

The Upper Room Experience

The Gospel of John Chapters 13-17 Study Guide

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The Upper Room Experience

Introduction to the Course

Importance of the Study

Recorded only in John's Gospel and comprising almost a quarter of that book, this Discourse is by far the most extensive and intensive recorded instruction Jesus gave to his disciples. Together with his prayer in Chapter 17, it involves five chapters (13-17).

On this eve of the crucifixion, Jesus revealed more truth particularly relevant to the church today than on any other occasion, anticipating many of the themes to be developed in the epistles. Almost every basic truth revealed in the Pauline epistles is mentioned. A study of this Discourse, therefore, is basic to understanding the role, responsibilities, and resources which Christ has planned for the believer's life and ministry today.

Scripture

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Basic Passage: | John 13:1-30 | Background and Preparation |
| | John 13:31-16:33 | The Discourse |
| | John 17 | The Lord's Prayer |
| 2. Background and Related Passages: | Matthew 26:1-25 | |
| | Mark 14:1-21 | |
| | Luke 21:37-22:30 | |

Class Objectives

1. To introduce the student to the **background of the Discourse** and the **main subjects** dealt with, noting especially their **sequence and significance**.
2. To **exegete** key words and statements e.g. *parakletos* (14:16) and "new commandment" (13:34-35)
3. To consider **difficult passages** e.g. "greater works" (14:12) and "take away" (15:2)
4. To lay a foundation for **further independent study** of the Discourse.
5. To **contribute** significantly to the student's understanding of spiritual principles taught in the Discourse and their **application to personal life and ministry**.

Approach to the Study: *Be aware of...*

1. The subject/emphasis of the passage involved.
(What is the **basic idea** being taught or discussed?)
2. The concerns and **needs of the disciples** at the moment.
(Why did they speak or act as they did?)
3. The **reactions** of the disciples to Jesus' actions and words.
(What would they mean to individuals: John, Peter, Judas, Thomas, Philip, and the other Judas?)
4. The approach or **teaching method Jesus** is using at the moment.
(How is Jesus communicating and why does He do it this way?)
5. The **place** of the action or teaching in the Discourse.
(How does it **fit into the flow** of events and instruction i.e., relate to what precedes it and what follows it?)

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Introduction to the Discourse

Relation of the teaching to the Gospels and Acts

Jesus' teaching in the Upper Room constitutes an **essential bridge** between the Gospels and Acts. It marks a major **transition** from the ministry of **Christ** to the ministry of the **Apostles**. This change of emphasis resulted from several events:

1. The **Rejection of Christ** by the nation Israel. ("away with him...")
2. The **death, resurrection and ascension** of Christ.
3. The coming of the **Holy Spirit** at Pentecost.



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kingdom was emphasized ("is at hand") | Church was emphasized |
| 2. Jesus presented as King | Jesus preached as Savior |
| 3. Ministry of Christ limited to parts of Palestine
(80 miles diameter) | Ministry of the Apostles extended
throughout the Empire |
| 4. Ministry of Christ was primarily to Jews
(very few Samaritans) | Ministry of the Apostles was to Jews
and increasingly to Gentiles |
| 5. Christ revealed the Father | Believers revealed Christ |
| 6. Apostles were prepared to bear fruit | Apostles were producing fruit |
| 7. Jesus lived among believers | Holy Spirit lived in believers (John 14) |

Occasion: ***Jesus' imminent departure from the world and his return to the Father.***

Implications to: "I am going away!!!"

1. Jesus' program is to build his church (Matthew 16:18 / Eph 4:11-12)
2. The twelve would have responsibility to evangelize and to lead the
3. Church (Act 1:8 / John 21:15-17)
4. Jesus **needed to prepare** the twelve for **ministry**

Purpose: ***To prepare the Twelve to minister after his departure by...***

1. Instructing them in their new responsibilities and resources (chapters 14,15)
2. Providing basic information concerning matters which would be developed in the Acts and the Epistles concerning the church (chapter 14)
3. Comforting and encouraging them for the period of his absence (chapter 14)
4. Preparing them for the shock of living and serving him in a hostile world (chapter 16)
5. Assuring them of his love and his intention to return (chapter 14)

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Basic Themes: *The Believer's new... (3 R's)*

1. Relationships to...
 - The Father (access)
 - Jesus Christ (absence)
 - Holy Spirit (presence)
 - Believers (fellowship)
 - World (evangelism)
2. Responsibility to bear fruit involving...
 - Development of one's spiritual life
 - Ministry to believers
 - Witness to unbelievers
3. Resources of...
 - Holy Spirit in them 14:17
 - Word written for them 14:26
 - Prayer to the Father directly 16:23-24

Circumstances

1. Given 2 days after Olivet Discourse (Mt 24-25) which primarily concerned the future of Israel (nation).
2. Given on the evening before the crucifixion, probably late Thursday evening.
3. Location was a guest room in Jerusalem borrowed for the purpose and unknown to Jesus' enemies.
4. Occurred during the eating of the Passover meal.
5. Given to the eleven disciples after Judas' departure.

Features

1. Subjects
 - Relationships among believers
 - Jesus' departure to the Father
 - Jesus' future return for believers
 - Obedience to Christ and his Word
 - Prayer through Jesus' name
 - Holy Spirit's new ministries
 - Jesus' legacy of peace and joy
 - Believer's purpose
 - Hostility of the world
 - Comfort and encouragement
2. Illustrations
 - Family accommodation ("rooms") 14:1-3
 - Road ("way") 14:4-6; 16:13
 - Grape production 15:1-16
 - Social stratus 15:13-16
 - Woman in labor 16:20-22
3. Actions
 - Washing feet - to prepare the Eleven for the Discourse
 - Giving the sop - to identify Judas and expedite his role
 - Instituting a new symbolic use of bread and wine to proclaim Jesus' death and bind believers together
4. Interaction from Questions
 - Peter: "Why can't I follow you now?" 13:36-14:4
 - Thomas: "Where are you going?" 14:5-7
 - Philip: "Point out the Father to us!" 14:8-13
 - Judas: "Why don't you reveal yourself to the world?" 14:22-24

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Content Overview


1. Preparation for the Discourse 13:1-30
 - a. Teaching on interpersonal relationships 13:1-17
 - i. Background vv 1-3
 - ii. Foot washing model
 1. action vv 4-11
 2. application vv 12-17
 - b. Self-examination and removal of the traitor ("Is it I?") 13:18-30
2. Basic teaching: The New Commandment (Love one another) 13:31-35
 - a. Perspective vv 31-33
 - b. Unique character: mutual love among believers vv 34-35
3. Promises by Christ 13:36-14:31
 - a. His departure and future return 13:36-14:11: "I will return for you"
 - Peter: "Why can't I follow you now?"
 - Thomas: "How can we know the way?"
 - Philip: "Point out the Father to us!"
 - b. His continuing work while absent 14:12-15: "You will do greater works"
 - c. His prayer for another Helper 14:16-26: "I will send the Holy Spirit who..."
 - Is like Christ
 - Lives in the believer
 - d. His peace 14:27-31: "I leave you my peace"
4. Purpose for believers: Bearing fruit 15:1-17
 - a. Condition of fruitbearing vv 1-8
 - b. Dynamic of fruitbearing vv 9-11
 - c. Relationships in fruitbearing vv 12-17
5. Hostility of the World 15:18-16:33 (disciples become targets of Satan)
 - a. Reasons for the hostility and response 15:18-16:4
 - b. Holy Spirit's work 16:5-15
 - for unbelievers vv 5-11
 - for believers vv 12-15
 - c. Encouragement in adversity 16:16-33
6. The Lord's Prayer 17:1-26 (note: not really part of discourse)
 - a. For himself vv 1-5
 - b. For the Twelve vv 6-19
 - c. For future believers vv 20-26

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Preparation for the Discourse 13:1-30 (also see: Luke 22:24-30)

Introduction vv 1-3: *Perspective of Jesus (vv 1, 3) and Judas (v 2)*

Background

1. Two crises: **Capernaum** (September AD 29) and **Jerusalem** (March AD 30)
 - a. At Capernaum (Mt 18:1-17)
 - i. Issue: "Who is the **greatest** in the Kingdom of Heaven?" (Mt 18:1)
 - ii. Concept: In "walking one stumbles and causes to stumble" (Mt 18:2-14)
 - iii. Remedy: "Go and reprove him..." (Mt 18:15-17/Cf. Gal 6:1)
 - b. At Jerusalem (Luke 22:24-30; John 13:4-20)
 - i. Issue: "a dispute, ...which . . . was the **greatest**" (Luke 22:24)
 - ii. Concept: In "walking" one's feet become "dirty" (John 13:10)
 - iii. Remedy: "Wash one another's feet" (John 13:14-15)
2. Nature of problem: Pride/lack of love resulting in competition (comparison -> competition -> conflict)
 - a. Jesus was their Teacher and King, but not their Lord.
 - b. They saw him and other disciples from the perspective of self-interest:
 - i. To Christ: "Give me the best position in the Kingdom."
 - ii. To Others: "I am more important than you are."
3. The need for Jesus to deal with the apostles' interpersonal problems.
 - a. So He could give them new teaching and responsibility
 - b. So they could meet each other's needs when He was absent.

