apostles taught and wrote (the New Testament) all the truth which the Spirit reveals concerning salvation? Prove your answer!
3. Would the Spirit teach anything new—anything other than what Christ had already taught? If not, what would He teach?
4. How would their sorrow be turned to joy?
5. Why would they ask no questions after the coming of the Spirit?
6. What lesson is there in this discourse for believers today?

## HIS VEILED SAYINGS WILL SOON BE MADE PLAIN

*Text: 16:25-33*

25 These things have I spoken unto you in dark sayings: the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in dark sayings, but shall tell you plainly of the Father.

26 In that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you;

27 for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

28 I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father.

29 His disciples say, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no dark saying.

30 Now know we that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

*Queries*

- a. What are the "dark sayings" and when were they made plain?
- b. Was Jesus critical of the belief of the disciples (v. 31)?
- c. Why would they soon scatter and leave Jesus alone?

*Paraphrase*

I have spoken to you during My ministry, and especially these last hours, in veiled and disguised sayings. But the time is coming very soon when I shall come to you again no longer speaking in this veiled way but reporting to you plainly concerning the Father. When that time comes I shall no longer have to treat you as children who do not know how to pray to the Father for themselves as they ought, but you will have matured and know to pray in My name—in accord with My will and purpose for you. And you will have your requests answered by your loving Father and He has such love toward you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came from the presence of the Father. It is indeed true that I came from the very presence of the Father and came into the world to accomplish My mission. Now, hav-

ing almost completed My mission, I am about to leave the world and return unto the presence of the Father. His disciples then said, Ah, now you are no longer speaking to us in veiled sayings but in plain words. Now we know that every hidden thing is known by you and you have no need of anyone to ask you a question before you know what he is thinking. Because of this demonstration of omniscience we believe you have come from God. Jesus replied, Are you now so sure of Me as you think—do you now really believe? I say to you the time is very nearly here when you shall all be scattered, each going to his own interests, leaving me alone. However, I shall not really be left alone at all for My Father is with Me. I have told you all of these things so that your faith in Me may be strengthened and thus you may have peace in Me. In the world you have anxiety and pressure but be courageous for I have conquered the world and all its fears and anxieties.

### *Summary*

Jesus promises that the time is coming very soon when all His dark sayings will be made plain. The disciples will not be able to endure the brutal frankness of some of it and will be temporarily scattered.

### *Comment*

The "these things" of v. 25 refers especially to what Jesus had been teaching His disciples that very night concerning His "going away" and "coming again." And, as a matter of fact, He had been speaking the truth of God to them with a veil upon it all through His public ministry (cf. Matt. 11:25-30; 13:10-17). In Matt. 13:10-17 Jesus quotes Isaiah 6 and gives one reason it was necessary for Him to speak in riddles, parables and veiled sayings—the hardness of the hearts of those who listened. Another reason is given in Matt. 11:25-30 and that is the concern of the Lord for the spiritually immature. The disciples fell into one or the other of these categories practically all of their days with Jesus before the resurrection. They had cluttered their minds with thoughts of an earthly kingdom and they were not prepared to be taught plainly (although Jesus did speak plainly with them at times) all the things Jesus had to teach them concerning His relationship to the Father and the Kingdom of God. Of course, Jesus was also prevented from speaking plainly about the whole work of redemption because the whole work of redemption had not yet been accomplished. He had spoken previously in veiled sayings concerning:

- a. His resurrection—"raising up the temple in three days."
- b. His crucifixion—"lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness."

- c. Partaking of His divine nature—"eating His flesh and drinking His blood."
- d. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit—"the water of life which flows out from future believers."

And in these last hours He had spoken of the "resting places" He was going to prepare; of seeing the Father in Him; of abiding in Him as branches in the Vine; of His going away and coming again by sending the Comforter; of the hatred of the world but His conquest of the world. All the truth represented by these parables and allegories would have been even less comprehensible to the disciples had it been spoken bluntly and plainly. Their immature but growing faith in Jesus might have been wounded beyond healing had He spoken openly. It is highly possible that they would have been so offended (cf. Matt. 16:21-28) at continued plain teaching about His death and the spiritual kingdom as to leave Him never to return.

But Jesus knew just how plain and just how veiled to be with these men and thus fan the spark of faith within their hearts into a fire that would endure. And this fire, after being refueled with the power of the resurrection and the Holy Spirit, would radiate and empower them to spread the flame of the gospel to the whole world.

One only need turn from the parabolic teachings of Jesus in the Gospels to the plain and unveiled teachings of Jesus (through the apostles) in the epistles to see the fulfillment of the promise in v. 25. The atonement, justification, the church, godliness—all are made plain in the epistles. When the Spirit came He led them into all truth. He made the way so plain that even the wayfaring men would not err therein (cf. Isa. 35:8). The way to come into covenant relationship with the salvation provided by Christ is plain enough for children to understand in the book of Acts. Exhortations on living the christian life are just as plainly stated in the epistles. Someone has said that the epistles are amplifications and interpretations by the Spirit openly of all that Jesus taught parabolically and in guarded form in the gospels. There seems to be some justification for this idea in a comparison of the gospels with the epistles.

Be that as it may, one of the important points to notice here is that the One who is going to make the "dark sayings" to become "plain" is none other than Jesus Himself returned to the disciples in the Spirit.

Besides the fact that upon His return in the Spirit will they have the hidden made plain, they will also pray with a new frankness and openness. Before they did not know how to pray as they ought (cf. Luke 11:1-4ff). Jesus had to teach them the things that were within the scope of His purpose and will for which they should pray. He had

to teach them how to pray—persistently, humbly, and forgivingly. And so He informs them that in "that day" (the day when He should come in the Spirit) they would not only know how to pray and what to pray for "in His name" (according to His will), but they would also enjoy a new relationship to the Father through the atonement which Jesus would accomplish for them. Jesus will be their High Priest, constantly interceding on their behalf, but they will approach the Father directly through Him. All barriers would be removed. By prayer they, themselves, might henceforth come into the very presence of God their Father, whereas before His atonement all men were prohibited from the presence of God and approached Him only through an earthly priest.

This new relationship of the disciples with the Heavenly Father is founded upon the Father's love for them because of Jesus. It is interesting to see the "eternal love triangle" worked out here in verse 27. God sent His Son Jesus and loved us first that we might be drawn to love Him. When we then love His Son and believe that He came forth from God, God loves us even more because of our love for His Son, (cf. I Jn. 4:9-10).

In one concise statement (v. 28) Jesus sums up the central act of redemption. He relinquished the glories of heaven for a season to become the obedient servant (cf. II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-11). He came into the world in flesh incarnate and revealed the love of God. He is about to leave the world by the cross, the resurrection and the ascension. This statement is direct and clear. It is more direct than the statement in v. 16 which caused so much consternation among the disciples (v. 17). So the disciples are highly pleased that He is now speaking plainly. Their pleasure turns into amazement and then into a profession of increased belief of the deity of Jesus as they realize that Jesus did not need to ask any man anything. In verses 16-18 we find them discussing what Jesus had said in verse 16 which was such a puzzle to them. Beginning in verse 19 Jesus begins to answer their questions without asking them what their questions were. Jesus read their hearts like an open book. Suddenly it dawned on them that they were in the presence of One who had truly come forth from God and so they said, "Now we believe . . ."

What did Jesus mean by His reply in verse 31? Does He mean to deny their belief? No. It is not that the Lord is denying what belief they have professed, but that He is warning them not to be too sure of their own estimates of themselves. Jesus constantly warned the disciples against overestimating their own strength and abilities (cf. Matt. 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31; Lk. 22:31-34; Jn. 14:36-38). So now He



says, "I accept your confession as genuine and sincere, but will your belief be strong enough to weather the coming storm?" When He should willingly surrender and allow Himself to be crucified as a common criminal would they still profess their belief in Him as One sent from the Father? It was not that Jesus was *critical* of what faith they had but He was fully aware of their weaknesses as well as their strengths. He was warning them against the fatal mistake of overestimating their own capabilities. What makes this so fatal is that one puts all his trust in his own capabilities and when failure comes (as it surely does to everyone) all hope for an overcoming power and all assurance of victory is gone. Paul the great apostle found this to be true in his own life. He found that in him dwelt no good thing. He came to the conclusion "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 7:15-25). And then he went on to show how victory is possible "in Christ" (Rom. 8:1-39).

Paul was constantly aware of the danger of overconfidence in oneself or the flesh and buffeted his body lest after preaching to others he himself might become a castaway (cf. I Cor. 9:27).

There is a great lesson for us here. We must beware of being too quick to say "We are able" (cf. Matt. 20:22). We must always remember the man who prayed, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

There is a prophecy from Zechariah 13:7 implied here in verse 32. The prophecy was quoted by Jesus in Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27. When Jesus was arrested the disciples at first made good their promise to fight for Him to the death. Peter drew his sword and would have fought there and laid down his life for his King. But when they realized that Jesus was going to offer no resistance but that He was going to submit to such humiliation, they forsook him and fled (cf. Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52).

Just what Jesus meant when He said they would all be scattered, "every man to his own," is not certain. Probably He meant to say that each would return to his own home and daily pursuits. After having seen Him die they assumed that His work was defeated (cf. Luke 24:13-24) and when the women reported that the tomb was empty and that evidently someone had taken His body Peter and John assumed the women to be correct and went away again to their own home (cf. Jn. 20:10). Luke 24:24 indicates their discouragement even at the empty tomb. They went away and left Him alone, but Jesus was not alone for the Father was with Him in the darkest hours and raised Him from the tomb.

Jesus has spoken these things, foretelling the future, showing the fulfillment of prophecy, so that after they come to pass their faith will be strengthened and thus find peace by trusting in His omniscience and omnipotence. There are two sides to the peace which the believer has in Jesus. First there is the judicial peace which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of man between God and man. This judicial peace is accomplished at the cross where in His body He suffered the sentence and penalty of sin and took out of the way all the commandments that were against man (cf. Eph. 2:11-22; Col. 2:8-15) which we appropriate by being buried with Him by baptism. Having been united with His death by faith and obedience (Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 3:26-27) and having appropriated that judicial peace to our souls, we find and realize that subjective peace of heart and soul which passes understanding (cf. Phil. 4:7).

