

John 14 Chapter Study

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1. Jesus washes the disciple's feet 13:1-17
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Because Jesus said He would soon be leaving -

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 shall follow Me afterward."

Because we know what's coming, we know Jesus meant He was going to heaven & that eventually, Peter would go there to, but only after many more years of serving God on Earth as one of the Apostles.

But of course, Peter had no clue that's what Jesus meant.

When Jesus said He was leaving, because Peter & the others had come to believe He was the Messiah & would soon claim the throne of Israel, Jesus' talk about leaving confused him.

Was Jesus going to Damascus to speak to the Roman regional governor there?
Or maybe He was going to go straight to Rome and secure the throne of Israel from the Emperor as Herod the Great had done.

37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake."

Whatever Jesus was going to do, where ever He was going, it would be *dangerous* & Peter wants Jesus to know he's not afraid.

Even if it came to violence & the threat of life, Peter was willing to risk it.

38 Jesus answered him, → ["Really, Pete?"] "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times."

Jesus not only knew what was coming for Him, He knew what the disciples would soon face.

He knew the confusion that would come at His arrest in the Garden.

He knew they would run off in fear.

That Peter would follow at a distance & warm himself at a bonfire in the high priest's courtyard while they examined Jesus.

He knew Peter would be pegged by others round that fire as one of the disciples & that 3 times he would deny it.

Jesus warned Peter about his failure ahead of time because He wanted him to know

He knew all about it.

He didn't want Peter to think that if Jesus had known ahead of time about his weakness & denial it would have changed His decision to go to the cross. Jesus did know, & went to the cross anyway – because He loved Peter even in the midst of his failure.

God knows us. He knows all about our weaknesses & failures.

He knows the ways we're going to mess up & blow it long before we do it. And still He loves & welcomes us.

Amazing Love – how can it be, that You my King, would die for me?

There's an important insight to be gleaned from Peter's failure.

In the Upper Room at the Last Supper, he said he would lay down his life for Jesus.

This was no idle boast; Peter *was* courageous.

The Jews were generally fearful of the sea; it had a strong evil connotation, so historically, Jews distrusted & shunned it.

This is why until modern times they never had a strong Navy or were known as a seafaring culture.

Yet Peter was a fisherman on a body of water that was well known for fierce storms.

Throughout the Gospels, Peter's the one to take the risk & speaks up in response to some question or challenge Jesus gives.

He's the one who tries walking on water.

He's the first one to speak out who he's come to believe Jesus is.

Courage was one of Peter's greatest strengths.

Interesting that it was right at that point that he suffered his greatest failure.

It was a little serving girl who pointed him out as being a disciple & led to his denial.

Peter's courage failed precisely because it *WAS his strength*.

Because he was *trusting in himself* rather than in God, he was unprepared for the challenge that little girl brought.

We all know those things we're weak in, so we look to God to protect us & to give us strength to overcome when trials or temptations come against those things.

But when we're tested in those things we're strong in, we don't look to the Lord because we figure we can handle them on our own.

Here's the danger – when we overcome in our own strength, we can easily develop a sense of superiority & pride – & that can become a bigger sin than if we had failed.

So God will allow us to be tested in the areas of our strength in ways that get around our natural defenses so that we'll see even our strengths must be surrendered to Him.

Peter was ready for an armed assault against Jesus.

He was willing to lay down His life – & pictured himself going out in a blaze of glory, swinging a sword for the Lord – as in the Garden when he chopped off some poor guy's ear.

Peter never saw the challenge of the young servant girl coming, & it laid him low.

What's your chief moral strength – courage, loyalty, humility, purity, generosity, honesty, integrity?

Don't become proud in it!

Don't let some stand-out victories in that area of your life bring you to a place of boasting about how strong you are.

Don't fall into the trap of saying, "I would never _____!"

6. The promise of & way to heaven 14:1-6

1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it* were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. **4** And where I go you know, and the way you know." **5** Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" **6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

[Sunday]

7. Jesus reveals the Father 14:7-14

7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Greek scholars agree that this is one of the most powerful & clear claims to deity Jesus made.

Jesus says that if the disciples had *really known* Who He was, & not just seen Him through the lens of Who they *hoped* He was as *their* conception of the Messiah, they would have known not only Him but the Invisible God Whom He perfectly represents.