Chapter 13

- 1- Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
- 2- During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,
- 3- Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,
- 4- * **rose** from supper. He **laid** aside his outer garments, and **taking** a towel, **tied** it around his waist.
- 5- Then he **poured** water into a basin and began to **wash** the disciples' feet and to **wipe** them with the towel that was **wrapped** around him.

* - all verbs are present tense

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Jesus' actions vv 4-5 (Reflects sequence in Phil. 2:5-8)

1. Rose from the table [supper]
2. Laid aside his robe [garments]
3. Took a towel
4. Girded [tied] the towel on him
5. Poured water into the basin
6. Washed their feet
7. Wiped them with a towel

6- He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"

7- Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."

8- Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."

9- Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"

10- Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you."

11- For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

Peter's Reaction: *Two levels of meaning in footwashing vv 6-11*

1. Physical defilement from walking
 - a. Whole body bathed (*louo*) at home v 10
 - b. Feet require washing on arrival (*nipto*) vv 5,6,8,12,14
2. Spiritual defilement from unconfessed sin
 - a. Evidenced by wrong interpersonal relationships
 - b. Remedied by application of the Word and confession
3. Two spiritual states: Judas and the Eleven
 - a. Judas: unregenerated (had never been regenerated-*louo*)
 - b. Eleven: regenerated but unclean spiritually, contaminated with pride (had been regenerated but needed cleansing-*nipto*)

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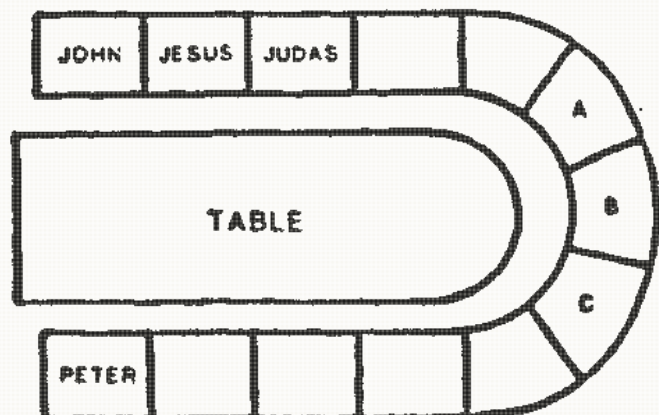
Implications for Peter

1. Beginning of a series of incidents Peter would regret (13:6)
 - a. Argument about Jesus washing his feet (John 13:8)
 - b. Jesus' prediction of his denials (13:38)
 - c. Sleeping when Jesus asked him to pray (Mt 26:36-45)
 - d. Foolish defense of Jesus in the Garden (John 18:10-11)
 - e. Resentment and following at a distance (Mt 26:58)
 - f. Denials in Caiaphas' courtyard (Mt 26:69-75)
2. Future Understanding, for Peter (13:7)
 - a. Restoration after his denials (Luke 24:34)
 - b. Commission as leader (John 21)
 - c. Unique ministries (Acts 1-12)
 - d. Records which reflect understanding (I and II Peter)



Possible arrangement of persons around the table at the Lord's Supper. Each was reclining on his left arm.

Alternate possibility: John, Jesus and Judas in positions A, B, C respectively



- 12- When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand [know] what I have done to you?
- 13- You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.
- 14- If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.
- 15- For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.
- 16- Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.
- 17- If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

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Significance of the Action vv 12-17

(See Appendix A)

1. Controlling facts:

- a. Jesus Christ who washes their feet is God - Lord - Teacher
- b. The believer who has "dirty feet" (e.g. pride) is...
 - i. a brother or sister who is valuable to Christ (Eph 2:10)
 - ii. only what God makes him (1 Cor 4:7)
 - iii. a servant of Christ who needs him (John 15:16/1 Cor 3:9)
 - iv. useful to God only when rightly related to other believers

2. Jesus' action reflected a cultural courtesy of the day but it...

- a. Stands in judgment on elitism among believers (Rom 12:3)
- b. Sets the standard for a servant attitude in his followers
- c. Demonstrates importance of love by a leader (John 21:15-17)
- d. Shows the importance of love among believers (John 15:9, 12)

APPLICATION OF THE TEACHING:

How do believers "wash feet" today?



(See Appendix B)

1. Activity may be...

- a. Physical: e.g., acts of humble service
- b. Spiritual: e.g., a ministry of rebuking and restoring using the Word involving...
 - i. Acceptance of the role of this ministry (one giving)
 - ii. Acceptance of this ministry from another (one receiving)
 - iii. Application of the Word by ...
 - showing concern
 - instructing
 - probing for the root problem
 - challenging
 - encouraging

2. Attitude: The act (whether physical or spiritual) has no meaning without love evidenced by

- respect
- trust
- truthfulness
- empathy
- patience
- anticipation

3. Results of "washing a brother's /sister's feet"

- a. A closer bond between the "washer" and the one "washed"
- b. A cleaner walk and more effective service by the one "washed"
- c. A more compelling witness by the one "washed" (Rom 10:15)

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18- I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled,
'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'

19- I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does
take place you may believe that I am he.

20- Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me,
and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

18- After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified,
"Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."

19- The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.

20- One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side,

21- so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.

22- So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?"

23- Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it."
So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

24- Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him,
"What you are going to do, do quickly."

25- Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him.

26- Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him,
"Buy what we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

27- So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

28- Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him.

29- Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we
need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

30- So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

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The removal of Judas vv 18-30

1. Encouragement for the Eleven in the defection of Judas vv 18-20
 - a. Relation of the Eleven to Christ would not be affected
 - b. After the crucifixion they also would face hostility
 - c. The Eleven are to be important because they sent by God
2. Self-examination vv 21, 22
 - a. Jesus was troubled v 21
 - b. Disciples were bewildered v 22
 - i. Not thinking of deliberate betrayal but an involuntary act
 - ii. Still ignorant of Christ's purpose in going to the cross
 - iii. Had no concept of the timing or occasion of the betrayal
3. Removal of Judas vv 23-30
 - a. Peter shows innocence asking betrayer's identity vv 23, 24
 - b. John alone was told his identity but not the timing vv 25, 26
 - c. Judas was not suspected because of his role vv 28, 29
 - i. Replenishing food for the Passover meal?
 - ii. Giving to the poor from their treasury?
4. Jesus kept Judas on schedule vv 27, 30

PERSPECTIVE: JESUS AND JUDAS



1. Judas' Decline
 - a. Called an "adversary" (devil) one year before at Capernaum (John 6:70, 71)
 - b. Called a "thief" a few days before in Bethany (John 12:4-6)
 - c. Satan said to have sown the seed of betrayal in his heart (John 13:2)
 - d. Satan said to have entered into him (John 13:27)
2. Jesus demonstrated continuing love for the one who betrayed him.
 - a. Allowed him to eat the Passover meal as the others
 - b. Allowed him to sit in the place of honor
 - c. Washed his feet ("swift to shed innocent blood")
 - d. Gave him no false hope of salvation
 - e. Warned him that He knew his plans
 - f. Gave him the sop, an honor and invitation to respond
 - g. Excused him from the meal in a gracious way to avoid exposure
3. Judas was responsible for his decision and action; he was not passive.
4. Contrasts:
 - a. Judas: One "in the company" whom Satan used against God but whom God used for his ultimate purpose
 - b. Jesus: One whose confidence in God's love, control and purpose prevented him from resisting or defending himself against personal attack

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- 31- When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.
- 32- If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once.
- 33- Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'
- 34- A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
- 35- By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
- 36- Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward."
- 37- Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."
- 38- Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."