We have this peace by trusting in Him even in the midst of a world filled with tribulation. Even though Christians must endure tribulation in the world they may be courageous and cheerful for Jesus has overcome the world. He has conquered and won the victory over all that the world can do. There is nothing that Satan or the world can do to defeat Jesus and His beloved children. Thus Jesus ends the dark and veiled sayings of this ominous night on a glorious note of victory! And the New Testament from the resurrection and appearances to the end of the book of Revelation is one grand *shout of victory!* (cf. for example Rom. 8:31-39; I Cor. 15:50-58; II Cor. 4:16—5:21; I Jn. 5:1-6).

The constant theme of the Old Testament prophets is that of God's ultimate victory over all His enemies.

Let this be the clarion call of twentieth century preaching—VICTORY IN JESUS! Men and women need victory for living in the here and now and victory when death makes its pretense of defeat. The surest way to make the preaching of the gospel relevant for this generation is to convince people of VICTORY IN JESUS!

### *Quiz*

1. Why did Jesus speak to the disciples in veiled sayings?
2. When and how were these veiled things made plain?
3. What did Jesus mean by saying He would not pray for them?
4. What was Jesus' purpose in questioning their belief (v. 31)?
5. How did they scatter and go each man to his own?
6. What theme was used to end His dark sayings this dark night?

### SERMON NO. SIXTEEN (TOPICAL)

We have chosen to deviate from expository type sermons in this one instance in order to give our readers a topical sermon which covers

briefly the whole scope of the Holy Spirit dwelling within the Christian.

## CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY

*Text: Col. 1:27*

### *Introduction*

#### I. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN IS THE ONE IMPERATIVE

- A. Christians are commanded "be filled with the Spirit . . ." Eph. 5:18
- B. Christians are told plainly, ". . . if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:9
- C. Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Jn. 3:5

FRIEND, IF YOU DO NOT KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE YOU ARE NOT FULFILLING THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH GOD CALLED YOU THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

AS ROMANS 8:9 SAYS, IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE DO NOT BELONG TO CHRIST

- D. Now a person may have once received the Spirit and then resisted Him, quenched Him, done despite unto Him, lied unto Him, grieved Him

- 1. ONE MAY HAVE ONCE RECEIVED HIM, AND BY INDIFFERENCE OR WILFUL RESISTANCE COMPLETELY CAST HIM OUT OF HIS LIFE!

THIS IS A MOST IMPORTANT THEME . . . ONE UPON WHICH CHRISTIAN PEOPLE OUGHT TO CONCENTRATE AND STUDY AND LIVE

#### II. THERE IS SO MUCH CONFUSION IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY ABOUT THE NATURE OF AND THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. We are not talking about the special miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit
  - 1. This is the lesser and secondary work of the spirit anyway
- B. So many want to confuse this secondary work of the Spirit with the INDWELLING PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT IN EVERY CHRISTIAN

THIS IS OUR SUBJECT THE INDWELLING PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK OF THE SPIRIT!

I DO NOT PROPOSE TO LEAD YOU TO A COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THIS DIVINE PERSONALITY, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ONE SERMON

IN FACT IN A WHOLE LIFE-TIME OF COMMUNION WITH HIM WE SHALL STILL NOT KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT HIM

BUT THIS PERSON HAS REVEALED ENOUGH OF HIMSELF IN HIS WORD THAT WE MIGHT KNOW HIM, LOVE HIM, BE HELPED BY HIM . . . EVEN MAKE HIM A PART OF US BY OUR CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH HIM

### *Discussion*

#### I. WHO IS THIS PERSON?

- A. "He is not a mere impersonal force or influence which we somehow get hold of and use; but He is a personal being; wise and holy, who is to get hold of us and use us. He is one with whom we may have the closest friendship or fellowship. He enters into our personalities, and we become new persons, with renewed minds, affections, desires and wills" Phil. 2:1; II Cor. 13:14 . . . Seth Wilson
- B. He is called the Spirit of God, Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 6:11
  1. This is the Person who moved upon the face of the waters in the great creation of the world
  2. This is the Person who raised up Jesus from the dead
- C. He is called the Holy Spirit—the third Person of the Godhead
  1. This we accept on faith . . . we do not now understand how God can be 3 and 1
- D. He is called the Spirit of Truth, Jn. 15:26 and 16:13
  1. This speaks of His character and purpose as well as His personality
  2. His personality and purpose of bringing truth and light to man is contrasted with the spirit of darkness and error which is Satan
- E. He is called the Spirit of grace
  1. The law came by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ
- F. He is called the Spirit of Christ
  1. The two are equated—this describes His personality better than any of the others . . . for we know what the personality of Christ is like!!!
  2. In fact, Jesus makes it plain that the Holy Spirit to come and live in the disciples will be Himself Jn. 14:16-24  
(Read)

WHO THEN IS THE HOLY SPIRIT? HE IS A PERSON WITH A MIND, WITH LOVE, COMPASSION, HOLY, SINLESS, A

PERSON WITH A WILL, ONE WHO SPEAKS WORDS . . . ONE WHO CAME AND DWELT IN A BODY OF FLESH AND DEMONSTRATED HIS PERSONALITY TO MAN!

## II. WHAT DOES THE INDWELLING SPIRIT OF CHRIST DO FOR US?

### A. Comforts—Strengthens

1. By explaining many things such as
  - a. Reason for suffering, Job, II Cor. 1, Heb. 12
  - b. God's eternal purpose in history, Isa., Colossians, Rev.
  - c. Examples of those who overcame, Heb. 11.
2. We can't get this comfort and strength apart from listening and believing the Spirit as He talks to us thru the Word

### B. He convicts Jn. 16:7-11

1. Because He is the spirit of truth His word convicts us of our sin, of what is right and of the judgment to come
2. It is possible, however, to so cauterize one's conscience that one is not convicted by the Spirit (Rom. 1: Jn. 3:19-21) David . . . Felix . . . Herod

### C. He leads and guides us, Rom. 8:12-14; Gal. 5:18

1. He guided the apostles into all truth, Jn. 16:13
2. He revealed to them the mind of Christ, I Cor. 2
3. They recorded for us all that He had given them
4. When the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts through His word He is guiding us and leading us IN DIVINE WISDOM!

### D. He bears fruit in us and thru us, Gal. 5:22-25

1. First the old man must die and the new man must be born Jn. 12:24
2. Then we must be cleansed periodically or constantly like a grape-vine is pruned, in order to bear more fruit Jn. 15:2
3. We must abide in Him . . . we must bear fruit to be His disciples

A TREE BEARS FRUIT AFTER ITS OWN KIND . . . A CHRISTIAN MAKES OTHER CHRISTIANS

HOW MUCH FRUIT HAVE YOU BORNE? WHY HAVEN'T YOU? BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO GET HOLD OF YOU AND RENEW YOUR MIND AND WILL!

WHAT DID JESUS DO TO THE FIG TREE WHICH BORE NO FRUIT? . . . OUTWARDLY IT WAS A FIG TREE AND OUTWARDLY IT GAVE THE APPEARANCE OF BEING REAL BUT IT HAD NO FRUIT

### E. He gives assurance, Rom. 8:15-16

1. The Spirit expresses His will in His Word, I Cor. 2
2. The New Will and Testament of God is the plan of salvation Heb. 9:15
3. When we know that we are complying with His will, then His spirit witnesses with our Spirit that we are the children of God.

John says: "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in Him, and he in him. And hereby, we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." I Jn. 3:24

"These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God . . ." I Jn. 5:13

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning his Son." I Jn. 5:10

### III. HOW DOES THE SPIRIT COME TO US?

A. Much confusion and erroneous teaching on this part

1. Some believe He is irresistible
2. Some believe one must have an "experience" (emotional, miraculous) before one can be sure they have Him in their lives
3. We do not presume to say the Holy Spirit could not operate in such a way if He saw fit . . . We say He does not because such an operation would mean the Bible becomes obsolete, for such an operation would contradict the Bible

We firmly believe the Holy Spirit has operated miraculously in the past . . . BUT EVEN THEN THAT WAS NOT THE INDWELLING PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT PROMISED TO ALL CHRISTIANS . . . THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT DID NOT KEEP PETER FROM SINNING . . . OR OTHERS! (the Corinthians, Galatians, Hebrews, etc.)

4. How then does He indwell the Christian

- a. Do we absorb Him through the pores of our skin? Does He overwhelm us by some mystical, direct, irresistible saturation?
- b. How do we know that He is in us—by some emotional thrill or ecstatic trance?

"The Holy Spirit enters today into those who hear and obey the apostles' written word even as He did into those who heard the oral word. The power of the Holy Spirit in the christian life today is limited only by the lack of faith in the written word! The power of

the H.S. will be manifest as the Christian saturates his very life and being with the precepts and principles taught in the Bible, which is the living voice of the Holy Spirit, and puts them into practice in His life. As the christian has the mind to surrender to the instructions of the H.S. as He speaks through the written word, the H.S. possesses him, leads him and uses him and to just that extent" W. Spratt

B. The Holy Spirit as a new Person and a new Life is born within us through the Word of God

1. This in itself is a miracle—there is a supernatural power in the supernatural word of God
2. There must be a life-causing seed to generate this new life
  - a. Lk. 8 . . . parable of sower . . . the seed is the Word of God
  - b. I Pet. 1:23 . . . begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God
  - c. Jas. 1:18 . . . of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth
  - d. We are born anew when we believe . . . belief cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ

C. He dwells in us through faith, Eph. 3:17

1. Gal. 2:20 . . . It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me."
2. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. 3:2
3. We might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, Gal. 3:14
4. "For we are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ." Gal. 3:26-27

D. Paul connects being filled with the Spirit directly up to understanding what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17-18)

The Spirit does not operate independent of His Will and Word in possessing a man and dwelling in him. Just as a father's personality penetrates and bears fruit in the lives of his children through the father's teaching and deeds, so the Personality of the Heavenly Father, His Spirit penetrates and bears fruit in the lives of His children through the Father's word and deeds as they are witnessed to in the Word of God.

E. We are to PARTAKE of the divine nature

1. II Pet. 1:2-4 "Grace and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world.
2. If men desire eternal life they must partake of His flesh and blood (His very nature . . . BUT HOW?)
  - a. Jesus answers, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Jn. 6:63
  - b. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet glorified." Jn. 7:37-39

WHEN WE PARTAKE OF HIS DIVINE NATURE BY ASSIMILATING HIS WORD INTO OUR MIND AND HEART, WE HAVE HIS SPIRIT IN US!