Time & again in John's Gospel we've seen Jesus draw this vital connection between Himself & the Father; here it is again.

In the last part of the verse, we find something that's difficult to bring over into English without it sounding awkward.

"... and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Jesus is saying that because of what He was about to do, they would be brought into a new relationship with God that would give them a *personal experience* of Him.

And from that basis, they would come to realize Who Jesus really was & would understand that He *perfectly manifests* the Person of God.

Now, before we read v. 8 – which John intends to be *humorous*, we need to catch what Jesus is saying in v. 7.

In effect He says – "One day soon you will realize that *in Me you see the Father.*"

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

Philip's just being a bit dense.

Let's say we meet in the hallway before study & you say, "Lance, I got a new Hummer. It's in the parking lot outside; want to see it?"

I say, "Sure, let's go."

We walk outside & over to where you've parked your new wheels & you go [tada].

I look at it, walk around it, & say, "Okay, let's see it – show me your new car." That's what's happening here with Philip.

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Jesus is not saying that He is the same **PERSON** as the Father; the language does not allow that conclusion.

He's saying that what can be made *visible* about the Father's nature, character, & purpose are *revealed* in the Son.

And Jesus' continual affirmation of His union with the Father over the last 3 years ought to have made it clear to Philip & the other disciples that to know One was to know the Other.

Here's a *very imperfect analogy* of what Jesus is saying, but it might help to illustrate.

Inside the computer back there is a program that contains the information we want to project up here.

That information is sent through a cable to the projector, which converts the data into little specks of light, and throws them up here on the screen.

Our eyes blend all those little specks together to make an image/picture.

The screen is just the surface upon which the light shines to present what we want you to know.

The body of Jesus was the screen God showed the pure light of Himself on.

If you were to stand up here in front of the screen & look at the projector, you would not see the image but your eyes would be hurt by the intensity of the light.

In the same way, you & I cannot see God in His glory.

His grandeur is far too vast for us to see; His glory too great for us to endure.

But what we *can* know about God has been manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ.

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?

Again Jesus points to His essential unity with the Father.

The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Jesus' teaching has been in complete agreement with & are a fulfillment of the Scriptures.

If that wasn't enough proof for them then they ought to realize the things they've seen Him do over the last 3 years *prove* He's the Son of God.

12 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

This is the last time Jesus will spend with them.

So He begins their commencement speech.

They're graduating from the School of Discipleship & will be moving into their new role as Apostles & leaders of the Church.

The work He's been doing will be carried on by those who come after & believe in Him.

It's important we be careful with these verses because they've been abused over the years.

First of all, Jesus says that it's the man or woman who's continuously believing **INTO** Him who will do His works.

He's not speaking of someone who thinks he/she is a Christian because 20 years ago they said a sinner's prayer at an outreach concert or when they were 7 at VBS, but that's the extent of their experience with God.

He's not referring to C&E attenders – who's only time to show up at church is on Christmas & Easter.

The verb tense speaks of an on-going, growing *trust* in Christ that sees him/her in a daily vital relationship with Him as **Lord**, as well as Savior.

Not only will such a person carry on in works similar to what Jesus did, but there will be *more* of them.

The word “greater” here doesn't mean *bigger* so much as *more*.

Because Jesus was returning to the glory of heaven and the Holy Spirit would be released to indwell ALL those who are born again, the potential for the Work of God to be multiplied, increased.

The Holy Spirit would mediate the presence of Christ, not just in one person but in *all* those who are born again.

And when they worked together, the spiritual power released would see the works of God grow *exponentially*.

We see this on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached on behalf of the Apostles & 3,000 came to faith at one time.

We see it today at a Harvest or Billy Graham Crusade.

13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Some have taken what Jesus said here & used it as justification for asking God to do some really bizarre things.

They see the words, “whatever you ask” & “If you ask anything” & think that's a divine blank check to ask for literally ANY & EVERYTHING they want.

When God doesn't come through, they get angry.

But Jesus never said He would do *whatever* we ask.

He said He would grant whatever we ask **IN HIS NAME**.

The “anything” has to be a “something” **IN HIS NAME**.

Praying “in Jesus' name” is not a *formula* we use to get what *we* want.

Jesus' name speaks of His *authority* which is coupled to His character & mission.

This is why He said the aim of all requests, the bottom line, is that the Father would be glorified through the Son.