THE DISCOURSE 13:31-16:33

Basic Teaching: *The New Commandment vv 13:31-38*

1. Reason for Teaching vv 31-33
 - a. The crucifixion vv 31-32
 - b. The departure v 33
2. The New Commandment: "Love one another" vv 34-35
 - a. New in kind (*kainos* - "new") - "wholly different and miraculous being brought by salvation" (Kittel IV, 448,449)
 - b. Other occurrences of *kainos*
 - Creation (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - Man (Eph. 2:15)
 - Name (Rev. 2:17; 3:12)
 - Song (Rev. 5:9; 14:3)
 - Jerusalem (Rev. 3:12; 21:3)
 - Heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1/2 Pet 3:13)
 - c. Relation to other Commandments:
 - "Love the Lord thy God . . ." (vertical relationship)
 - "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (horizontal relationship)
 - "Love one another" (reciprocal relationships within the new community, the church). (See Appendix A)
 - d. Purpose of love: Identification of disciples when Jesus was absent

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3. Peter's Problems vv 36-38¹

- a. Distraction: Peter missed the message about the new commandment because he was distracted by what he thought was a rebuke, exclusion from accompanying Jesus where He was going (having been with Christ at the raising of Jairus' daughter and the transfiguration)

- b. Disappointment and determination vv 36-38

Q: "Where are you going (that I can't come with you)?"

A: "You can follow me (to a cross and to the Father) later"

Response: "I'll give my life to go with you I"

(Cf. his defense of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane)

- c. Denial: (Cf Luke 22:31-34)

- d. Issue: Jesus had a purpose and a plan for Peter's life. He...

- Loved Peter so He denied his urgent plea to go with him to the cross and, at this time, to the Father.
- Planned to use Peter in a greater role than a bodyguard.
- Would assign him leadership of the Twelve and a major role at Pentecost and in the early days of the church.

- e. Encouragement to Peter (and the others)

- "Go on believing me. . . even though you cannot see me (or go with me)." 14:1
- "I will return and then you can go with me forever." 14:3

¹ NOTE: The Lord's Supper was probably instituted at this point. (See Appendices C and D)

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Chapter 14

- 1- "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.
- 2- In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
- 3- And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.
- 4- And you know the way to where I am going."
- 5- Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"
- 6- Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- 7- If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."
- 8- Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."
- 9- Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?
- 10- Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.
- 11- Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

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Promises about Christ's Departure and Apostles' Ministry 14:1-31

1. He will return 14:1-11

a. Practical encouragement vv 1-3

- Continued faith is the remedy for agitation v 1
- Preparation of an eternal home assures his return vv 2,3

b. Thomas' problem: Where is Jesus going? vv 4-7

Q: "Where are you going?" A: "To the Father"

Q: "How can we know the way?" A: "I am the way."

Meaning: "Way" (Road) is a concrete reference described by two abstract terms...

1. Truth: Jesus revealed the Father to man (John 1:4, 5, 7-9. 17; 8:32, 36)
2. Life: Jesus redeemed men to bring them to the Father (John 1:4; 3:36; 5:24)

c. Philip's problem: How Jesus reveals the Father vv 8-11

- Issue: Implication of Jesus' statement (v 7) was that to know Jesus was to know the Father/to see Jesus was to see the Father.
- Philip: "Point Him out" (if He is visible and knowable).
- Jesus' explanation: We know a person by hearing his words and seeing his actions.

Since Jesus spoke/acted exactly as Father desired, one who had heard/seen him had heard/seen (and thus known) the Father.

MEANING OF HIS PROMISES



1. "In My Father's house (*oikia*) are many dwelling places (*monai*)" (14:2).

- a. The word *oikia* would refer to the family "tent" or community under the authority of the patriarch. As each son would marry, he would bring his bride into the complex and an appropriate addition would be made for them (Cf. Gen 24:67). The word *monai* does not mean "mansion" (from the Latin Vulgate) or "resting places along the way" (stages of advancement in heaven are not taught in Scripture), but rather "abiding, staying places" i.e., permanent residence areas within and part of the *oikia*, the "household" ruled over by the father. The picture emphasizes the authority of the Father, the availability and abundance of permanent accommodations for members of God's family and, above all, that Jesus' preparation of these eternal residences assures his return for their occupants.

2. "I will come again..." (14:3) Several views:

- a. The presence of the Lord with the believer in trials ("again" is against this)
- b. Christ's appearance in the Upper Room after the resurrection ("that where I am..." does not fit)
- c. The believer's death (we go to be with him, not He with us [2Cor. 5:8])
- d. The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost (confuses persons of the Trinity [Cf. John 14:16; 16:7])
- e. The personal return of Christ for believers (confirmed by I Thess. 4:13-17)

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12- "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

13- Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son

14- If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

15- "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

2. He will enable believers to do greater works vv 14:12-15

a. Believers will have more responsibility v 12

- As the Father (not Christ independently) spoke/acted, so Christ (not the believer independently) speaks/acts.
- Greater works: Not in quality but in scope. Phase II of his objective to build his church will be completed through believers (Mt 16:18; Acts 1:1,2; Eph 4:11,12)

b. Believers will have the resource of prayer in Christ's absence vv 13,14

- Christ will answer prayer to glorify the Father/his name has authority, vv 13,14
- Prayer must be controlled by the Word. 15:7
- Purpose of prayer power is to provide resources that bear fruit. 15:16
- Procedure: Go directly to the Father on Christ's authority 16:23,24

c. The prerequisite for greater works is obedience motivated by love. v 15

"GREATER WORKS"



CHRIST ON EARTH

Disciples: 12 -> 70 -> 120 +

Place: Galilee to Judea

Purpose: Reveal Father/Redeem sinner

People Addressed: Jews + a few Samaritans, Gentiles

Time Period: 3 years

Result of physical miracles:
eventual destruction of the
body healed (or raised).

BELIEVERS TODAY

Billions

World

Build church worldwide

4.8 billion of many ethnic groups

20 centuries +

Result of ministry:
eternal life and resurrection
for each believer.

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- 16- And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,
- 17- even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.
- 18- "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.
- 19- Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.
- 20- In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.
- 21- Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."
- 22- Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?"
- 23- Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.
- 24- Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.
- 25- "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.
- 26- But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

INTERPRETATION:

"I will come to you" (14:18)

Several views:



- Coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: (Problem: Would confuse persons of the Trinity and would use "behold" in two senses, literal and figurative) see v 19
- Second Coming of Christ: (Problem - This event is not in the context. The "coming" of this verse seems to be more immediate and connected with his departure for the cross.)
- Christ's appearance after the resurrection: This event is in the context (v 19 "because I live..."). Verse 18 would then parallel 16:16.

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3. He will send the Holy Spirit

14:16-26

(See Appendix E)

a. His relationship v 16-21

- A paraclete (One called beside to help) for the ekklesia (body called out to witness)
- From Pentecost - "in you" in contrast to "with you" (Cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19)

b. His ministry: "another of the same kind" as Jesus Christ to...

- "Teach you all things" 14:26
- "Bring all things to your remembrance" 14:26
- "Guide you into all truth" 16:13
- "Show you things to come" 16:13

c. Judas' problem: "Why is your self-revelation limited to believers?" vv 22-26

Background: Jesus had taught extensively about his revelation of the Father and of himself to believers (vv 7, 9).

Q: "Why are you revealing yourself so fully to us but not to the world?" (as O.T. prophecies predicted that Messiah would do in the Kingdom e.g., Isaiah 2:2-5)

A: "The revelation and residence relationship of the Father and Son are reserved for obedient believers in this pre-Kingdom age."

Implications:

- The world is rejecting me and the revelation I have given.
- The world will become increasingly hostile to you.
- I will send you into the world to witness to me; this is how I will reveal myself to the world.
- The Kingdom-type revelation of God to all people will not occur until the Kingdom is established at Christ's return.

27- Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

28- You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29- And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.

30- I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me,

31- but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

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4. He will give his peace

14:27-31

- a. Definition: **Peace** is not a greeting, but a gift/not apathy but conviction (v 27). It is a settled assurance that rests on the promise of God. It is a serenity of victory while the battle goes on.