The Holy Spirit is born and grows within us through constant communion with Him by knowing His will, obeying His will and doing His work!

F. He comes to us when we love Him and keep His word, Jn. 14:21,23

1. To obey the Word is to be "led by the Spirit"  
The man who obeys the gospel is a child of God.
2. The only dependable agency available to man whereby he may be certain that he *knows* the H.S. or *feels* Him or that He *controls* him is obedience to the written will of the H.S. in His word!
3. We may be sure we know Him if we keep His commandments I Jn. 2:3  
We abide in Him and He in us by keeping His commandments I Jn. 3:24  
Whoever knows the Spirit of God listens to the apostles' doctrine and this is the *only* way man may know the difference between the spirit of truth and spirit of error (I Jn. 4:6) . . . NOT EVEN OUR EMOTIONS ARE A SAFE GUIDE



If we love one another and confess Christ His Spirit abides in us, I Jn. 4:12-15

Anyone who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God . . . He who abides in this doctrine has both the Father and the Son, II Jn. 9, 10

G. By "opening the door" Rev. 3:20

*Conclusion*

**I. YOU CAN HAVE THIS DIVINE PERSONALITY DWELL WITHIN YOU TODAY**

A. He is here in the world today . . . He dwells within the lives of many Christian people. I know for I have seen His divine nature working in their lives

He is here for His word has been preached

B. He is promised to you upon your reception of His word as the seed into your heart

1. He promises to take up a dwelling place in you upon your keeping of His word

17:1-5

2. The promise of Peter and the apostles Acts 2:38; 5:32 is just as living and relevant and practical today as it was 2000 years ago

**II. WHAT CAN HE DO FOR YOU?**

A. He can do all that the scriptures promise

B. He can satisfy the hunger and thirst of your soul

C. He can give you assurance, peace, strength, happiness, purpose, fruitfulness IN YOUR EVERY DAY ACTIVITIES IF YOU WILL JUST SURRENDER TO HIM

**CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

This is one of the most precious chapters of the Fourth Gospel. Here the Incarnate Son pours out His divine heart in prayer for Himself, for His intimate friends and for all believers. He prays for you and for me. This is really the Lord's Prayer. The prayer in Luke 11 commonly known as "The Lord's Prayer," is not His prayer but one He taught the disciples to pray. In the synoptic gospels there are many references to the prayer life of Jesus but only a few (and those in Gethsemane) tell us of the content of His prayers. But in John's gospel this one prayer gives special emphasis to the content of His prayers. This is uniquely the private prayer of the Lord Himself. He does not teach the disciples to pray this prayer, He prays things that no man could possibly presume to pray and, in fact, He does not even invite the disciples then present to join Him in prayer.

It has also been called the High-Priestly Prayer of Jesus Christ. First, it was offered by Him when He was about to give Himself a ransom for sinners. Second, this prayer gave further occasion to consecrate Himself as both High Priest and sacrificial victim in the approaching sacrifice on the cross. Third, it fulfills the typical rites of the high priest in Israel on the Day of Atonement as he prayed for himself, his fellow priests, and the covenant people (cf. Lev. 16:6, 33). Fourth, the parallel terms in the Epistle to the Hebrews and John 17, have in common the priestly concepts of cleansing, sanctification, perfection and priestly ministry in general.

Hendriksen expresses, to our way of thinking, the real theme of this chapter when he says, "The mission of Jesus Christ and of his followers on earth, unto the glory of God, is the theme throughout." In each distinct division of this prayer the glorification of Father and Son is mentioned. Jesus prays that He may be glorified and the Father thus glorified (17:1-5); He prays that the eleven disciples may be sanctified and united in order that He may be glorified in them (17:10); He prays that all believers in all ages may be one by abiding in His glory (17:22).

The prayer of our Lord here is one of the most distinct teachings of the New Testament on the unity of all believers. More than just a mere formal, doctrinal statement, this is a prayer from the very heart of God in the flesh. Most certainly the unity of believers is one of the things with which God is most concerned!

We shall outline this chapter as The Lord's Intercessory Prayer and place it in our continuing outline as follows:

### III. The Word Manifested to The Disciples And Their Acceptance of Him, 13:1—20:31

#### A. Private Instructions and Encouragements, 13:1—17:26 (cont'd).

#### 5. The Lord's Intercessory Prayer, 17:1-26

##### a. Prayer for Himself, 17:1-5

- (1) To be glorified in the Cross
- (2) To be glorified in revealing God to men
- (3) To be glorified with former glory

##### b. Prayer for the disciples, 17:6-19

- (1) That what He taught them should end in His glorification
- (2) That they may have His joy fulfilled in them by remaining in His name
- (3) That they may be sent into the world by being sanctified in truth

## c. Prayer for all believers, 17:20-26

- (1) That they may be one
- (2) That they may have His glory
- (3) That they may have the love of the Father

## PRAYER FOR HIMSELF

*Text: 17:1-5*

1 These things spake Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee:

2 even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him, he should give eternal life.

3 And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.

4 I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do.

5 And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

*Queries*

- a. What "hour" had come?
- b. Does verse 2 teach "predestination-divine election?"
- c. What glory did He have before the world was created?

*Paraphrase*

When Jesus had said these things, He lifted up His eyes toward heaven and prayed, saying, Father, at last the hour which You have set to culminate Your plan of redemption in Me has arrived. I pray that by My death, resurrection and ascension You will glorify Me with deity before men in order that I may glorify You in all the earth; for this is in harmony with Your giving Me authority over all people in order that I may give eternal life to all whom You have chosen to grant eternal life through their relationship to Me. And the way in which they shall receive eternal life is to know You by submitting to Your will and coming into intimate fellowship with Him whom You sent, even Jesus Christ. I have glorified You on earth having completed the task which you gave me to do. So, now Father, glorify me in Your own presence with the glory that I knew with You before My voluntary humiliation, yea, even before the world was made.

*Summary*

Jesus prays for the Father to glorify Him through the events of His passion about to be enacted. This prayer for personal glory is, however, entirely selfless for its end is to be the glorification of the Father and eternal life to believers.

*Comment*

Just where Jesus poured out His heart in this prayer is not certain. The references in 14:31 and 18:1 seem to indicate some place between the upper room and the city gate that leads across the Kidron valley to Gethsemane. Some commentators think He remained in the upper room until this prayer was ended. The place is not important. The content of the prayer is.

Christ, by saying, "Father, the hour is come . . ." reiterates for the eleven disciples then present, and for all believers, His omniscient awareness that there are stipulated "times and seasons which the Father has set within His own authority" concerning the divine plan of redemption. The Son knows these "times" because the Father has shown them all to Him (cf. Jn. 5:19-24). "Hour" is not used in an absolutely literal sense here. That is, Jesus did not expect to be crucified within that very hour. In fact, many hours would transpire before the actual crucifixion occurred but the hours of "darkness" were now beginning. The time for teaching and pleading with men was over. Jesus was aware all along just how much time He had to accomplish His task on earth (cf. Jn. 24; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1). What a burden to bear—knowing the very hour that He must die. What agony to know not only the hour but to know also that He must die alone. What love and majesty that He should bear it willingly, knowing that He had the power to forego it.

In the New Testament the word glory (Gr. *doxa*) is used to denote *honor* in the sense of recognition or acclaim (cf. Lk. 14:10), and of the praise and reverence the creature gives to the Creator (cf. Rev. 14:7). It denotes majesty (Rom. 1:23) and perfection, especially in relation to righteousness (Rom. 3:23). In the O.T. the Hebrew word for glory, *kabod*, gives the idea of being laden with riches, power and position. All of these help explain the glory for which Christ prayed.

Jesus prays first that He might be glorified (honored with majesty, perfection, righteousness, etc.) by the "hour that is come." The overall tone of this prayer shows definitely that it is far from being a death knell. It is a victory shout! The "hour" includes not only the cross but also the resurrection and the ascension. The time has come for the Son who for a little while became "lower than the angels" (cf. Heb. 2:5-9), to be exalted above every name (cf. Phil. 2:5-11). The time has come when His divine majesty must, without question, be unveiled. It is almost as if Christ prays, "Father, at last the hour for which I have eagerly waited. Now, glorify thy Son!" But this is not a selfish request. The reason the Incarnate Son desires to be glorified is two-fold. First, as He prays in verse 1, He wishes to be glorified only that

the Father may be glorified. Both the Father and the Son are in complete harmony. What One wills the Other wills; what One works the Other works; what One loves the Other loves. There are no separate interests or aspirations between God the Father and God the Son. Even when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, it will be "to the glory of the Father!"

In verse 2 Jesus explains the means by which He was to glorify the Father. The Son was to glorify the Father in giving eternal life to all those whom the Father should give to the Son. The "authority over all flesh" which the Father gave to the Son no doubt has reference to the same idea Jesus taught in John 5:19-29. Into the hands of the Son the Father committed authority and power over all flesh. Not only flesh but power over all the elements was committed to Him also. Verse 2 is one of the verses in the Fourth Gospel which becomes a frequent battlefield for Calvinistic predestinarians. The Scriptures teach a divine election, but not the extreme view advocated by Calvinists. It ought to be plain to every reader here from verse three that God gives to the Son for eternal life all men who are willing to *know* (intellectually and experientially) God the Father as He is revealed in God the Son. It seems to us that the N.T. teaching on election is clear enough in one aspect. All men have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. God has not recompensed man with divine justice but has, from divine love, chosen to have mercy and save all who will be saved by grace. God has arbitrarily *elected* to save "whosoever will" *in* Christ Whose body is the church. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). We have access into the grace of God through faith (Rom. 5:2). We are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus and as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). The *election* is provided in Christ. God has provided His divinely inspired revelation, the Bible, to invite and instruct men into His election. But men, created with self-sovereign wills, must respond and surrender their will to His will in order to appropriate this election. Faith which issues in obedience to revealed truth is the response God demands of man.