Mark had put a lot of time and money into restoring a 57 T-Bird coupe.

One day not long before he finished it, he told Janet, his wife, that for the very first drive, they would take it up the Coast for a romantic weekend in Carmel.

On the Wednesday before they were to take their maiden journey in it, their 17 year old son asked Janet where the keys to the T-Bird were.

She asked why, and he said that Mark had given him permission to drive it to school.

Is Janet going to give her son the keys to the car? No way!

It doesn't matter he's claimed his dad said he could – she knows better.

She *knows* her husband would *never* give his permission because she knows her husband.

Waving Jesus' name over our requests does not turn them into automatic answers.

What we ask must be in line with God's will; it must further the cause & mission of Christ which goes on through those who believe in Him.

So, while we close the door on the *abuse* of what Jesus says here, let's make sure we're opening it as wide as possible to all that it *does* mean.

Jesus meant this to be an *encouragement* to His followers – to pray bold prayers of faith that God would work through them to further the Kingdom & Glory of God.

This is another reason why we need to be diligent students of the Word of God, so we can *know His will* & be instruments through which that will comes to Earth as it is in Heaven.

8. Another Companion 14:15-23

15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

As disciples, they'd shown their love of Jesus by following Him for the last 3 years.

But as He said, He was about to leave & they wouldn't be able to continue their mode of following Him by being constantly *with* Him.

Their *following* would have to change form & here Jesus tells them what form it was to take – **Obedience**.

What Jesus says here isn't so much *another* command as it is a *diagnostic*.

He spoke this to the 12, & because 11 of them DID love Him, they went on to lives that changed the world for good.

Judas *didn't* love Him, so he betrayed him & ended up killing himself.

I met with a local pastor recently who God has allowed me to mentor.

He's a good brother who loves the Lord and wants to be faithful in his calling to lead his flock.

I asked him what he's been teaching lately & he said he's been focusing a lot on *obedience*.

On how if we say we're Christians, we need to obey God and put into

practice what His Word says.

His denomination requires him to preach on specific topics every month; obedience, stewardship, & evangelism are the main subjects – and he’s been concentrating on obedience in all these.

But he’s frustrated because the people don’t respond.

They sit and listen politely, but there’s no real movement or positive application that he can see.

As we wrapped up our time together, I suggested that instead of concentrating on obedience, it might be more helpful to focus on God’s grace & goodness, on how much God loves them and yearns to be in fellowship with them right where they are right now.

If his people can get their minds around that, it will move them to obedience as a natural response to God’s love.

I asked him, “When you first dated your wife, did you get her flowers & treat her nice because you knew you should or because you loved her and wanted to treat her special?”

He immediately made the connection.

Jesus is not laying a heavy burden on the disciples here.

He’s simply clarifying that if we love God, obedience to Him will mark us.

But that obedience won’t be a heavy burden, an onerous duty we regret.

Love sees obedience as affection. Love calls duty, devotion.

Obedience is only difficult when love cools.

And obedience becomes dry, dreary duty when love is gone.

Before we read v. 16, we need to note that it’s linked to v. 15.

The promise of the Holy Spirit which comes next is for those who love Jesus & are demonstrating that love with yielded lives.

16 **And**

This links what follows with what came before . . .

I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Jesus says that once He’s returned to heaven, He will ask the Father to send another One who will help them.

Two words need our attention.

1) “Helper” is the Greek word ‘Paraklete.’

It was an ancient word even in John’s day.

It spoke of a *legal advocate*. Today we’d refer to this person as a *lawyer*.

But since lawyers have such a poor reputation today, we need to understand the role of the paraclete in *that* time.

The paraklete was someone who brought the knowledge & expertise needed to help those who didn’t know how things worked.

The paraklete knew the details of the law and what the person he was helping needed.

He knew how to work the system to make sure his client was taken care of.

The paraklete was an *expert* at making sure the person he was assisting had everything he needed.

Today, that's what a good lawyer is supposed to do.

They're supposed to run interference for their client, using the legal system to make sure they're taken care of and all the forms have been followed.

When we go to Israel, our trip is taken care of by Inspired Travel.

They arrange for all the flights, transfers, bus, guide, hotels, sites we're going to see, tips, they do everything for us.

All we do is show up at the airport, and the rest is a breeze!

We get off the airplane in Tel Aviv and there's our guide waiting for us who shoes us literally where to go.