Examples:

- Jesus in the ship (Mark 4:38)
- Peter in prison (Acts 12:5-6)

- b. Basis: vv 28-31

- Christ's departure and return vv 28,29
- Christ's victory over Satan v 30
- Christ's obedience to the Father v 31

Chapter 15

- 1- "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.
- 2- Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.
- 3- Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.
- 4- Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.
- 5- I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
- 6- If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.
- 7- If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
- 8- By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.
- 9- As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

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- 10- If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
- 11- These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.
- 12- “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
- 13- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
- 14- You are my friends if you do what I command you.
- 15- No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.
- 16- You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.
- 17- These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

God's Purpose for Believers: *Bearing Fruit* 15:1-17

(see Appendix G)

1. The Basis of Fruitbearing vv 1-6
 - a. Dimensions of the parable vv 1-3
 - b. Condition of fruitbearing: Abiding vv 4-5 (Relate to 14:12-20)
 - c. The alternative to fruitbearing v 6
2. The **Resource** for Fruitbearing: Prayer controlled by the Word (v 7)
3. The **Results** of Fruitbearing v 8
 - a. The Father is glorified
 - b. Discipleship is validated
4. The Dynamic of Fruitbearing vv 9-11
 - a. His love v 9-10
 - b. His joy v 11
5. **Relationships** in Fruitbearing vv 12-17
 - a. To other believers vv 12, 17
 - b. To the Lord vv 13-16
 - His friends vv 13-15
 - His appointees v 16

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MEANING OF 15:2 AND 15:6



I. THE PROBLEM

- A. In what sense does Jesus "take away" (KJV.NASB) or "cut off" (NIV) a branch "in me" which is not bearing fruit? v 2 (Relates also to v 6)
- B. What action/event is referred to in the statement of v 6?

II. PERSPECTIVE

The approach to a parable must not be to seek a **spiritual significance** in every detail but rather to understand the main thrust of the illustration, the basic concept being taught. (e.g., "I am the Bread of Life" would not involve a consideration of whether it was leavened/unleavened or size or shape of the bread.)

The interpretation of a parable is determined by the basic teaching in the context for which the parable becomes a vehicle of explanation. Further, a **parable cannot be used to "prove" or "disprove" a doctrine taught in other Scriptures.**

III. INTERPRETATIONS (with evaluations): The words "take away" refer to...

A. Loss of the individual's salvation

- 1. Eliminates any possibility of restoration for fruitbearing
(Cf. John Mark: Acts 13:13 and 2 Tim 4:11)
- 2. Contradicts other Scriptures (John 5:24, 10:28,29)
- 3. Implies salvation is earned by works if it is maintained by works = "fruitfulness"
- 4. Makes "fire" in v 6 literal (but "branches" in v 2 are not literal)
- 5. God executes judgment, not men as mentioned in v 6
- 6. If "take away" = "prune out" the "prune" later in v 2 would be redundant
("Prune" = take away believers or cleanse believer's life?)
- 7. If the purpose is to encourage fruitbearing, no production would be possible after the branch had been removed

B. Excommunication (from church membership / fellowship)

- 1. Does not fit the terms and imagery of the passage
- 2. Would be temporary, but the action of vv 2 and 6, if so interpreted, would be permanent
- 3. People act in excommunication (1 Cor 5) but God acts in v 2
- 4. Actions and agents differ between v 2 and v 6, thus excommunication would not be referred to in both
- 5. Excommunication in 1 Cor 5 was commanded for serious moral sin, not fruitlessness

C. Professing Christians, not truly regenerated persons are in view

- 1. Persons addressed are referred to as "in Me"
- 2. Unbelievers would not be expected to "abide"
- 3. A non-believer would not be expected to bear fruit

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D. Hypothetical situation that could not really occur

1. Would make the exhortation to "abide" and "bear fruit" meaningless
2. Does not provide an explanation or application of the passage



E. Loss of the believer's rewards (1 Cor 3:11-15) Possible but...

1. Evaluation at the Judgment Seat of Christ is future but this is present
2. Purpose here is to increase fruitbearing, not determine reward
3. Equates "works" with "fruitbearing", confusing the teaching on each
4. Only the person not "abiding" is mentioned (v 6) but all believers are at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Cor 3:12-15 and 2 Cor 5:10)
5. Fire destroys the "branches" (v 6), not the believer's works (as in 1 Cor 3:15)

F. The "sin unto death" (1 Jn 5:16; 1 Cor 11:30) Possible but...

1. This would be a severe and irreversible judgment for "not abiding"
2. Reason given for believers' deaths in 1 Cor 11 were not related to a lack of fruitbearing (Cf. also Ananias and Saphira, Acts 5) but to specific sins
3. Death is not clearly referred to in vv 2 or 6
4. Specific sin or any sin (as in "sin unto death") is not in view in the passage
5. Issue in the passage is production of fruit, not chastisement for sin

G. Removal because of lack of fruit of the Spirit (as Judas)

1. No evidence that "fruit" is limited to fruit of the Spirit (which was not specifically mentioned in Scripture until Gal 5:22, 23)
2. If the reference of "taking away" applied only to Judas, the passage has no universal application, whereas all the statements show that a wide scope was intended, e.g. "every branch in me"
3. If Judas was not a believer, he could not be said to be "in me" or be expected to bear fruit.

IV. ALTERNATIVE/PREFERRED INTERPRETATIONS



A. Restoration of Production (v 2)

Summary: The branch which is not producing fruit is dealt with by the Vinedresser to restore and maintain fruit production. Emphasis is on production of fruit through the believer.

Two Possibilities:

1. To "take away" impediments to fruit bearing, that is, to remove from the believer's life any attitudes, relationships, activities which keep him from "abiding in Christ" thus making him unproductive. The force of *airo* in this case would be to "take away", not the believer, but those aspects of the believer's life which are counter-productive. Christ repeatedly states that the reason for non-production of fruit is "not abiding in Him". This involves not just a distracted life but a disconnected life; not just immaturity, but rebellion. This action would be a "pruning".

A problem with this interpretation is that it could be seen as prescribing the same treatment for the non-productive branch as the producing branch, since *kathairo* means that the Vinedresser is "pruning" the latter that it may increase its production. This may not be a real problem because, in a sense, the Vinedresser does perform the same cutting away of dead parts, sucker growth, etc., whether the branch is producing or not. This view would be compatible with a play on the words *airo* and *kathairo*.

2. To "lift up" the believer (convict, restore to a relationship of abiding) as the Vinedresser lifts up (cleans off, dusts, etc.) and sets the vine on a flat rock to keep it dry and in contact with the air and sun. Evidence:

1. The basic meaning of *airo* = "lift up", "pick up" (e.g., Jn 8:59)
Although it can express the secondary idea "take up and carry away" (Jn 1:29) or "expel" (1 Cor 5:2) that idea is not required here.
2. The picture is of a vine on the ground, needing support and dryness on a stone.
This would suggest God's intervention to restore the believer to a place and condition of fruitfulness.
3. There is a possible play on words *airo* = "lift up"/*kath-airo* » "prune"

The point of the parable is not judgment or condemnation for not bearing fruit, but rather the concern and activity of the Vinedresser to ensure that each branch bears fruit and bears as much fruit as possible. (Cf. 1 Jn 2:28)

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B. The waste of non-production (v 6)

Summary: The believer who is not abiding in Christ and thus not producing fruit (v 4) is of no more value than a dead branch, the **uselessness** of which is demonstrated by the fact that it is thrown into a fire to be destroyed. Emphasis is on the importance of fruitbearing.

C. Evidence:

1. The figures of speech (casting out, withering, gathering, burning) must be understood in terms of the context of grape vines; they hardly fit human beings. These actions are not literal for the believer just as the believer is not a literal branch or Christ a literal vine.
2. The antecedent of "them" is the useless branches (not believers).
3. The picture parallels "salt without saltiness" (Mt 5:13) and "water which is neither cold nor hot" (Rev 3:15-16). Each is discarded because of its uselessness (but in neither case, is the action seen as literal for the believer's body).
4. If eternal punishment for a momentary lack of abiding/fruitlessness were intended, Peter would not have survived when he rebuked Christ (Cf. "Get thee behind me, Satan, you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.") or when he denied him ("I do not know the man.") Nor would John Mark have been sought and commended by Paul after his defection (2 Tim 4:11).

FRIENDS AND SLAVES (vv 14-15)



1. Believers are...
 - a. Sons of God by faith
 - b. Slaves/servants of Christ by submission
 - c. Friends of Christ by obedience
2. The distinction between servant and friend is not based on the kind of work one does, but on the extent of knowledge of the other's purposes and plans.
3. "Servant" and "friend" relationships are not mutually exclusive. In the context of our relationships to Christ, they are complementary. Paul called himself a servant/slave.