Of course, divine foreknowledge in all its mysterious ramifications is beyond the comprehension of the finite mind with its limitations. Just how God knows the beginning from the end, how He knows all things before they come to pass, is inexplicable to the human mind. How God knows our destiny ahead of time and still elects us to salvation upon the condition of our response is also unfathomable. All of this we accept by faith in the omnipotence and omniscience of God on the basis of His revelation of Himself in Christ, in time and in

space to the senses of men. See our comments on John 10 for a further discussion of divine election. We recommend a careful and thorough study of Romans 9, 10 and 11 and Ephesians 1, 2 and 3 in connection with the subject of election.

But how may we know that we are of the elect or not? Some religious teachers say that a person who has "fallen away" after an initial response to the preaching of the gospel was never saved in the first place. Thus, they say, we may know that such a person was never elected to salvation but has very evidently been elected to damnation and this before he was ever born and apart from any choice he might wish to make after his birth. Such a perversion of the Scriptures makes them worse than useless. What purpose does the Bible serve, with all its exhortations to hear, believe, repent, obey, make one's calling and election sure, if men are elected apart from any response on their part. Our salvation is conditioned upon our response and our response is faith in Christ which issues in obedience to His revealed will. Let us also direct the reader to a thorough study of John's First Epistle. There is not in all the New Testament a more lucid discussion of the certainty of salvation in response to the revealed will of Christ (especially I Jn. 3, 4 and 5).

When Jesus said that eternal life is to be found in "knowing" God and the Son sent by God, He meant more than an intellectual knowledge of God. But He meant at least that knowledge for it is impossible to know God experientially without knowing Him through the intellect. Paul wrote in Hebrews 11:1-6 that any one who "comes to God" must believe that He exists. There are many exhortations for men to come to an experiential knowledge of Christ (cf. Jn. 7:17; Phil. 3:8-11), but there is only one way to experience any of the love and other characteristics of the nature of God and that is to let His Spirit be born and grow in us through the Word of the Spirit in the Bible. See our comments on the Holy Spirit in chapters 14, 15 and 16.

Jesus speaks in the past tense in verse 4 and, as Hendriksen says, "He has a right to speak as if also this suffering (of the cross) has already been endured, so *certain* is it that he will endure it!" The Cross was not an accident nor an isolated event; it was the climax of the work Christ came into the world to perform. That is why the cry of Jesus, "It is finished," has always been such a wonderful word to sinful men. It speaks "peace" to men because it announced the sealing of the covenant of grace, and became the sure foundation upon which to rest their salvation. The work of the Cross, of course, had to be validated by the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb.

The Son has potentially accomplished *on earth* the Father's will and

mission perfectly; and now what is uppermost in His mind is the continuance of that work in glory (the sending forth of the Holy Spirit; His reigning upon the throne of David; His High-Priestly mediatorship), because in verse 5 He goes on to ask the Father to glorify Him with the glory that was His before the Incarnation. To go into detail about His pre-incarnate glory would be to speculate idly. But the scriptures are plain enough that the Son enjoyed equality with the Father; the Son, though rich, became poor that we might become rich; He emptied Himself of divine glory and became obedient even unto death. All creatures and all creation sing and shout His praise; all creatures and all creation serve Him.

While on earth His magnificent glory was veiled by the form of flesh, but in Heaven all of His magnificent glory shines forth. In Heaven, the Lamb, standing as though it had been slain, is worshipped and praised as, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and the riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing . . . for ever and ever," (Rev. 5:11-14).

### Quiz

1. What does Jesus mean when He says, "the hour is come?"
2. What does the word "glory" mean?
3. Is Jesus' request to be glorified out of harmony with God's plan?
4. By what means is Jesus to glorify the Father?
5. How does the Father "give" people to the Son? Is Calvinistic predestination taught here? If not, why not?
6. How do men "know" God and the One He sent?
7. What glory did Jesus know before with the Father?

### PRAYER FOR THE DISCIPLES

*Text: 17:6-19*

6 I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee:

8 For the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believed that you didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine:

10 and all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine: and I am glorified in them.

11 And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and

I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are.

12 While I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 But now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

### *Queries*

- a. How were the disciples "given" to Jesus?
- b. How did the perishing of the "son of perdition" fulfill the scripture?
- c. How is God to keep the disciples from "the evil one?"

### *Paraphrase*

I have explained Your nature and declared Your will unto the men who were chosen by You, out of all mankind, to be My apostles. They were Yours before, being sincere disciples of Your covenant under Moses, and You directed them to Me through Your Word; and Your Word in the Old Testament, in John the Baptist and in Me they have guarded in their hearts. These men are fully persuaded that all the doctrines and all the miraculous works which You have given Me are all really derived from You. They have come to this persuasion upon the surest evidence for I have taught them no other doctrine but that which You gave Me to teach. Being therefore fully persuaded that My teaching is in perfect harmony with Your divine nature they have accepted and appropriated it in their hearts and have known assuredly that I am the Holy One of Israel truly commissioned by You and have trusted in their hearts that You sent Me. I am praying in the last moments of My life on earth for these men particularly and not for the world in general because they are more especially Your servants for upon these few shall fall the responsibility of carrying on My work of redeeming sinful men. Everyone who serves Me and carries on My



work serves You and everyone who serves You serves Me. And every disciple who is true to Me and serves Me in faithfulness and fruitfulness brings honor and glory to Me. And now, having finished the work You gave Me to do, I am no longer to continue in the world but I am coming back to Your presence. These servants of Mine, however, must remain in the world and so, Holy Father, I am praying that You will care for them and guard them in Your Word which You gave to Me in order that when they are sent forth to carry on My work they may be one in doctrine and in deed imitating the oneness of the Father and the Son. During My personal ministry among them I guarded them in the Word which You gave Me and none of them fell away except the son of perdition and his falling away was not due to any defect in My care for him but was because of his own unrepentant rebellion and fulfilled the prophecy of scripture showing the foreknowledge and omniscience of the Father. Now I am coming to You so I am praying and teaching and demonstrating My care for them and Your care for them in order that they may have the joy that I know from Your care made full to overflowing in themselves. I have given them every doctrine and precept of Yours necessary to fit them for converting the world. The world hates them and persecutes them because they will not conform to the world but are endeavoring to be even as I am—not conformed to the world. Nevertheless, Father, I am not praying that You should remove them out of the world and keep them from persecution, but I am praying that You will guard them through the power of Your Word and Your Providence from the fiery darts of the evil one. These men are not of the world for they are Mine and I am not of the world. I pray that, by the sanctifying power of Your Spirit operating upon their minds by Your word, they may be separated from worldliness and dedicated to proclaiming Your Word which is Truth. And, as You sent Me into the World with Your regenerating Truth, I am sending them into the world with Your Word to transform the world. In order that these men may have power to be transformed, separated from worldliness and effective in carrying out their commission I now fully dedicate Myself in atoning death and resurrection. This is the truth which will give them the power for such sanctification.

### *Summary*

Jesus pours out His heart in prayer for this select group of disciples. Upon them shall fall the tremendous responsibility of carrying on God's message of redemption to all mankind. He prays for their oneness and their sanctification in the Word. He prays that the Heavenly Father will protect them and keep them from the evil one.

*Comment*

There should not be any problem with *how* the Father *gave* these eleven disciples to Jesus. Verses 7 and 8 are explanatory of verse 6. Verse 6 is even *self-explanatory*. The Father *gave* them to the Son by "drawing" them to the Son (cf. our comments on 6:41-51). The Father gave them to the Son when the Son "manifested the Father's name" to these men. When they "received" the teachings of Christ and accepted His deity and chose to follow Him it was because the Father had given them to Jesus. By the divine omniscience and omnipotence of the Father these disciples (which included even Judas Iscariot in the beginning) were given the opportunity to hear Jesus preach, witness His miracles and be invited to follow Him. Furthermore, in the divine providence of God, these men were prepared aforetime by the revelation of God to them in the Old Testament. This, we believe, is the significance of the phrase, "thine they were . . ." They were sons of the covenant of Moses, sons of Abraham and Israelites in whom there was no guile, i.e., they were sincere and honest men (except for one). Some of them had even become disciples of the Voice crying in the Wilderness, John the Baptist. They were eager to hear and do the will of Jehovah God. But even the prophet of the wilderness was God's delivery man to *give* these disciples unto the Christ (cf. Jn. 1:29-34; 3:22-36). So, these men were called by God through preaching and providence—through divine doctrine and divine deeds. But each one was chosen on the condition that he answer and respond to the call of his own free will. Each one was tested and each one was free to follow or free to "go away" (cf. Jn. 6:66-67).

All men are given to the Son through the same plan of redemption. Jesus stated (Matt. 11:25-30) that no one knows the Father except those to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. But Jesus went on to explain that every man who wanted to come to Him might do so by learning of Him. These men, however, were chosen "out of the world," i.e., they were called to a special office (cf. Matt. 16:13-20; 18:18-20; Jn. 20:19-23; I Cor. 2; Eph. 4:11). These men were called to be apostles; given a special office, a special commission, special gifts. It was the will of the Holy Spirit (cf. I Cor. 12:11) to give certain people in the first century church special offices and special gifts for the special reason that the supernatural will of God had not yet been completely recorded in writing. These men were "given to Christ out of the world" (a group specially set aside from the rest of mankind) to become foundation stones in the church of Christ—Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. And, despite their failure to comprehend the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Christ, they kept (guarded)

the word of the Father as Christ had revealed and taught it to them. They were persuaded of His deity, of His Messiahship. They not only guarded His word but they also preached His word when He sent them forth (Matt. 10).

They had just proclaimed their belief in the divine origin of His teaching (16:29-30). In verses 7 and 8 Jesus confirms the sincerity of their former profession. They came to this wonderful knowledge by "receiving" the words which Jesus taught them and "believed" them. These men heard His teachings and allowed His word to "have free course in them" while others who heard His teachings did not (cf. 8:37, 5:38). These men were willing to do His will and thus knew His teachings to be of God while others were not willing (cf. 7:17, 3:19-21).

McGarvey (Fourfold Gospel) gives four reasons or pleas of Jesus as to why the Father should bless the disciples of the Son: (a) because they are the Son's property in a special sense as a gift from the Father; (b) because of their reception and retention of the truth and the resulting knowledge and belief; (c) because the Son is glorified in them; (d) and last because the Son must very soon leave them alone in the world, (vv. 6-11).