When we get to the hotel, our bags are taken to our rooms while we wait in the lobby to be handed our key.

All we have to do is remember what time we're to eat dinner and breakfast & be back on the bus.

The Paraclete is the lawyer, the travel agent who helps us get through this life skillfully.

2) "Another" - there are 2 words for another in Greek.

- *heteros* = Another of the a different kind.

- *allos* = Another of the same kind.

As Jesus is speaking here to the disciples about going away but sending back to them another helper, which word for another do you think

He used – another of the same or a different kind?

Same! The paraclete who will come to them will be just like Him.

And when He comes, He will dwell in them *forever*.

He will not leave as Jesus is having to now.

If there was any question in the disciples mind as to Whom Jesus was speaking, v.

17 makes it clear – the Paraklete is the *Holy Spirit*, referred to here as the Spirit of Truth which was an idiom for the Holy Spirit they knew well.

But the Holy Spirit was a shadowy figure to the Jews of Jesus day.

They did not understand the role or work of the Spirit very well.

Jesus now tells them they have already witnessed the Person & work of the Spirit throughout the last 3 years as they've followed Him.

The Spirit has been with them in the Person of Christ, & will soon be IN them in the same manner He'd been in Jesus.

18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Though Jesus is departing, He's also coming back.

He will return through the mediating presence of the Holy Spirit Who will do an inner work in them, making it possible for Jesus to live within them.

But it's interesting that Jesus says He will not leave them as *orphans*.

Why does He use this word describing fatherless children?

Because just as the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit makes way for the Person of Jesus, who does Jesus make way for? The Father.

That becomes clear as we read on . . .

19 “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

They would see the resurrected Christ. And His resurrection meant the defeat of sin & death for all those who believe in Him.

20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

While it's true that God loves *all* people, He has a *special* love for those who've been born again.

We're His children & enjoy His Fatherly affection.

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him,

In Matthew's Gospel, he's called "Thaddeus."

“Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³ Jesus answered and said to 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.”

In a word – Jesus is saying that those who are born again & abiding in Him will enjoy a relationship with God of intimate fellowship only those who are *also* experiencing it can understand.

9. The test of genuineness 14:24

24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

Just as genuine love for God will manifest itself in obedience, *disobedience* is evidence of a *lack* of love.

As our culture moves deeper into what is called *postmodernism* with its corresponding abhorrence of the Judeo-Christian worldview, people are choosing lifestyles further & further way from Biblical norms of morality.

Being a local church in the midst of this postmodern society means we see lots of visitors who are engaged in behavior that lies outside the boundaries of God's will.

Couples who are living together.

People involved in sexual immorality of one kind or another.

People who do drugs.

Those who make their living off crime.

Listen, before we come to Christ, we're all messed up, not matter what our sin is.

I'm totally stoked to know that people are here because they heard us on the radio, they saw a flyer lying around somewhere, or someone invited them.

I don't care what they're into – I just want them to know God loves them and wants them to come to a genuine faith in Him.

I know, that once they give their lives to Him, He'll tell them what *He* wants them to change.

And change is the evidence that they've truly come to faith.

We've had literally dozens of cohabitating couples over the years who started coming, & after a while, they look at each & say, "I'm not comfortable with our living arrangement any more. We ought to get married."
They do, and then their spiritual growth *just takes off*.
God starts working in their extended family & among their friends in a new & powerful way.

10. The ministry of the Holy Spirit • Part A 14:25-31

25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present 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 things that I said to you.

This is where recapping the goal of being a disciple would be a wise move.
The goal of a disciple was to be just like the rabbi.

As we've laid out in previous studies, being a disciple of a notable rabbi was the aspiration of every Jewish young man in Galilee.

But it was only a tiny, tiny few who showed the skill to pass through the arduous Torah schools & make it to being a disciple candidate.

If you were one of the lucky ones who graduated from school, you picked a rabbi from among the dozen or so who were making the rounds you thought you could be like when you reached maturity.

Then you went and started following him.

Only after several weeks of following him would he even acknowledge your presence & would begin to test your knowledge & skill with the Scriptures and traditions of the Jewish scholars.

Most disciple candidate were turned away by a rabbi, and told to go home and enjoy a good life as a mason, or baker, or some other noble trade.

Those privileged few who were selected to be disciples would then follow their rabbi from about age 16 till they were 30 years old.