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- 18- "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.
- 19- If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.
- 20- Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.
- 21- But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.
- 22- If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.
- 23- Whoever hates me hates my Father also.
- 24- If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.
- 25- But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'

Hostility of the World to Believers 15:18-16:15

1. Reasons for the hostility 15:18-25
 - a. Identification of the branches with the Vine 15:18-21
 - b. Indignation of sinner when convicted 15:22-25

REASONS WHY THE WORLD HATES THE BELIEVER (vv 18-24)

1. Identification with Christ (vv 18, 20). As Christ leaves the world his believers replace him as the target of Satan's hatred and attacks. (cf. 2 Tim 3:12)
2. Separation from the world (v 19). The believer's separation from the world system in its values, relationships, and methods constitutes a **de facto** rebuke of that system and those who live by it. This produces resentment in unbelievers.
3. Ignorance of God (v 21). Because the world does not know God, it does not understand believers, considering them as aliens and a threat. There is no excuse for this ignorance because God has revealed himself in the words of Christ (v 22) and his works (v 24).
4. Conviction of sin (v 24). Revelation of God brings responsibility to respond either by coming to him by confession of revealed sin or by fleeing farther from him by refusing to repent. The result in the latter response is hatred for those who have come into a right relationship with God, i.e., those who retreat into the darkness (Jn 3:19-20) resent those who are walking in the light (1 Jn 1:7).



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26- “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

27- And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

- 2. Response to the hostility: Witness 15:26, 27
 - a. By the Holy Spirit through believers 15:26
 - b. By believers empowered by the Holy Spirit 15:27

Chapter 16

1- “I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away.

2- They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.

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

4- But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

- 3. Reality of the hostility 16:1-4

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- 5- “But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’
- 6- But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.
- 7- But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.
- 8- And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;
- 9- concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;
- 10- and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me;
- 11- and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
- 12- “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
- 13- But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.
- 14- He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.
- 15- All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

- 4. Resource in the hostility: the Holy Spirit 16:5-15
 - a. Need for the Holy Spirit: Christ's departure 16:5-7
 - b. Work of the Holy Spirit 16:8-15
 - For the world; vv 8-11 He convicts of ...
 - sin: guilt is still upon them because they have rejected Christ
 - righteousness: revelation is needed in the absence of Christ
 - judgment: warning because Satan himself was judged by Christ
 - For the believer: vv 12-15 He...
 - guides into all truth v 13a
 - reports back on things to come v 13b
 - glorifies Christ v 14a
 - -reveals the things of Christ vv 14b, 15

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ADVANTAGES OF JESUS' DEPARTURE FOR THE BELIEVERS (v 7)



1. His death on the cross was essential for their salvation.
2. His physical presence would limit the worldwide growth of the church.
3. The Holy Spirit could not reside in each believer until Jesus sent him to replace him.
4. The Holy Spirit's coming made possible a wide variety of ministries and benefits for all believers in all cultures in all condition and times.
5. Jesus' absence would make possible and necessary a new kind of faith relationship. This would involve a unique dimension and blessing for those who relate intimately to One whom they have never seen (Cf. Jn 20:29 and 1 Pet 1:8).

NOTE: Christ does not return to earth for each generation. We know him through the records of his life and work in the world.

CONVICT THE WORLD (vv 8-11)

The conjunction (*hoti*) may mean "that" or "because".

1. "...convict the world of ...in that they do not believe..." = wrong ideas of sin
2. "...convict the world of ...that they do not believe..." = unbelief is their sin
3. "...convict the world of ...because they do not believe..." = unbelief illustrates their sin

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THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS THE UNBELIEVER



1. Concerning his sin (guilt) because he has not yet believed on Christ and therefore remains condemned. He has an unrelieved conscience (Heb 10:2) since he has not come to repentance. He needs the pressure of the Holy Spirit to convict of need.
2. Concerning righteousness because Jesus, who has demonstrated God's absolute standard of righteousness (Mt 5:20) will soon no longer be present to do so. Since Christ will not be on earth to define righteousness by his person and teaching, the unbeliever will need the work of the Holy Spirit to do this, i.e., to show him that he falls short of God's standard of righteousness.
3. Concerning judgment because Satan has been (future at that point, but viewed as an accomplished fact) judged/defeated by Christ's substitutionary death on the cross (Col 2:14, 15). Since Satan has been condemned, the Holy Spirit will convict unbelievers that judgment for sin is a reality and an accomplished fact and therefore they should repent to escape judgment.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES INTO ALL TRUTH (16:13) – the 3 “Cs”

1. He does not drive the believer, but guides (from "way"/"lead"). This implies...
 - a. A continuous illumination of what has already been revealed in the principles/precepts in the Scriptures, rather than "flashes of revelation".
 - b. Willingness and cooperation of the believer; the Holy Spirit does not lead without the believer's submission.
 - c. A continuous process. The believer never knows and understands all spiritual truth, thus the Holy Spirit will always have an essential ministry to the believer.
2. The guidance referred to is not primarily that of "leading in decisions in one's life", but is rather that of illuminating (explaining and applying the Scriptures). Note that the Holy Spirit convicts the unbeliever who is in a state of rebellion, but he guides the believer who has submitted to Christ's lordship.

16- “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.”

17- So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?”

18- So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.”

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- 19- Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’?”
- 20- Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.
- 21- When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.
- 22- So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.
- 23- In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.
- 24- Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
- 25- “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father.
- 26- In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;
- 27- for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.
- 28- I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”
- 29- His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!
- 30- Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.”
- 31- Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?
- 32- Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.
- 33- I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” *(Note: This ends the discourse)*

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Encouragement Concerning Events in the *Immediate Future* 16:16-33

1. Perplexity of the Twelve 16:16-19
 - a. Jesus' prediction of his departure and reappearance 16:16
 - b. Bewilderment of the Twelve 16:17-19
2. Explanation of the Sorrow/Joy Sequence vv 20-22
 - a. Prediction of reactions v 20
 - b. Illustration by parallel v 21
 - c. Application of the illustration v 22 (see note next page – "See Again")

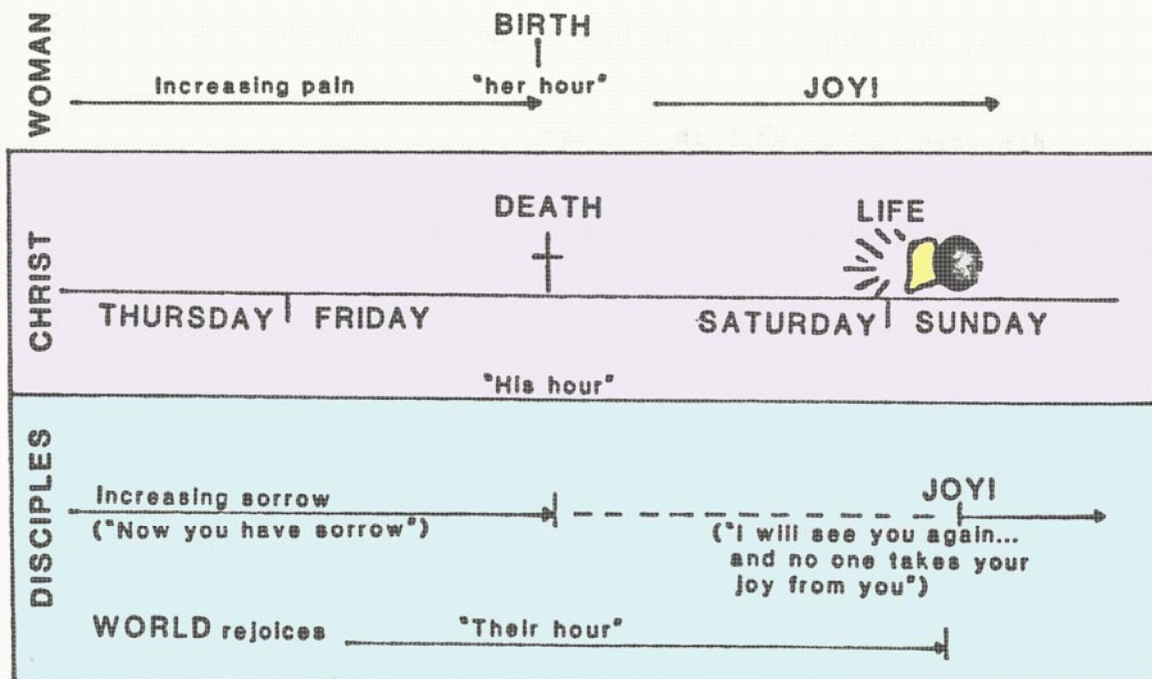
PREPARATION OF THE ELEVEN FOR EVENTS OF THE NEXT THREE DAYS 16:16-33



Relation to the occasion:

1. Earlier in the evening Jesus had told the disciples that he was "going away," and that they would look for him but could not follow him (13:33).
2. Later he told them that he was "going away to the Father" (14:3-6, 28).

Now he is preparing them for the fact that although he will be going away for a long time (the ascension), in the immediate future he would leave them for a short time and then return (the cross and the resurrection with post-resurrection appearances over forty days). To explain this sequence he paralleled it to the events surrounding the birth of a baby, thus introducing not only the sequence of events, but also the reactions of those involved.