Jesus emphasizes, in verse 9, that, at the moment, He is concentrating His intercessory prayer upon this especially selected group of disciples and not upon men (even believers) in general. The prayer for all future believers comes later (beginning at verse 21). The meaning of verse 9 is, "Father, I am now praying especially for these eleven disciples; I am not at this moment praying for any other than these who have been given to Me for a special and an extremely responsible task." Jesus prayed for men of the world—even for His enemies (Lk. 23:34) and taught all His followers to do the same (cf. Matt. 5:44; I Tim. 2:1). But here, momentarily, His intercession is on behalf of a soon-to-be bereaved band of intimate friends and co-laborers. The last few hours preceeding this prayer has been concentrated on preparing them for the time (soon to come) when they shall "be offended and scattered like sheep." They are not only dear to the heart of the Incarnate Son but they are the Father's dear ones also. The statement in verse 10 of the relationship between Father and Son is so astounding that it never becomes trite. The Son has the same authority as the Father; the Father has the same love as the Son. Jesus prays fervently for He knows that the Father loves all that belongs to the Son with the same fervency.

Jesus prays a special intercessory pray for these eleven for whatever they say and do from henceforth will reflect and represent Him and

His church and whatever reflects and glorifies Christ will glorify God. Jesus is glorified in them because He redeemed them and chose them by grace—not by merit. He is also glorified in them when they, by their transformed lives, let their lights so shine that men may see their good works and glorify the Father who is in heaven. Jesus is glorified when they testify to Him by preaching His kingdom. Whatever they do to bring honor and glory to the Son brings honor and glory to the Father. Therefore Jesus prays that the Father will grant them all that is needful for their carrying out the purpose for which they have been given Him.

One thing that is definitely needed is a oneness of heart and mind and purpose. Jesus would soon leave them. The Word of God Incarnate, the Holy Spirit in the Flesh, kept them (except Judas Iscariot) united in oneness of mind and heart. Jesus, by His constant expressions of love, tender rebukes, stern exhortations and patiently repeated lessons bound them together as one. And now He must leave them in a physical sense, but He prays that His Spirit living in them through His Word and in the Name of the Father may keep them in this oneness. The prayer of Jesus here, we must remember, is specifically for these eleven disciples. The same request is made by Jesus in verses 20-23 for all who believe in Him. The oneness which Jesus prays may exist in the disciples is a oneness deeper than any organizational union or hierarchical system. Jesus is not praying that the disciples organize themselves into a group with a pope and bishops and laymen. He is praying that they will so partake of the divine nature that there will be a oneness of their spirit with the Spirit of God. As Hendriksen puts it, "In God the unity is basic to the unity of manifestation." Before the disciples can present to the world a unified program of evangelization, they must be made one in Christ by allowing His Spirit to live in them. There can never be Christian unity until Christians individually and collectively surrender to the authority of God's Word and allow His Spirit to dwell in them. We shall say more about this later on. Christ here prays for the spiritual regeneration, sanctification and oneness in the divine name and with the divine nature which brings forth a unified proclamation and practice. Of course, the disciples cannot expect to attain the same essential oneness which belongs to the Father and the Son, nor did Jesus pray for such a oneness. He simply prayed that they might be "kept in His name" (His *name* means His mind, will, doctrine, Spirit, personality, authority) in order that they "may be one" with Christ and with one another in word and deed, similarly as Christ and the Father are one.

Westcott says, ". . . all spiritual truth is gathered up in 'the name'

of God, the perfect expression (for men) of what God is, which name' the Father gave to the Son to declare when He took man's nature upon Him. (Cf. Ex. 23:21)" It is this truth with which Christ the Logos captured and guarded ("kept") the disciples while He was with them. It was His deity and doctrine which "kept" them (cf. Jn. 6:68). And not one of them fell away but Judas Iscariot, the "son of perdition." The term "son" was given by the Hebrews to those who possessed the character described by the word or name following (cf. sons of Belial; sons of light, sons of the prophets, etc.). Judas was called by the One who reads the heart—son of perdition. Judas was a thief, traitor and murderer from the beginning. But Matthew was a tax-collector and James and John were hot-tempered fishermen. The difference was that the Word of God and the personality of Christ changed their natures when they surrendered their wills to Him. In fact there were many different personalities and persuasions among that band of twelve but subsequent history of the eleven demonstrates the power of the Spirit of Christ to keep them one in love, doctrine and purpose. R. C. Foster says, "This prayer, in so far as it applied directly to the early Christians was fulfilled. The apostles stood up on the day of Pentecost an absolute unit in faith and love and in the declaration of a single, tremendous proclamation. The early preaching of the gospel would not have been powerful had it not been for this unity. Difference of opinion as to method (Paul and Barnabas) developed in the apostolic church but unity of faith remained until after the gospel was given its final form in the N.T." (Parenthesis ours).

The title "son of perishing" was not a title given to Judas by foreordination of predestination apart from his own choosing but one which described the very nature of Judas' own willful determination to remain a thief and traitor. There is no indication that Jesus was including Judas in His prayer for the disciples this night. He had prayed many times for Judas, no doubt, just as He had tried by teaching and revealing to Judas that He knew his secret schemes to convert him. But Judas did not wish to be changed and had so completely surrendered to the devil that there was nothing more Christ could do to change him.

It was not the fault of Jesus that Judas had capitulated so completely to Satan. "Judas was lost by his own free-will determinedly choosing evil in the presence, and under the teachings, and in spite of the warnings, of Jesus Christ. God who, dwelling in eternity, foresees all possible contingencies, foresaw his fall, and foretold it, and made it to serve His purposes of grace in redemption, without having, in the

least degree, foreordained it. It is to be remembered that the fall of Judas, terrible as it was, is only one instance out of multitudes in which God permits men to receive gifts which they fling away, and occupy spheres for which in the end they, through their own fault, prove themselves unfit." (Sadler). Neither position in the church nor association with church people assures one of salvation. Judas, companion with Jesus Christ, was chosen and named among the apostles, was given power to work miracles, *and was lost!* That which avails unto salvation is being "*kept* in the name of God the Father and Christ the Son." It is *Christ in us*, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27)!

Judas was not compelled against his own will and choice in the course which he followed in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled; but his fall and character was foreknown by God and foretold by God and by Judas' subsequent choice the prophecy of God did receive a completion or fulfillment. This would strengthen the other disciples afterward when they finally understood that the betrayal of Christ and the apostacy of Judas was not a "slip-up" on God. They would understand that God foreknew it all and used it all to His eternal purpose of redemption. See our comments on John 13:18.

The road to joy for Jesus was that of conflict, self-denial and then victory. Their joy is at the end of the same road as He shows in verses 13-14. They were also rejoicing, no doubt, in this audible prayer of the Master as He held them up before the Throne of Grace. They heard Him speak of their oneness and faithfulness and to know that the Master Himself was rejoicing in their steadfastness was a joy to them. Refer to our comments on John 15:1-11 for the joy of Jesus being in the disciples. For a discussion of the hatred of the world toward the disciples see our comments on chapters 15 and 16.

In verse 15 and 16 Jesus prays about a problem that has plagued Christians since the founding of the church (the problem, in fact, dates back as far as the patriarchs of the O.T.): how may God's "called out" people remain in the world and not be contaminated by the world!? The apostle Paul dealt with the same problem in I Corinthians 5:9-13 and II Corinthians 6:14—7:1. A Christian would have to go out of the world altogether to avoid any association with wicked people. What Jesus means is that Christians must not be "of" the world. Their natures are "transformed" rather than being "conformed" (Rom. 12:1-2). The Christian becomes a "new man" and does not set his mind on things of this world (Col. 3:1-17). The Christian does not withdraw his leavening or savoring influence from the world but keeps himself pure and true in the midst of the world. He is to help shed the light of salvation in the world and not to be corrupted by it.

In the midst of the world the Christian himself is also perfected as he is tried, tested and victorious. Dr. Wm. Barclay has a wonderful note on this subject and we shall quote it here:

"The first essential is to note that Jesus did not pray that His disciples should be taken out of this world. Jesus never prayed that His disciples might find escape; He prayed that they might find victory. The kind of Christianity which buries itself in a monastery or a convent would not have seemed Christianity to Jesus at all. The kind of Christianity which finds the essence of the Christian life in prayer and meditation, and in a life withdrawn from the world, would have seemed to Jesus a sadly truncated version of the faith He died to bring to me. It was Jesus insistence that it was in the hurly-burly and the rough and tumble of life that a man must live out his Christianity. Of course there is need of prayer and meditation and quiet times, times when we shut the door upon the world to be alone with God, but all these things are not the end of life; they are the means to the end; and the end of life is to demonstrate the Christian life in the ordinary work of the world. Christianity was never meant to withdraw a man from life; it was meant to equip him better for life. Christianity does not offer us release from problems; it offers us a way to solve our problems. Christianity does not offer us an easy peace; it offers us a triumphant warfare. Christianity does not offer us a life in which troubles are faced and conquered. However much it may be true that the Christian is not of the world, it still remains true that it is within the world that his Christianity must be lived out. The Christian must never desire to abandon the world; he must always desire to win the world."

The Christian is not impertinent when he longs for his home with Christ (cf. Phil. 1:21-24; II Cor. 5:1-10) in heaven away from this world, but the Christian's task is to plant that longing in the hearts of all men while the Christian himself is a sojourner and a pilgrim here. In this war of ideas and ideals—the war of truth and falsehood—the Christian disciple may have protection from the evil one. Jesus prays for the protection of His disciples and that prayer includes the request made in verse 17 for their sanctification. John wrote later in I John 5:18-19, "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth himself, and the evil one toucheth him not. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one." Our protection comes from Almighty God but we avail ourselves of that protection by faith and obedience to His commandments. By faith and obedience to the Word of truth we are sanctified, set aside, set free from sin and the world. Therefore it is in

this sanctification by faith that we are protected from the evil one: Not only are we protected but we also enter into battle with the forces of evil by faith and sanctification (cf. Eph. 6:10-20). Our protection and victory over the evil one consists in fleeing from him and drawing nigh unto God (cf. James 4:7-8).

