

Jesus Will Return to Glory (John 16:5-17:8)

Expository Lessons from the Gospel of John

I. Background for the Farewell Discourse

- a. As we resume in the text, it is the Thursday night, the night before Jesus is to be crucified.
 - i. Jesus has had his Last Supper with the disciples, at which (we know from **Matthew, Mark and Luke**) He instituted the Lord's Supper with the bread and the cup.
- b. After dinner has ended and Judas has departed, but before Jesus and his disciples cross over to the Garden of Gethsemane (where Jesus will be taken prisoner), Jesus gives a lengthy and very significant talk to the apostles.
 - i. The passages we will cover in this lesson are part of that "Farewell Discourse", which we find in **John 13:31-17:26**.
 - ii. Jesus discusses several topics multiple times within this discourse. For the purposes of teaching this series, we have taken the subjects within this discourse topically, as they first appear (Holy Spirit, Jesus' impending departure, the faith that would be handed down complete, the importance of obeying Jesus' teachings, etc.). Since we are approaching the last part of this discourse, many of the things He discusses in the text (in **John 16**) are things we covered in prior lessons.
 1. Therefore, we will read and briefly review those things, but focus in this lesson on new things we did not previously cover.
- c. In our last lesson we discussed Jesus' teaching that His disciples would be hated by the world and persecuted.
- d. In this lesson we will continue that teaching of Jesus, from where we left off.

II. Jesus Again Speaks of the Spirit Coming After His Departure (Read **John 16:5-15**)

- a. Points Jesus is making here.
 - i. He again speaks of his departure. He is going back to the One who sent Him, returning to His Father.

1. He had said at the beginning of this discourse: "Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you." (**John 13:33**, NKJV)
- ii. He reminds them that after His departure, the Holy Spirit, the Helper, will come. (We discussed the personality, importance and role of the Holy Spirit in recent prior lessons).
 1. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness and the judgment to come.
 2. Regarding judgment: 'the ruler of this world' stands condemned.
 - a. Jesus here affirms that Satan is, indeed, the ruler of this world.
 - b. If things appear wicked and depraved in the world around us, we should not be surprised. However, justice and judgment are coming. Satan will be judged and destroyed.
 - c. Recall the mission of Jesus.
 - i. "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (**Hebrews 2:14-15**, NKJV)
 - ii. Satan is indeed the ruler of this world, and has taken mankind captive as prisoners, in bondage. Jesus came to destroy Satan and release us from that captivity to sin and death.
 1. "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one." (**1 John 5:19**, NKJV)
 - iii. Since Satan is the ruler of this world and Jesus' work is to destroy the devil, *there is no way that the world is going to love the Christians*; as we discussed in the previous lesson!

3. The Holy Spirit, “the Spirit of truth” will guide them into all truth.
 - a. Previously we discussed the importance of this promise.
 - b. The promise applied specifically to the apostles. They would be guided into all truth.
 - c. Since they would be guided into all truth, the faith would be handed down complete to the apostles; there would be no further addition or development of the faith.
 - d. Our charge is to restore and guard the original deposit of the faith; the faith “once for all entrusted to the saints”.

III. **Jesus Speaks More Directly About His Departure and Return** (Read **John 16:16-33**)

- a. Points Jesus makes here.
 - i. Jesus says “in a little while” you will not see Him; yet “in a little while” they will see Him again.
 1. Apostles want to know what “a little while” means here.
 - ii. Jesus uses metaphor of childbirth to explain how they will feel regarding His departure and return.
 1. Great pain and sorrow (like a woman in childbirth) at His departure. Recall that women’s pain in childbirth is one of the consequences of Eve’s sin (**Genesis 3:16**).
 2. Followed by joy to come that will be so great, they will forget the prior pain they felt.
 - iii. In that day (when He again appears) they will ask the Father in His name; and receive what they request.
 - iv. Jesus acknowledges that He is speaking figuratively; but in the future He will speak to them directly.
 - v. Disciples claim that they understand what Jesus is saying; Jesus implies that they don’t yet fully “get it”. In fact, they will soon abandon Him and be scattered.
 1. Yet Jesus will not be alone; His Father will still be with Him.

2. He says these things to encourage His disciples, that they might have peace.
 - a. He reminds them, "In this world you will have tribulation."
 - i. Clearly Jesus did not preach any form of the "prosperity gospel" or "have-a-more-wholesome-and-better-life-in-this-world gospel."
 - ii. It will be a rough ride for his disciples. It is a narrow and difficult road, but not impossible for anyone.
 - b. However, they can still be happy in the midst of tribulation, since Jesus has overcome the world.
 - i. Also, the reward at the end will make it all worthwhile.