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SEE AGAIN (6:22) / Several Views:



- Rapture: After Pentecost it is taught as an event that »ay occur at any time; here it is to be after an interval/brief ("a little time"), defined in the context as crucifixion to resurrection.
- Pentecost: The Twelve did not see Christ at Pentecost/they had joy at the resurrection and the ascension, before Pentecost.
- Resurrection of Christ (and resurrection-ascension ministry):
Cf Jn 20:20, same verbs for "see" and "rejoice."

3. New relationship of Believers to the Father vv 23-28
 - a. New access vv 23,24
 - b. New communication vv 25,26 (see note next box)
 - c. New circumstances vv 27,28
4. Vulnerability of the Twelve vv 29-32
 - a. Present confidence vv 29, 30
 - b. Future testing vv 31, 32
5. Basis of Encouragement v 33

BACKGROUND 16:25-26



The night before the crucifixion marked the end of an era in which Jesus had taught the Twelve from the perspective of his presence on earth (in contrast to his absence in the near future). Beginning with the Parables of the Kingdom (Mt 13) following his rejection by Jewish leaders in Galilee, he had used parables extensively. His method in Ch. 16, however, did not involve the use of that kind of "parable" (*parabole* = illustration) but rather a "proverb" (*paroimia* = a figure of speech in which deep truth is expressed; a pithy statement of truth).

This was a transitional period in which the disciples could not easily understand teaching from the perspective of the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension (then future events), which they could not comprehend. (Cf Lk 24:44-48). It was this subject matter in particular (the crucifixion and resurrection) to which He made specific reference in v 16 and which he illustrated so graphically in vv 20-22.

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Chapter 17

- 1- When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,
- 2- since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
- 3- And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
- 4- I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.
- 5- And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

The Lord's Prayer: Jesus' Perspective on his Work and his People 17:1-26

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. <u>Relating to himself</u> | vv 1-5 |
| a. His glorification of the Father | v 1 (see note below) |
| b. His provision of eternal life for believers | vv 2, 3 |
| c. His completion of the work | vv 4, 5 |

JESUS' PRAYER: "GLORIFY THY SON" (17:1) by...

- sustaining him in suffering
- accepting his sacrifice
- resurrecting him from the tomb
- restoring him to glory at his right hand
- giving him "a name which is above every name"
- sending the Holy Spirit (as He asked) to glorify him in and through believers



The Upper Room Experience

- 6- "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.
- 7- Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.
- 8- For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.
- 9- I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.
- 10- All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.
- 11- And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.
- 12- While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.
- 13- But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.
- 14- I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
- 15- I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.
- 16- They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
- 17- Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.
- 18- As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
- 19- And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

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- 2. Relating to the Twelve vv 6-19
 - a. Basis: His work for believers vv 6-8
 - b. His Prayer / Concern: Their protection / productivity in the world vv 9-19

SUMMARY: CONCEPTS AND CONCERNS



1. There is a fundamental and qualitative difference between believers ("not of this world") and unbelievers. (vv 9, 16)
2. Believers are now special targets of Satan because they carry the treasure of the Word, thus they need special protection. (vv 6, 14,15)
3. Satan 's basic strategy is separation - of man from God and of man from man (Cf. the Garden of Eden experience). The emphasis of Christ's prayer, therefore, is on unity and love between the Father and the believer and among believers. (vv 11, 21-33)
4. While on earth, Jesus guarded his men. Now on his departure, He turns them over to the Father to guard them. Note that "keeping" does not guarantee, or even imply, physical safety at all times. (vv 11, 12, 15)
5. Jesus intends that believers will not just "**be in** the world" but that they will penetrate the world ("**go into** the world"). They are to witness concerning who he is and what he does, e.g., Acts 1:8. (v 18)
6. The believer must be clean and reserved for God's use (= sanctified), as Christ himself was at all times. This preparation and reservation is accomplished by the application of the Word to the heart and continual obedience to it. (vv 17, 19)
7. There is a unity and continuity of believers of all generations. There is one church and some day all members of it will be with Christ. (vv 20-22)

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- 20- “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word
- 21- 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
- 22- The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,
- 23- I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.
- 24- Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.
- 25- O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.
- 26- I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

3. Relationship to Future Believers vv 20-26

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a. Their unity with the Trinity and each other | vv 20-23 |
| b. Their reunion with other believers to see his glory | v 24 |
| c. Their knowledge of the Father through the Son | vv 25, 26 |

The Upper Room Experience

THE MEANING OF JESUS' PRAYER FOR UNITY

(vv 21-23)



(See Appendix F)

1. The antecedent of "they" (v 21) is "those who believe in Me through their word", a reference to believers in the future from the time of the prayer. These are those who will come to know Christ, not through his preaching (e.g., v 8), but through "their word", i.e., the witness of succeeding generations of Christians. This reference is reinforced by Jesus' preceding words, "I do not ask on behalf of these alone" (v 20).
2. If "they" refers to future believers, then the unity prayed for would be a unity among them and the apostles, i.e., a unity in the continuity of believers throughout all generations of the church. While this generation-to-generation community is evident to only one generation at a time, it is compatible with the long range perspective of Jesus' prayer. In practice it still provides for a strong witness of reciprocal love and unity among believers to their contemporaries in any given generation.
3. Jesus continues to pray for these future believers in the latter part of v 21, "...that they may also be in Us", thus reinforcing the connection between unity and believers as individuals.
4. As generation after generation of believers witness to Christ's love for them through their love for each other (Jn 13:34, 35; 15:12) they can look back over many centuries and say, "Jesus of Nazareth really was sent by God. I haven't seen him, but I have seen the impact he is still having on his followers in my generation."
5. The standard of unity is the relationship among the persons of the Godhead. Unity among believers is analogous to that unity but not the same, ("even as...they also...", v 21, and "Just as...", v 22). The thrust of Jesus' prayer, then, is not a structural unity among believers but an organic unity ("in Us" v 21), i.e., believers united because of their relationship to the Godhead.
6. Unity among believers is not an external association which is commanded, but rather an internal result of the "glory that Thou hast given Me I have given them" (v 22), that is, a common bond based on all that Christ has provided for believers.

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JESUS' PRAYER (Chapter 17)



1. Relating to himself vv 1-5
 - a. a. His glorification of the Father v 1
 - b. b. His provision of eternal life for believers vv 2, 3
 - c. c. His completion of the work vv 4, 5
2. Relating to the Twelve vv 6-19
 - a. a. Basis: His work for believers vv 6-8
 - b. b. Concern: Their protection/productivity in the world vv 9-19
3. Relationship to Future Believers vv 20-26
 - a. a. Their unity with the Trinity and each other vv 20-23
 - b. b. Their reunion with other believers to see his glory v 24
 - c. c. Their knowledge of the Father through the Son vv 25, 26

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APPENDIX A

RECIPROCAL COMMANDS

I. **COMMANDS RELATING TO INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

(guidelines & directives on how we should relate to one another)

<u>NEED</u>	<u>COMMAND</u>
1. Be loved and know it	1. "Love one another" (Jn 13:34/15:12)
2. Belong and be accepted	2. "Receive one another" (Rom 15:7)
3. Be noticed/know you are there	3. "Greet one another" (Rom 16:16)
4. Not feel left out or unequal another"	4. "Have the same care for one (I Cor 12:24)
5. Be healed/restored to fellowship	5. "Forgive one another" (Eph 4:31, Col 3:12)
6. Be guided, confirmed	6. "Submit one to another" (Eph 5:21)
7. Be given opportunity to respond/ grow in a situation	7. "Forbear one another" (Eph 4:2, Col 3:13,14)
8. Make restitution/be restored to fellowship	8. "Confess your sins one to another" (James 5:16)
9. Live in open relaxed relationship, not on guard	9. "Have peace with one another" (Mark 9:50)
10. Walk and work in harmony, not confrontation	10. "Be likeminded one toward another" (Rom 15:5; 12:16)
11. Feel cared about/looked on with favor	11. "Be devoted one to another" (Rom 12:10)
12. Avoid contention, competition	12. "Preferring one another" (Rom12:10)

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II. NEGATIVE COMMANDS

If you do these things, you can...

- damage a believer's life and ministry
- damage your life and ministry
- hurt the body of Christ
- block potential ministry for yourself
- grieve the Spirit

Because that believer is...

- God's child
- Christ's servant
- Your brother and sister

Do not...