Sanctification is not something reserved for an elite few. Neither does it come by some mystical miracle worked by God today apart from the supernatural regenerating power of His word which is truth. All men may be purified, reconciled, justified and sanctified by faith in the Person of Christ expressed by obedience to His Word as it is given once for all in the New Testament. To be sanctified means to be "called out" from the world and set apart. We are called by the gospel as it was preached and recorded by the apostles (I Thess. 2:7-12; II Thess. 2:13-15). Of course there is a revelation of truth from God in nature and in the providential operation of the Holy Spirit apart from the supernaturally recorded Word of God. But nature and providence are very nearly inexplicable without the special revelation of God in the Word formerly spoken and now written. And so, ultimately, our sanctification to the degree which pleases God rests upon our response to His written Word.

We have what is almost a paradox. Jesus prays that the disciples may be set apart from the world in order that they might be sent into the world. It is not such a strange paradox, however, when one gives it a moment's thought. What the world definitely does not need is more worldly minded people. What the world definitely has not and cannot do is redeem itself or regenerate itself. The world "through its wisdom knew not God" and therefore it must have a supernatural wisdom. The world must have messengers who have been reborn with a supernatural nature to deliver to it the message of salvation.

And so Jesus prays that these eleven men might so set themselves apart, might deny themselves with the same self-denial which He knew, and thus become messengers fit for the service of God. Jesus Himself has given them the Word of the Father and has prepared them and now He prays that they may continue to grow in this sanctifying power as they are sent forth into the world.

Christ not only calls them and commissions them, He empowers them. For their very sakes He sets Himself apart in order that they may have a power with which to be set apart. Lenski says, "The sanctification of Jesus for his heavenly mission is to make possible the sanctification of the disciples . . . They are only to receive sanctification by a gift from the Father . . . And this gift to them is to proceed from what Jesus now does for them . . . Out of the one sanctification the



other is to proceed; thus the two are placed side by side."

Men are made holy first by the atoning blood of Christ applied to their sins through their faith in Him, and their allowing His Spirit live in them. Out of this comes the power for them to sanctify themselves. The power is not resident in men but in God but even God's power is available only conditionally. The condition is faith-surrender-obedience. Westcott says, "The work of the Lord is here presented under the aspect of absolute self-sacrifice. He showed through His life how all that is human may be brought wholly into the service of God; and this He did by true personal determination, as perfectly man. . . . By union with Him they also are 'themselves sanctified in truth,' through the Spirit whose mission followed on His completed work, and who enables each believer to appropriate what Christ has gained."

There is no possibility of sanctification or holiness apart from a moral response to the supernatural special revelation of God written in the Bible. There is first of all an initial response in initial obedience which brings us into Christ and sanctifies us as the Corinthians were "washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord . . . and in the Spirit . . ." (I Cor. 6:11) when they "heard and believed and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). But sanctification is a continuing moral response to the call of the Spirit of truth as He calls by the Word of God as it is written upon our hearts. We are to abound more and more in sanctification (cf. I Thess. 4:1-8) by knowing God and receiving His Holy Spirit. We must continue to be led by the Spirit by believing the truth (II Thess. 2:13-15), which is the sanctification of the Spirit. We are to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts (I Pet. 3:15) by such a continuing intellectual and experiential knowledge of Him through His Word that we may give answer to every man who asks us concerning the hope that is in us. Hope has a sanctifying and purifying power (I Jn. 3:1-3), and by the precious promises God has given us in His Word we may escape the corruption that is in the world (II Pet. 1:1-4). Perhaps the plainest explanation of the relationship of a continuing moral response to divinely revealed truth in bringing about a continuing sanctification is found in Ephesians 4:17-32. Here the apostle makes it plain that holiness and sanctification, even after one has become a christian, is dependent upon one's moral obedience and practice of the truth . . . and that truth is *in Jesus*. Truth is Personal . . . truth is in the Person of Christ. Truth is "He" and "Him" not "it." Therefore, He must live His life in us if we are to "speak the truth each one with our neighbor." And here is the important part of it all . . . we know His Person only through our intellectual and moral response to the infallible revelation of His Personality in the written

Word of the Spirit, the Bible. Sanctification means primarily singleness of purpose, integration of all the faculties of the person toward one goal. Sanctification in Christ means singleness of purpose toward Him and His Word. Sanctification or the lack of it on the part of individual members in the church is the primary problem with the lack of unity in the whole body of Christ.

### Quiz

1. How did God the Father *give* these eleven disciples to the Son?
2. What does Jesus mean, they were given to Him "out of the world?"
3. Why does Jesus say He is *not* praying for the world (v. 9)?
4. What "oneness" does He pray may belong to the eleven disciples?
5. Why did the "son of perdition" fall? Was it predestined? Explain your answer.
6. Why did Jesus pray that the disciples be not taken from the world? How could they remain in the world and not be of the world?
7. What is sanctification? Who is to be sanctified? How may one be sanctified?

### PRAYER FOR ALL BELIEVERS

*Text: 17:20-26*

20 Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word;

21 that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me.

22 And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one;

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.

24 Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me. for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee; and these knew that thou didst send me;

26 and I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them.

### Queries

- a. Which religious bodies may qualify as the "believers" for whom Jesus prayed in verse 20?

- b. What is the glory which Christ gives to believers?
- c. How is Christ to be in the believer (v. 26)?

### *Paraphrase*

Nor am I praying these things only for these eleven men. I am also praying for all men who shall come to faith and obedience in Me through simply responding to the divinely inspired Word which these apostles shall preach and write. My prayer for all believers is that they also may all be one in doctrine, practice, love and purpose. I am praying that even as You are in Me and I am in You in an organic and essential oneness, all believers may come to this same essential oneness in Us, in order that their oneness will lend impact to the saving efficacy of the Word and the world will believe that I was sent from God the Father. And the glory of the Spirit and the divine nature which You gave Me while I dwelt in the flesh I have given unto all who believe on Me through the Word in order that by possessing this glorious nature all believers may be one even as We are One. My very nature abides in them just as Your divine nature abides in Me in order that they may all be brought to a mature and perfected oneness so that the world of unbelievers may know that I came into the world with a commission from You and that their oneness is a product of Your love for them even as Our oneness testifies to divine love. Father, My desire is that all those whom You have given Me shall ultimately be with Me in Heaven and know the ineffable joy of beholding My glory. They shall see then the divine love with which You have loved Me through all eternity in all its gloriousness. O, Righteous Father, the divine knowledge of You which I possess I manifested to the world but the world rejected Me and did not come to know You. But all My disciples, the ones who receive Me, know that You sent Me for I make Your name and nature known unto them and will continue to make it known to them in the ultimate sense in order that the love with which You loved Me may be in them and that I may be in them also.

### *Summary*

Jesus looks down the corridors of time and His heart is turned in prayer to all who shall believe on Him through the word of the apostles. The oneness of all believers on earth and their ultimate glory and joy is the concern of His heart.

### *Comment*

Verse 20 is one of those verses of the New Testament which is a veritable treasurehouse. Its simplicity leaves no question as to the agency for making men Christians—it is the word of the apostles. Jesus knows no other method but the preaching of the apostolic doc-

trine in order to bring men to faith. Neither are there any other doctrines or philosophies approved by Christ to bring about unity of all who believe on Him. This same apostle John wrote in I John 4:1-6 that only those who hear and heed the unadulterated apostolic doctrine are those of the spirit of truth. All who add to or take away from the teachings of the apostles and practice these perversions are of the spirit of error. The apostle Paul said that belief comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17). The apostolic doctrine was completed when the New Testament as we have it today was completed in about 95-100 A.D. There are no other divinely approved or authorized writings. Paul wrote that even though an angel from heaven should proclaim any message other than the apostles he should be anathematized (Gal. 1:8-9). Jude wrote that the only body of apostolic doctrine authorized to be delivered to Christians was delivered once for all time in the New Testament (Jude 3). We like what Lenski has to say here, "The Word communicated by the apostles is the means for producing faith and making believers . . . Apart from the Word there is no church, because there is no faith apart from the Word; and the church is constituted out of those and those alone who have faith. The Word is the vital means and the root of faith. At once it appears how dangerous it is to be ignorant of the Word or to alter and to falsify it in any way." It is the preaching and proclaiming and teaching of the message of the apostles in the same way as the apostles proclaimed it that brings men to faith. It must be preached as historically true and accurate; as factually credible; as supernaturally delivered and verified; as demanding a moral response; as being of itself experientially known once it is practiced. It must be preached as absolutely and exclusively authoritative in all realms of life.

It is by this same word of the apostles that individual believers are to be in Christ and have Christ in them and thus grow into the same oneness which Father and Son know. Paul makes it very plain indeed in Ephesians 4:11-16 that we must "speak the truth in love" in order to grow up into a mature oneness in Christ. And this "growing up" is laid down as necessarily a cooperative effort. First, apostles and other teachers are set apart in the church to instruct in the Lord's Word. Second, all members of the body of Christ are to so learn the word of Christ that they be no longer tossed about with every slight wind of new and fanciful doctrine like children. Third, every member of the body is to supply maturity and sustenance to the body, "according to the working in due measure of each several part." And so in verses 21 and 23 Jesus makes the oneness of believers as a unified body of individual members solely dependent upon the union of the individual

with Him. Christ in the individual and God in Christ and all perfected or made complete in one body. See our special sermon at the end of chapter 16, "Christ in You the Hope of Glory," concerning the way Christ is in the individual and the individual knows he is in Christ. The *all* important focal point is the Living Word of the Living God. By submission to the Will of the Personality (Christ) living in The Word, this Personality (Christ) comes supernaturally to dwell in us and we in Him and all believers in union with one another. The reader is directed to a careful and prayerful study of the Special Study at the end of this chapter on Unity.

In verses 22 and 24 Christ informs us that He has given His glory to all believers and that there is also a glory of His which He desires we behold in the future where He shall be seen with the Father. Christ is speaking here in verse 22 as if He had already won the victory over the Cross and the Tomb and had ascended to the Father and had sent the Spirit. We feel that the "glory" which He says He has given to all believers is none other than His divine nature in the indwelling Spirit in all believers. Speaking of the Spirit in Romans 8:1-30 Paul concludes by saying ". . . whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The same apostle, speaking of the ministration of the Spirit, says, "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit," (II Cor. 3:18). Again, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians concerning being chosen in the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth by which God called them "though our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here, as in the others, the Spirit and the Word and the believer's Glory are all connected. And so it is that in Ephesians 3:17-19 that Paul tells us we may know experientially, feelingly, by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us by faith the breadth and length and depth and height and the love of Christ which passes knowledge and may be filled with all the fullness of God!! Yes, my friend, we can know the glory which God gave to Christ. Christ offers it to us in the Spirit by faith. The measure to which we may know and feel this glory is dependent upon the measure of our faith and submission to the will of Christ. Of course we must remember that the essence of the glory of Christ is that of selflessness and service. His glory consisted in giving Himself totally to God's will and man's salvation. When we are guided by and indwelt by the Spirit this will be our glory also.