IV. Jesus Begins His Prayer to the Father (Read **John 17:1-8**)

- a. Jesus asks for the Father to glorify Him.
 - i. Jesus says He has glorified the Father. He has finished the work that the Father gave Him to do.
 - ii. Jesus asks the Father to give Him the glory He shared with the Father before the world was (**John 17:5**).
 1. This points to the divinity of Christ.
 - a. Understanding (and being able to defend) Jesus' divinity is extremely important.
 - i. Nearly a quarter of the world's population is Muslim. *They assert* that although Jesus was the Christ and a great prophet, He *was not* God/divine.
 - ii. However, Christians assert that while Jesus became flesh when He was born in Bethlehem to the virgin Mary, His origins as the Son of God were *from eternity*. Therefore, He is in fact, divine.
 1. Consider **Micah 5:1-2**, applied to Jesus in **Matthew 2:5-6**.

- b. Two reasons this passage (**John 17:5**) points to the divinity of Christ:
- i. Reason #1: He was with the Father “before the world was”.
 1. Paul speaks of this as well: “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.” (**Colossians 1:15–17**, NKJV)
 2. Also, read **Hebrews chapter 1**.
 - ii. Reason #2: He shared the same glory that the Father had, in the beginning.
 1. “I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.” (**Isaiah 42:8**, NKJV)
 2. “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another. “Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last. Indeed, My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together.” (**Isaiah 48:11–13**, NKJV)
 3. God does not share His glory with another; yet Jesus is asking to share in God’s glory. Since Jesus is divine, He can share in God’s (*the Father’s*) divine glory.
 4. Read **John 12:37-41**.
 - a. John quotes from **Isaiah 6:10** and says Isaiah said those things “*when he (Isaiah) saw His glory and spoke*

of Him (referring to Jesus, the Son of God).

b. Read **Isaiah 6:1-10**

- i. The Lord (Son of God) is sitting on a throne, high and lifted up.
- ii. Seraphim (angels) worship Him as “the Lord of hosts”.
- iii. They cry out, “the whole earth is full of His glory.”

5. In **John 17**, Jesus prays that He may again share in the glory of the Father, as it was in the beginning.

2. This prayer by Jesus also reflects that the Son and the Father are *distinct persons*.
 - a. Jesus is praying to the Father.
 - i. Jesus *is not* talking to Himself!
 - b. He was with the Father in the beginning, was sent by the Father, and is returning to the Father.
 - c. He shared glory with the Father; and asks to be glorified again.
3. Jesus reveals his mission as coming from glory, becoming a servant to His Father and completing the mission (the work the Father gave Him to do), and then returning to glory. There are several implications for us:
 - a. First, as Jesus has completed His work and returned to His Father’s glory, He is now in the presence of His Father, interceding for us. When we pray, He brings our prayers before His Father (**Hebrews 7:25**). This is a tremendous truth and a great blessing for us.
 - b. Second, Jesus was faithful and completed the difficult work that the Father had given Him to do. He glorified His Father by doing this. Now we glorify Him and His Father *by completing the work they have assigned to us*.

- i. Many Churches teach that to glorify God is to worship Him by singing songs of praise.
 1. **Question:** *How did Jesus glorify God, His Father?*
 2. “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given me to do.” (**John 17:4**)
 - ii. “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.” (**Hebrews 12:1-4, NKJV**)
 - iii. Paul wrote to Timothy, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (**2 Timothy 4:7-8, NKJV**)
- c. Third, Jesus voluntarily gave up His exalted position for a time, to serve us. Paul points to that as the ultimate example for us to follow. Read **Philippians 2:1-16**
- i. Jesus left His exalted position of glory with God the Father: to become a man, to obey the will of His Father, to serve and to die for us.
 - ii. For that reason, God has now exalted Him again, above all.
 - iii. We need to follow Jesus’ example: to humble ourselves, to “in lowliness of mind consider others better than ourselves”. Being a Christian

is not just obeying a list of rules; it requires having Jesus' humble heart and deeply loving others.

1. To look out for the interests of others, not just our own interests.
 2. To do all things without complaining and disputing.
 - a. When mistreated, abused and crucified, Jesus did not open His mouth to complain (**Isaiah 53:7, Acts 8:30-35**).
 - b. **Question/Challenge:** Can you go one week *without complaining*?
 3. To shine as lights in the world.
- b. Jesus says He has the authority to give eternal life to as many as the Lord gives to Him (**John 17:2**).
- i. Jesus says eternal life is knowing the only true God and knowing Jesus Christ.
 - ii. Some take verses like this out of context and claim that salvation can be obtained by just believing in Jesus and having a warm feeling of "knowing Him". They further claim that *if God has given them* to His Son, then they cannot ever lose that position of eternal life.
 1. However, Jesus also says to His Father here, "You gave them to Me and they have kept Your word." (**John 17:6**)
 2. "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." (**1 John 2:3-6, NKJV**)
 - a. Here John defines what he means by "knowing God" (at least the kind of *knowing* that will lead to our salvation).
 - b. We know Him if we keep His commandments.
 - c. Anyone who claims to know Jesus who does not keep His commandments is a liar. They do not know Him.