1. Judge one another" (Rom 14:13)
2. Speak evil of one another" (James 4:11)
3. Murmur against one another" (James 5:9)
4. Bite and devour one another" (Gal 5:15)
5. Provoke and envy one another" (Gal 5:26)
6. Lie to one another" (Col 3:9f)

"Do not seek a "victory" over another believer, but rather a "solution."²

² Cf. Francis A. Schaeffer: The Mark of the Christian (Intervarsity Press)

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III. COMMANDS RELATING TO MUTUAL EDIFICATION

(building one another up!)

NEED³

1. Have sin in my life identified and cleansed /meet the need of a brother who needs cleansing
2. Be made stronger, bolder, more victorious over sin, more productive in ministry/disciple another believer
3. Increase in my knowledge of God's Word, ways/communicate and share what God shows me
4. Be challenged and encouraged/stimulate, lead, urge others on in the faith
5. Be convicted of sin and rebuked when in error/help restore a weaker or failing brother
6. Be comforted, encouraged, "warmed"/encourage, affirm others

COMMAND

1. "Wash one another's feet" (Jn 13:14)
2. "Build up one another" (Rom 14:19)
3. "Teach one another" (Col 3:16)
4. "Exhort one another" (Hew 3:12; I Thes 5:11)
5. "Admonish one another" (Rom 15:14; Col 3:16)
6. "Speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs." (Eph 5:18-20; Col 3:16)

IV. COMMANDS BEARING ON MUTUAL SERVICE

KEEP³

1. Be served/serve
2. Be helped to carry my load/assist someone with his load
3. Be provided with a place to stay/share my home
4. Be treated with gentleness, even when wrong/show grace
5. Be prayed for, others asking God to work for me/intercede for others

COMMAND

1. "Be ye servants one to another" (Gal 5:13)
2. "Bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6:2)
3. "Show hospitality to one another" (1 Pet 4:7-10)
4. "Be kind to one another" (Eph 4:32)
5. "Pray for one another" (James 5:16)

³ The first statement relates to the need of the person being helped; the second statement relates to the need of the person who helps.

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APPENDIX B

FOOTWASHING: AN ORDINANCE?

(John 13:14-15)

1. Jesus' question (v 12) serves to emphasize the significance of the act itself. Contrast his statements about the bread and wine when He instituted the ordinance to remember him and proclaim his death.
2. The word translated "example" (*hupodeigma*) does not carry the connotation of "ordinance" in its two other occurrences (Heb 4:11 and James 5:10).
3. If a literal washing of feet were intended as an ordinance then, by implication and Jesus' statement in v 10, regeneration would also involve literal water.
4. The expression of Jesus' purpose for the apostles (and all believers) in v 15 differs from the explicit statement concerning the bread and wine in which He told them to do it regularly, ("... as often as"), what it meant, and how long to continue doing it.
5. The issue addressed in the footwashing was not a theological truth to be demonstrated (as in the bread and wine symbolizing Jesus' death). Rather it was a spontaneous teaching experience in which Jesus contrasted their attitudes of pride and lack of humility, challenging them to contriteness rather than confrontation in personal relationships. The emphasis in the footwashing was upon an example of an attitude rather than on an expression of a doctrinal truth.
6. Jesus commanded them to do "as I did to you" (v 15) not to do what I have done (i.e., to each other). The emphasis is on imitation of attitude, not action, in contrast to the use of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

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APPENDIX C

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INTRODUCTION:

The Lord Jesus instituted this ordinance of remembrance during his last Passover meal with his disciples. Since this event occurred during those hours of unique and intimate fellowship in the upper room, it must be considered as an integral part of Christ's teaching on that occasion. As John's record of Jesus' personal conversation and action with Judas at the table identified the betrayer who was **not his** ("That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him"), so his personal conversation and action with the Eleven involving the bread and the wine identified the body of believers who **would be his**, for generation after generation ("...Do this in remembrance of Me" / "...until He comes").

A. The Time of the Lord's Supper Event In Relation to the Discourse

1. The Synoptic writers who record the event do not record the discourse; John, who records the discourse, does not record the event or provide specific clues as to when it occurred.
2. It is not known when all of the discourse itself, or its parts, occurred with reference to the Passover meal, which would have lasted for several hours. In view of the time period involved, presumably from at least mid-evening until, perhaps early the next morning, probably much more conversation and teaching occurred which is not recorded. Thus John's record includes key segments of discussions which, although presumed to be recorded in sequence, may actually have been separated by time gaps in which other conversation/ teaching and events, e.g. the Lord's Supper, may have occurred.
3. Apparently the Lord's Supper was established after the footwashing and departure of Judas and before Jesus' suggestion that they leave the room, i.e., between 13:30 and 14:31 "let us go hence..."

Within the sequence of the Passover celebration itself, the event would probably have taken place at the drinking of the third cup which was related to redemption. This would also account for Jesus' words "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mat 26:29). This statement would have referred to the fourth cup which related to the fourth in the series of promises, the restoration of Israel in the Kingdom.

(See Appendix D for the order of the Passover meal and Thomas & Gundry, A Harmony of The Gospels, p. 213, footnote "p", and Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah Vol. II, 511.)

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B. The Relation of the Lord's Supper Event to the Discourse

It is not essential to identify the exact point at which the Lord instituted this remembrance, but it is important to note that it was during this meal that it occurred. It is also important to relate it to the other actions and teachings recorded in John 13-17.

The eating of bread and drinking of wine provide a tangible link between the upper room experience and each generation of Christians until Jesus returns for them. Repeating these same actions as they were introduced to the Eleven that night was designed to remind all believers visibly and tangibly of certain basic facts:

1. The Person of Christ: The institution of the ordinance at this time was especially significant because Jesus was about to leave them and this was to be a reminder to believers that He who was physically there in the room and on the cross would return physically to be with them again. His "little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek me... where I am going, you cannot come" (John 13:33) is balanced by Paul's promise "...until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26)
2. The Work of Christ: The upper room teaching was given against the background of Jesus' imminent crucifixion ("...now is the Son of Man glorified..." "now I am coming to Thee"). The Lord's Supper was intended to portray this very event: "Take, eat, this is my body... this cup is the new covenant in my blood."
3. The Return of Christ: On several occasions in the discourse Jesus referred to his return, most pointedly in 14:3, "I will come again". This promise was echoed in Paul's comment about the Lord's Supper "...you proclaim the Lord's death 'til He come."
4. The Unity of Believers With Christ and With Each Other: Eating from the same bread and drinking from the same cup demonstrated the unity of believers, a principle recognized by Paul (1 Cor. 10:16-17). This unity was a climaxing point made by Christ in his prayer to the Father (17:21-22). Partaking of the bread and wine together at the Passover that night was the first of a succession of visible demonstrations of the unity of believers in Christ.
5. The Continuity of all Believers: Not only do believers on any one occasion demonstrate their unity as they partake of the bread and wine, but they also demonstrate their unity and continuity with all other believers from Jesus' day until his return. The participation "until He come" links believers of all generations in a common experience and reflects Jesus' prediction of subsequent generations of believers when He referred to them as "those also who believe in Me through their word" (John 17:20).

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APPENDIX D

ORDER OF THE PASSOVER OBSERVANCE

1. A benediction.
2. Drinking a cup of wine (First).
3. Washing the hands of each person, water being poured over the hands (over a basin). The water and basin were passed by the host of the feast while he recited a prayer.
4. Bitter herbs were dipped in sauce and eaten.
5. The lamb was brought in with other portions of the meal
6. A benediction and second eating of bitter herbs.
7. Drinking a cup of wine (Second) with questions and answers about the origin of the feast ("Why is this night different from all other nights?...").
8. Singing the first part of the *Hallel* (Psalms 113,114) followed by a benediction.
9. Host of the feast washes his hands and makes a sop by wrapping a small piece of unleavened bread in bitter herbs and dipping it in the sauce, for each one at the table in turn.
10. Each person eats, finishing with a piece of lamb.
11. Drinking a cup of wine (Third) after washing hands.
12. Singing the second part of the *Hallel* (Psalms 115-118).
13. Drinking a cup of wine (Fourth).