If, after some 14-15 years of such discipleship they had shown a remarkable ability to emulate the lifestyle of their rabbi, and had demonstrated a unique grasp of the things of God on their own, then they were given the title of rabbi in their own right, and launched out to elaborate & expand the work of their rabbi.

With this as our background – what Jesus is doing at the Last Supper is telling his band of disciples, that after just, how many years? 3 – He's leaving and turning His work over to them.

What do you suppose was going through their heads?

On top of the shock & disappointment of hearing He was leaving came the word that they were not to go back to their little lives as fishermen & tax-collectors & whatever else in Galilee – they were being graduated into full rabbiship!

But Jesus wanted them to know that He would send them much needed help.

The Holy Spirit would come & continue teaching & training them.

Not only that, He would recall to their memory all that Jesus had taught them over the last 3 years.

How many times in school when taking a test did you forget something you'd read

& studied?

There would be a question and the answer would hover round the edge of your memory, just out of reach.

How cool it would have been to have the instructor, the one who wrote the test, sitting at a microphone, and you have a little received in your ear.

And as you look at the test, you hear the instructor's voice telling you the answers.

That's what Jesus has promised us.

As we go through life facing different tests, the Holy Spirit will recall to our memory what the Lord has said.

This means of course, that we need to have read or heard God's Word at some previous point – another reason why we need to be faithful students of the Bible.

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 heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

No doubt one of the things that had so impressed the disciples over the last 3 years was the calm with which Jesus went through life.

This was the guy who could sleep in a boat being tossed about like a leaf in a storm.

This was the same guy who could have some of the most powerful men in the world angry at Him and plotting His death – and it didn't faze Him.

Jesus was unflappable, dauntless, unintimidatable; the peace He exhibited was unshakeable.

And here He says that He's going to give that to them.

A few years ago, media mogul Ted Turner staged a competition to find someone who could present a workable plan for world peace.

Over 10,000 blueprints were submitted.

Not one of them came anywhere near a workable plan for peace.

Turner was disappointed. Being the consummate humanist, he thought for sure *someone* would come up with a viable peace plan.

I wish I'd known about the competition because I have a untried but true plan for peace – here it is.

The world will not know peace until they know the *Prince* of Peace.

There can be no real peace between human beings until they make peace with God.

Peace is part of the legacy & promise Jesus has left us.

We'll look into this more on Sunday.

28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. ²⁹ "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.

This is a bit difficult to follow until we put it in a more familiar setting.

Parents have a huge advantage on their young children because of their maturity,

learning, & experience.

Imagine this scenario . . .

Mom tells her 4 year old daughter that she has to go to the store.

Now, the store is really crowded & little Suzie is a handful, so mom takes her over to the neighbor's to be watched while she does her shopping.

Suzie hates being apart from her mommy & starts crying.

Her mother says, "Suzie, don't cry. I won't be gone long, and when I get back I'll have lots and lots of goodies."

But the goodies are abstracts Suzie can't relate to right now – all she cares about is being apart from Mommy.

Her mother knows the refrigerator & pantry is empty and she HAS to go grocery shopping.

She also know when she gets back, little Suzie will get to her have her favorite strawberry Go-gurt.

So she leaves little Suzie bawling while she goes to the store and does her shopping.

That's a bit like what Jesus is saying here.

He's leaving, for now.

And if the disciples would look past their own disappointment for a minute & really listen to what He was saying, they'd be stoked because His returning to the Father would mean the completion of His mission.

And that would mean all kinds of goodies for them.

30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. ³¹ But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

All that Jesus said so far in chs. 13 & 14 took place within the context of the Passover meal which was a long, multi-course affair.

But now the meal is finished, & Jesus tells them their time together is quickly wrapping up.

When he said, "Arise, let us go from here," He was telling them to get ready to split.

But before they actually left the room, He spoke the words of the next 3 chapters.

Jesus tells them that the satanic plot against Him was drawing to a climax.

He didn't have a whole lot more to say to them.

But what we find in the next 3 chapters is some of the most important teaching we get from Jesus.

The guideline Jesus had given about love & obedience to the disciples earlier, He here says applied also to Him as it related to His relationship to the Father.

It was because He loved the Father that He obeyed.

Jesus does not call us to that which He doesn't Himself fulfill perfectly.