There is a glory Christ desires for the Christian yet to be revealed. We are now recipients of this glory in a measure hindered only by our

corruptible bodies. But when Jesus comes the Second time we shall receive the consummation of this glory in all its excellence (cf. I Jn. 3:2; Phil. 3:20-21). "When by His grace I shall look on His face, that will be glory for me." Moses and Elijah appeared in glory (Lk. 9:30-31). We shall appear with Him in glory when He appears (Col. 3:4). We even now partake of the glory to be revealed (I Pet. 5:1). Our light affliction works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:17; cf. also Rom. 8:17-18; II Tim. 2:10). Jesus regained for man the glory which man forfeited when he sinned and Christ brought many sons to glory by His death and resurrection (Heb. 2:5-18).

Verses 24 through 26 form the climactic crescendo of the whole night's discourse (chapters 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17). He has already expressed His will that all disciples shall one day be with Him in glory (14:1-6). He has already explained how and why the world did not know or receive Him, (chapter 16). He has already explained the coming of the Spirit (14, 15 and 16). He has already explained the glory of giving self (chapter 13). And now He sums it all up. He made known the name and nature of the Righteous Father so that the boundless, filling, glorious love with which the Father loved Him may be in the disciples and that He Himself may also be in them. Christ dwelling in our hearts by knowledge and acceptance of the Word is more than a mere intellectual assent to the verities of the Scripture. Christ cannot dwell in us until love of the Father dwells in us, but of course love for the Father comes when we apprehend the love of the Father for us as it is expressed only in the written record, the Bible. It is a reciprocating, circular, triangular affair, with the Father, Son, and believers and the Bible the hub.

We have desisted from making extended comments of our own on unity and have offered a Special Study with comments from three Christian brethren (Bro. Beam now having gone to be with Jesus) who have spent years laboring in this field. We have much we would like to say but these men say it so well in so brief a manner we feel our readers would be the more profited than by our lengthy comments.

Rather than an expository sermon on Chapter Seventeen we have chosen to conclude this chapter with excerpts from essays by respected Christian men of long experience in dealing with the problems of Christian unity, Seth Wilson, Dean, Ozark Bible College; Carl Ketcherside, Editor and Lecturer; Earnest Beam, former Minister and Lecturer on the Pacific Coast, now deceased.

## SPECIAL STUDY NO. TWO

Excerpts from an essay by Seth Wilson, Dean, Ozark Bible College, entitled,

"OUR LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY IN JOHN 17"

*Why Must We Have Unity of Christians?*

1. *Jesus wants it that way.* It should be enough that Christ prayed for unity of the church, who gave Himself for her, who will claim her for His bride, who will give to her all His inheritance.

2. *The Holy Spirit through the apostles urged unity.* Read I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-6; Phil. 2:2; I Pet. 4:8-11.

3. *The practice of division will condemn us.* Read Gal. 5:20,21; I Cor. 3:16,17.

4. *We are commanded to avoid or turn from those who cause division.* Read Rom. 16:17,18; Tit. 3:10,11; II John 9-11.

5. *That the world may believe.* Division among the churches makes it impossible for the schools to teach the certain truths of Christianity, and it gives to every common-school pupil the false impression that religion is not a matter of fixed truth, but only matter of feelings and that every one makes his religion for himself, and it is just as respectable as any one else's religion. However much we may wish and agitate for the public schools to teach Christianity, they simply cannot do it while divisions continue to exist. The world discounts or disregards the testimony of a divided Christendom, just as we discount the so-called "scientific" conclusions which differ from and contradict one another while all are represented as "assured results." The less we care about contradictions in our testimony, the less the world cares about our affirmations. If it does not make any difference *what* one believes, it probably does not make any difference *whether* one believes. If one church is as good as another, possibly none is as good as any, since both statements rest upon the assumption that falsehood is as good as truth, disobedience as good as obedience.

6. *Because division comes from putting human authority in the place of Christ.* At least in some part it displaces Christ as the head of the church, and that is blasphemy. See Eph. 1:20-23.

7. *Because division comes from putting the words of men in the place of the infallible word of God.* At least in some part it displaces the Holy Spirit as the revealer and spokesman of Jesus Christ and His covenant. See I Cor. 2.

8. *Because Christ is one and not divided.* We cannot be perfectly united in and with Him without becoming united with each other. If we have the mind of Christ we will have the same mind, and so on

through all the characteristics of the Christian which we receive from Christ Himself. Unity is natural and inherent in Christianity; and division among Christians misrepresents its nature.

9. *Because division wastes and dissipates the energies and resources of evangelistic workers and supporters;* furthermore, it turns a great bulk of religious effort from evangelism to party promotion and party regulation and party contentions. If all the printers' ink, if all the hours of study and conference, if all the money and men that have been employed to keep up human institutions had been used to bring men to their Savior, what glorious results might have been! As it is five centuries of vigorous denominationalism leave the churches far from holding their own against an avowedly pagan world. "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

To sum up, all the causes of division are sinful; all the results of division are shameful; all the characteristics of division misrepresent Christ and despoil the godly character. Surely division is of the devil and is his best implement for hindering the church from victory. The faith, devotion, obedience and brotherliness that produce unity are godly. The practice of unity is sweet and blessed (Ps. 133:1). The results of unity are faith and its glorious victory. Its goal is that all should be perfected into one in Christ. Can any man doubt that unity is of God and is a prerequisite to a victorious church?

*What is the Unity for Which Christ Prayed?*

1. Jesus in His prayer describes it briefly, but exactly: "as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee." We in them and they in us.

2. Such as the world can see: "that the world may believe." The purpose of unity is faith and conformity to Christ. A union without faith and obedience defeats its own purpose.

3. A fellowship of those who are called of God and set apart for His name, to do His work by His Spirit, using His Word—all in every place "that are sanctified." Study the word "sanctify" and its other forms with a concordance, or see the article "Sanctification" in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.

4. It is such a vital relationship as is described by figure of the members of the body in relation to the head (see I Cor. 12; Rom. 12:4,5), or of the branches to the vine (John 15:5).

5. Such as existed in the apostolic church when "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32).

6. Such as prompted the Gentile Christians to send help to Jewish Christians in time of need (II Cor. 8:1-9; especially verse 5).

7. Such as is indicated in the following words used in apostolic exhortations: "speak the same thing," "Be perfectly joined together,"



"same mind," "like-minded," "same love," "of one accord," "preferring one another," and "with one accord and one mouth." See I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:2; Rom. 12:10,16; 15:1-6; I Cor. 12:25,26.

8. Such as is characterized by "one Lord," "one faith," "one baptism," "one body," "one Spirit," "one hope," "one God and Father over all, in all and through all" (Eph. 4:1-6).

Can any man imagine that the state of Christendom today is the unity that pleases the Lord?

Note particularly that it was unity in faith, "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." Jesus prayed that *those who believe* might be one. It was He that said, "but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Paul, who so earnestly urged the Corinthian brethren to unity and love, closes his great letter of correction with this: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (I Cor. 16:22). In Gal. 5:20,21 divisions under every name are condemned, but in Gal. 1:8,9, Paul writes: "If any man preach unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." In the first Epistle of John, Christian love and fellowship are upheld in their true nature and necessity, but in II John 9-11, Christians are strictly commanded to refuse fellowship to "anyone bringing not this teaching." Jesus commended the church at Ephesus because they could not endure evil men and did try false apostles (Rev. 2:2). He held it against the churches at Pergamum and at Thyatira that they had there some that held injurious teaching (Rev. 2:14-16,20).

Unity of believers with unbelievers is so impossible that intermarriage of the two is not to be attempted (Read II Cor. 6:14-7:1). They could have a form of union, but not unity sanctified in Christ. "What portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?" "Or what communion hath light with darkness?" How can we hope to promote true unity in Christ while we disregard Christ's will and harbor unbelievers within the fellowship? Study and apply the following scriptures: Roman. 16:17-19; Gal. 1:6-9; Tit. 1:9-16; Tit. 3:10; I John 2:18-26; 4:1-6; Jude 3,4; II Cor. 10:3-5; 11:13-15; I Tim. 6:20,21; II Tim. 3:5; Eph. 5:7-12.

PROPOSITIONS from an article by Ernest Beam, CHRISTIAN STANDARD, October 8, 1949

Proposition 1. All sincerely immersed into Christ, with manifest purpose to be governed of Him, are one body in Jesus Christ, though some are now also in denominational churches and others also in church of Christ sects.

Proposition 2. All of those in next above are commanded of God to receive one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

Proposition 3. The receiving of brethren in Christ is never an endorsement of weakness, immaturity, and error even as Christ's reception of us is not His endorsement of our weakness, immaturity, and error.

Proposition 4. Those who will not receive the brethren but do dis-fellowship them, or some of them, are, on that account, to be marked, avoided, and rejected, even as the man under the old law who did kill was himself to be put to death.

Proposition 5. The Scriptures forbid any sincere brother to violate his own conscience in religious acts and devotions whether that conscience is at present properly taught or not; and the Scriptures forbid the rest of us to ignore that conscience. Nor is our own liberty to be judged of another conscience.

Proposition 6. It is not necessary for the brethren to be of the same mind upon meats, days, circumcision, the law, colleges, missionary organizations, orphan homes, instrument, "pastor system," cups, war, premillennial views, tobacco, classes, uninspired literature, names, or other such, as conditions of salvation and of receiving one another. Those of Proposition 1 are one body notwithstanding these and like differences.

Proposition 7. Division in the body of Christ is always made by the brother who will not fellowship his brother. (This does not mean there are not times that a brother must disown a brother; there are. But the brother who disfellowships always and everywhere makes the division—those that should never be, as well as those that must be.)

Proposition 8. The brother, though right about every item in Proposition 6 above is not permitted to bind that right, as a condition of receiving, against his brother who does not yet perceive the right.