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APPENDIX E

PARAKLETOS

(John 14:16)

1. It is not just a noun form from *parakaleo* = "encourage", "exhort", "entreat".
2. It does not mean "comfort" (from the old Wycliffe translation) since that word has lost its original meaning (= "with/strength") and has now come to mean simply "consolation".
3. The form of the word is passive but it is difficult to translate it without using an active word, e.g. "Helper".
4. The basic concept is "one who is called to the side" (a root meaning of the verb *parakaleo*). The way the person helps is not indicated in the word itself but is, in effect, left blank to fit the context.
5. It has a legal connotation in two passages:
 - John 16:8 - The Holy Spirit prosecutes ("convicts") the world.
 - I John 2:1 - Christ defends (acts as an "advocate") for the believer.
("Advocate" comes from the Latin equivalent of the Greek *parakletos*.)
6. Each ministry that the Holy Spirit performs for the believer as *Parakletos* is true of Christ, thus He is referred to by Jesus as "another *Parakletos*" (John 14:16) e.g.
 - He is **in** the disciples (14:20; 15:4,5) as is Jesus
 - He **teaches** the disciples (7:14; 13:13) as did Jesus
7. Conclusion: Since the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit has replaced Christ in his direct ministry in and to and through believers. This ministry involves doing all that is necessary:
 - (1) to maintain the spiritual life of the believer and
 - (2) to enable him to bear witness to the lost. He also convicts the lost to bring them to salvation.

Jesus' own evaluation of the work of the Holy Spirit reflects the fact that his ministry to believers is a broader one than Christ Himself had when He was among his disciples on earth (John 16:7).

APPENDIX F

JESUS' PRAYER FOR UNITY

(John 17:21-23)

H. Ecumenical Interpretation:

Jesus' prayer is commonly interpreted as an appeal for the kind of ecclesiastical unity that would involve the breaking down of denominational barriers. Theoretically this would result in the achievement of the goal of the ecumenical movement as expressed in such phrases as "church unity" and "one world church" and in the prayer "that one day our unity may be restored".

This view of Christ's intent in his prayer presents several problems:

1. No denomination existed at the time. Nothing approaching our current denominational structures or divisions appeared until many centuries later. Neither the "unity" of the Roman Catholic Church before the Reformation nor the fragmentation of Christendom following it could have related to Jesus' statement historically or logically.
2. Jesus was speaking of individuals, not organizational structures. The latter are not mentioned in the context while the former are specially noted.
3. There is no evidence that even if denominational distinctions were broken down and all of Christendom were unified structurally, this would achieve either the kind of unity that Jesus prayed for or that the world would respect.
4. The lack of personal holiness and witness of individual believers and conflict within denominations and local churches probably offends the world more than the so-called "scandal of our denominational divisions" as such.
5. Christ's statement is a prayer to the Father that they (present and future believers) may all **be** one; it is not a command to twentieth century believers that they **become** one.

I. The Nature of Unity:

1. Positional:

All believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ (I Cor 12:13) and are part of one church under one Head (Eph 4:3-6). The seven-fold unity referred to in the Ephesians passage is not viewed as a goal for human achievement, but rather as a relationship already accomplished by the Holy Spirit himself (v 3).

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2. Personal/Interpersonal

Scripture often exhorts believers to a "oneness of mind", an interpersonal unity in attitudes and relationships which reflects their positional unity in Christ. The above passage (Eph 4:2,3) alludes to this as an application of the positional unity referred in the verses which follow. The Apostle Paul wrote frequently of the importance of this kind of unity (e.g., Phil and 4:2).

3. Perceived Unity (by the world)

It may reasonably be assumed that most unregenerate persons are only vaguely aware of the significance of ecclesiastical structures. If divisions among denominations affect them at all, it is probably in a general and impersonal way. They probably expect and tolerate this fragmentation in the same way they do the differences between such secular organizations as the Rotarians, Lions Club, etc.

On the other hand, any interpersonal disunity among professing Christians, especially as it may be reflected in disrespect, acrimony or competition, would be highly visible and damaging in terms of one's impression of Christianity.

J. The Basic Issue: *Reciprocal love as a witness to the world*

1. Jesus does not command his followers to "be unified". He does command them to "love one another". This desire of Jesus is a dominant theme throughout the discourse (13:34, 35, 15:12,17).
2. Jesus loves the lost ("the world"). Apparently an important means of communicating his love for them are believers who love him and love each other. This reciprocal love among believers is attractive to the world as it gives evidence that "Thou didst send Me" (v 21) and in addition, "... didst love them" (v 23).

K. Conclusion:

The prayer of Christ "that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (vv 21,23) appears to be related to a demonstrated unity among believers, ("that they may be perfected in unity") rather than to the unification of organizational structures.

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APPENDIX G

Parable of Vine and Branches and Fruit Bearing

RELATION BETWEEN CHAPTER 14 AND 15:1-17

Jesus' teaching in Chapter 14 is illustrated by his **parable** of the *Vine* and *Branches* in Chapter 15.

The *Vine* and the *Branches* Parable (Chapter 15)

1. "Bear much fruit" (15:5) = "greater works than these" (14:12)
2. "Abide in me ... the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine" (15:4) =
 - a. Prayer: Seeking God's enablement demonstrates the dependence of the branch on the Vine (14:13, 14)
 - b. Submission: Obedience to the commands of Christ reflects the love of the branch for the Vine (14:15, 21-24)
 - c. Faith: Trusting God to act releases the power of the Vine to bear fruit through the branches (14:12)
3. "That you should go and bear fruit ...that remains" (15:16) = the ministry of the Holy Spirit (14:16-20).

As the vine supplies the branch, so the Spirit in control of the believer empowers for...

 - a. Maturing the individual: fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)
 - b. Edification of the body: making disciples (Matt. 28:19/Eph 4:12)
 - c. Witness in the world: making converts (Acts 1:8)

EMPHASES OF THE PARABLE:

1. The objective of the vinedresser is the **maximum fruit production** (v 2)
2. Pruning is essential for increased production (v 2) and is accomplished by application of Word (v 3)
3. Every (all) believer is expected to bear fruit (v 2)
4. The believer is totally dependent on Christ for the resources to bear fruit (v 4)
5. The believer who does not bear fruit is useless to God (v 6)
6. Conformity to the teachings (doctrine/words) of Christ are essential for effective prayer (v 7)
7. Prayer is essential to the requisitioning of the resources needed for bearing fruit (vv 7, 16)
8. Fruit results in:
 - a. Glory for the Father and joy for the believer (v 8)
 - b. Demonstration of a true discipleship (v 8)
9. Fruitbearing is essential for worldwide evangelization (v 16)
10. Fruitbearing is not the option of the believer but the decision of Christ (v 16)

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MEANING OF FRUIT

1. Different biblical usage (N.T.)
 - a. Literal: = fruit of a tree or vine or seed (Mt 21:19; Mark 14:25; Luke 13:7)
 - b. Spiritual:
 - Evidence of internal decisions or attitudes (Luke 3:8; Mt 7:16, 20)
 - Result of applying the Word (Mt 13:23; Col 1:6)
 - Result of personal ministry (Rom 1:13; Ph 1:22; 4:17)
 - Characteristics produced by the Holy Spirit when He controls a believer (Gal 5:22, 23)
2. Nature of fruit: It is the...
 - a. Character of the Vine demonstrated in the branches.
 - b. Conduct of the Vine imitated by the branches.
 - c. Converts of the Vine evangelized through the branches.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FRUITBEARING

A. PURPOSE OF THE TEACHING

1. This is a parable given to illustrate the basic teachings of the Discourse, especially those recorded in Chapter 14.
2. The vine (Christ) will soon leave and then fruit (spiritual ministry) will be produced (accomplished) by him (who will be with the Father) through believers (who will remain on earth, generation after generation).
3. It is of vital importance to Christ's purpose ("I will build my church") that believers reflect his character and penetrate the world as He did, with the lasting, spiritual result of producing regenerated, reproducing people.
4. This whole operation requires the believer's obedience to the will of Christ (as recorded in his Word), drawing on his resources (prayer), and living in the expectation that He will do greater works through him/her (faith). This relationship is evidenced by Christ's love, joy and peace in the believer. (Cf. p 24)
5. As with Christ (the Vine) when He was on earth, fruit will not be borne under ideal, climate-controlled conditions, thus, supernatural resources are required.

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B. RELATION TO OTHER SCRIPTURES

1. Matthew 28:19: "make disciples" = "fruit that remains" (and reproduces) worldwide.
2. Acts 1:8 "witnesses unto Me" = producing fruit that remains worldwide as Christ builds his church from many people in many places.

C. BACKGROUND

1. Persons addressed:
 - a. Believers: Only believers remained after Judas left.
 - b. Nominal Christians (name only) are not involved: "in Me" = "in Christ" of the epistles) indicates a vital union of regenerated persons with Christ.
2. Theme: Christ, in the presence of the Father producing fruit through believers on earth ("fruit 8 times/"abide" 12 times) = living his life in them. (Gal 2:20)
3. Perspective: Assumes Christ's resurrection and ascension and the Holy Spirit's indwelling.