Proposition 9. The receiving of all those sincerely in Christ, by Paul, did not stop him from successful labor to overcome the wrongs of those received, but did enhance the working of it. The receiving by all of us, each of the rest of us, in Proposition 1 above, by the wonderful grace of our God, can and should work the same way.

Proposition 10. No more grace is required in my heart to receive my brother, as set out above, than is required in Christ to receive me now and hereafter. (Yea, the comparison is an unworthy one, but is used to turn the mind toward working of grace *from* us as it has come *to* us.)

Proposition 11. The Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the apostles were not compromisers and betrayers of the gospel in receiving brethren with error of whom we read in the New Testament; we are the

compromisers and betrayers of their gospel when we do not so receive one another.

Proposition 12. The Holy Spirit as certainly commands not to own all those who come among us not of genuine faith in the whole mystery of Christ revealed in Scripture (II John 7-11; I John 4:2,3) or who are not of mind to consent to "wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness" (I Timothy 6:3) as He does command us to receive the brethren of genuine faith. (We may together own the authority of the dictionary, but fail of meaning, proper usage, and pronunciation in keeping with that authority. We must together own the authority of Jesus and of His Word, or oneness is neither possible nor permitted.)

Proposition 13. It is as hurtfully erroneous to try to make God speak in the field of necessary judgment—the circumstantial of the gospel left to the judgment of the brethren and the expediency of which changes through the centuries with changing means and agencies of society—as it is not to hear God in the great realm of faith where He does speak.

Proposition 14. In all matters of faith a thing must be lawful before it can ever be expedient; in all matters of necessary judgment a thing is not to be judged of right or wrong but whether it is a good and useful means to attain the given end.

Proposition 15. The use of any and all humanly adopted means and methods must ever be kept within the realm of *enabling* what God has commanded and never used upon a par with, as an addition to, as a part of, or exalted above the thing commanded or those appointed of God. (The use of uninspired literature to *enable* the teaching of God's Word is one thing. But to make use of it as upon a par with, added to, a part of, or exalted above God's Word, is grievous error not to be tolerated. The same is true of all things whatsoever that have been left to the judgment and wisdom of men.

Proposition 16. To charge a brother with an addition to the Word who uses uninspired literature to *enable* the teaching of the inspired Word; or to "the cup" who but uses individual cups to *enable* the communion of "the cup"; or to sing who but uses the instrument to *enable* singing, decency, and order; or to the one organization of the New Testament who but uses colleges, missionary organizations, orphan homes, old folks' homes, organized classes, and journalistic organizations to *enable* orderly obedience to the commands of God—this is false accusation against brethren and divides those who are of the same faith.

Proposition 17. The adoption of any test of fellowship not clearly

demand in Scripture is to adopt a condition of salvation—a new and added commandment—unto the perversion of the gospel. This is the very sin of Galatians the first chapter, and is the sin which has made a multitude of sects particularly among those who do not use the instrument. It is also the sin to which Paul would submit, "no, not for an hour."

QUOTED FROM MISSION MESSENGER NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1964, EDITOR W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

## 2. DO YOU THINK THE PRAYER OF JESUS CAN BE ANSWERED BY RESTORING THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT?

No, I do not. The restoration movement launched by the great heroes of the faith in the early part of the nineteenth century was simply a means to an end. It was never intended to be an end in itself. Alexander Campbell wrote, "We only profess to work and walk by the rules which will inevitably issue in a pure speech, and in right conceptions of that pure and holy, and celestial thing called Christianity—in faith, in sentiment, and in practice." It is too much to expect of these noble pioneers that they would be able to either discover or translate into practice all that was essential to the accomplishment of their aims. The restoration movement was vital precisely because it was a movement. To return to it at any given point and assert we had "arrived" would be folly. When a movement ceases to move it becomes a monument to past accomplishments and dead hopes.

Alexander Campbell did not believe he had all of the answers. He freely admitted that to enter some areas of consideration "we should have to launch upon a wide and tempestuous ocean, for which our slender bark is not at this time sufficiently equipped. This may yet deserve the construction of a larger vessel in a more propitious season." Our task, as I conceive it, is not to restore a movement inaugurated by men but to recapture the ideal of God. We believe that in this we may be aided by restoring to our generation the spirit of the restoration movement. Even this must be regarded as a means to an end.

## 16. WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND WE SHOULD DO TO RESTORE A PROPER FEELING OF UNITY AMONG THE BELIEVERS?

We should confess to one another that we have been partisan and sectarian in attitude and pray one for another that we may be healed of the ravages upon our hearts of this work of the flesh. We should be brought to our knees in tears over our growing sectarianism. We should set the table of the Lord for every sincere immersed believer

and invite all such to sit down around it as our brethren. We should call upon all of them, recognize and regard them as children of our Father.

It is time for us to throw off the childish attitude which has characterized the brotherhood and start acting like men. The idea of categorizing those who differ with us as "brethren in error," with the implication that we are wholly free from error and know all there is to know, is a little silly when you think about it seriously. The truth is that we are all brethren in error. Not one of us is perfect in knowledge and we all have a great deal to learn. We do not accept one another because we are free from error but because we are free in Christ—free to receive one another even while we try to work out our problems together and seek to arrive at a greater understanding. The brethren who accept me will have to overlook a lot of things just as God had to make allowances in order to receive me. I am willing to receive others on the same basis as he received me.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

There is no more time for private counsel with the disciples. The hour of darkness has come. Between chapters 17 and 18 of John's gospel, the agony of Gethsemane transpires and is recorded in the Synoptics. And now in chapters 18 and 19 of John's gospel the darkest deeds ever perpetrated by man are recorded for all men to feel for all time their shame.

Simeon the aged prophet told Mary, the mother of Jesus, some thirty-three years before this night, "Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." (Lk. 2:34-35).

In other words, Jesus was born to be a "sign spoken against" or a spectacle. The spectacle is about to begin. He will be betrayed by one of His closest friends. He will be arrested, mocked, ridiculed, falsely and illegally tried and condemned. He will be denied by the one closest to Him and the same one who swore that he would never let Him down. Then, declared innocent at first, He will, because of political expediency, be given over to His murderers. But through it all it was not the Son of God on trial—it was mankind on trial that black night. At the end of this chapter we have a sermon entitled "Mankind on Trial."

Isaiah, some 700 years before this night, had prophecied, "He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers

is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7). Now it is about to come to pass.

Instead of the usual paraphrase we have chosen to follow the regularly printed text with a "harmony" or "unification" of all the gospel accounts of this section (Trials, Crucifixion and Resurrection). This unification will be a quotation from *The Gospels; The Unification of the Four Gospels*, by Thomas G. Deitz, published by Eerdmans.

We continue with our outline of the third section of this gospel:

### III. The Word Manifested To The Disciples and Their Acceptance of Him, 13:1—20:31

#### B. Public Spectacle of His Passion, 18:1—20:31

##### 1. The Arrest and Trials, 18:1-40

##### a. Betrayal and Arrest, 18:1-11

##### b. Tried by the Jewish authorities, 18:12-27

##### c. Tried by Pilate, the Roman authority, 18:28-40

### BETRAYAL AND ARREST

*Text:* 18:1-11

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into which he entered, himself and his disciples.

2 Now Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received the band of soldiers, and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth, and saith unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

6 When therefore he said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Again therefore he asked them, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 that the word might be fulfilled which he spake, Of those whom thou hast given me I lost not one.

10 Simon Peter therefore having a sword drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. Now the servant's name was Malchus.

11 Jesus therefore said unto Peter, Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

### *Queries*

- a. Where was the "garden" into which Jesus entered with his disciples?
- b. Why did the crowd "go backward" when Jesus identified Himself?
- c. Why the boldness of Peter here when later he fled with the others?

### *Paraphrase (Harmony)*

When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into which he entered, himself and his disciples; a place which was named Gethsemane: (all the Gethsemane experience falls between John 18:1 and John 18:2; cf. Matt. 26:37-46; Mk. 14:32-41; and Lk. 22:40-46). And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, who betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples came, and with a great multitude with swords and staves, with lanterns and torches, and weapons from the chief priests and the scribes, and elders of the people. And Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders, that were come against him, Are ye come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves to seize me? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth, and saith unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When therefore he said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. Again therefore he asked them, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the word might be fulfilled which he spake, Of those whom thou has given me I lost not one. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he: take him, And lead him away safely, And straightway he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Rabbi; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, do that for which thou art come, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? Then they came and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

Simon Peter therefore having a sword drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. Now the servant's name was

Malchus. And when they that were about him saw what would follow, they said, Lord shall we smite with the sword? Jesus therefore said unto Peter, Put up the sword into the sheath; all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Suffer ye them thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? But all this is come to pass, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples left him, and fled.

And a certain young man followed with him, having a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked body: and they lay hold on him; but he left the linen cloth, and fled naked.

### Summary

The Son of man, with legions of angels ready to answer His slightest beckoning, surrenders to betrayal by one of His disciples and arrest by the murderous rulers in order that the purpose of the Father may be fulfilled.

### Comment

When Jesus finished His intercessory prayer (somewhere in Jerusalem), He beckoned the disciples to follow Him and He left the city. It is pure conjecture to try to establish the exact spot of the Upper Room and to guess which gate Jesus used to go out to the garden. In fact, it is equally uncertain just where Gethsemane was located. The most probable location for Gethsemane is on the brow of the Mt. of Olives. The word "Gethsemane" means *oil press*. The word John uses is *chorion*, or "garden" which is literally, "a place enclosed, a farm." It was an olive orchard which was probably enclosed with a stone fence having within it an olive press. Jesus left the city of Jerusalem by one of the eastern gates and crossed the valley Kedron. This valley runs north and south along the eastern wall of Jerusalem, separating the city from the Mount of Olives. Most of the year the valley is bone dry. Only during the winter rainy season is there any water in the valley and then only during heavy rainfall. This valley seems to have been a favorite dumping place (cf. I Ki. 15:13; II Ki. 23:4; II Chron. 29:16; 30:14; Jer. 31:40). It was over the same dry stream bed that David, a royal type of The King of Israel, fled before his rebellious son Absalom (cf. II Sam. 15:23).

The account of the Lord's experience in Gethsemane is recorded in the other three gospels (cf. Matt. 26:37-46; Mk. 14:32-41; Lk. 22:40-46), and John, led by the Holy Spirit, deemed it unnecessary to repeat the account.