

JESUS' CARE AND PRAYER

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

Summary and Historical Background

Jesus warned His disciples of the coming persecution lest it should cause them to stumble in their ministry. The disciples would be cast out of the synagogues by religious men who would think they were doing service to God. However, these religious men would neither know God nor Jesus (16:1-4; Acts 26:9-11).

Then Jesus comforted His sorrowing disciples and told them it was necessary that He leave them so they could receive the Holy Spirit (16:7). The Spirit would have a threefold ministry in the world: first, to convict men of their sin because they did not believe on Christ (16:9); second, to convict men of righteousness because they would no longer be able to see Jesus Who was the only acceptable standard of righteousness (16:10); and third, to convict unbelieving sinners of their impending judgment because Satan is judged (16:11). Satan would be judged at the cross of Jesus before the Spirit would arrive.

The Spirit also would minister to the disciples by guiding them into truth they were not yet able to bear (16:12-13). The Spirit's ministry was to glorify Christ (16:14).

Jesus promised to return to His disciples after His resurrection and then they would rejoice (16:16-22). They would then understand and Jesus would no longer speak in figures of speech (16:25). They were assured of answered prayer and of God's love for them (16:24, 26-27). They were promised peace and eventual victory (16:33).

Jesus' intercessory prayer was threefold. **First**, He prayed for Himself: He finished the work of salvation that His Father had given Him, so He asked for the glory that He had before the world was (17:1-5). **Second**, He prayed for His disciples: they were given to Him by His Father (17:6-19) so He prayed that they be kept in true spiritual unity (17:11); that they be kept from the powers of Satan (17:15); and that they might be kept separated from the world by the sanctification of God's truth in His Word (17:17). **Third**, Jesus prayed for all future believers (17:20-26): that they be brought into perfect unity (17:21-23); and that they be with Him to behold His glory (17:24). He also desired that His Father's love for Him would be in all believers and He would be in them (17:25-26).

I. The Savior's Precaution — 16:1-4

A. Purpose — 16:1

16:1 — Jesus spoke "these things" to His disciples to keep them from being "offended" (from stumbling or apostatizing). God cares for His own by instructing believers through His Word.

B. Problem — 16:2-4

16:2 — The disciples would undergo severe persecutions. They would be put out of the synagogues and *they* would even be killed. By doing this, some persecutors would think they were serving God (cf. Acts 26:9-11).

16:3 — They would persecute the disciples because they did not know the Father or the Son. They would love the disciples if they ever came to a saving knowledge of God.

16:4 — Jesus told them these things so they might be reminded of His words and strengthened by them when persecution came.

II. The Savior's Plan — 16:5-15

He would send the Holy Spirit to them, Who would minister to men in various ways.

A. Regarding Believers — 16:5-7

16:5-7 — Jesus needed to depart and then He would send the Holy Spirit to them to be their Comforter (Advocate, Helper). The value of the Holy Spirit's ministry can be contrasted with that of Christ. Christ was bodily limited to one place at a time, but the Holy Spirit's presence would be everywhere at the same time. He would dwell in every believer and be with them forever (14:16-17). He would teach the believers and bring to their memory the things that they had been taught (14:26). This was especially important for those who were appointed to record the works and words of Jesus in the Gospels. He still brings Scriptures and teaching to the memories of believers as they serve Him. He would guide believers to the truth and show them things to come (16:13). He would glorify Christ (16:14). As a result the work and glory of Christ would be multiplied greatly.

B. Regarding the World — 16:8-11**1. Conviction of wickedness: Sin — 16:8-9**

16:8-9 — This is showing people their sin so they might come to Jesus for salvation (cf. Jn 15:22-24). The Spirit would do the same kind of work that Jesus did in uncovering the sins of people.

2. Conviction of righteousness: Son — 16:10

16:10 — Christ would no longer be on the earth to show forth His righteous life. Therefore, the Holy Spirit would inspire holy men to record the life of Jesus in New Testament Scriptures. He also would convince sinners that Jesus is God's only standard for righteousness (cf. Rom 10:3, 4).

3. Conviction of judgment: Satan — 16:11

16:11 — "Prince of this world" - This is the third time that Jesus referred to Satan by this title (cf. Jn 12:31; 14:30). In Jesus' mind, Satan already was judged by His upcoming death on the cross. Therefore, those who follow Satan will be judged (cf. Jn 12:31; Mt 25:41).

C. Regarding Scripture — 16:12-15

16:12 — "Many things" — Not everything was revealed to the disciples by Jesus because they were unable to handle it at that time.

16:13-15 — The Holy Spirit would guide them later in the writing of "all truth." This would include prophecies - "things to come."

"Not speak of Himself" — The Holy Spirit would teach only those things heard from Heaven. Since He inspired holy men to write the Scriptures, He would not initiate the revelations that He gave to the disciples. He would reveal only those things that were told to Him by the Father and His Son (2 Tim 3:16).

"He shall glorify Me" — The Spirit's job was to magnify Jesus Christ, not Himself. It was Jesus that died for our sins and He was to be magnified by the Spirit.

III. The Savior's Promises — 16:16-33**A. Joy — 16:16-22**

Jesus' disciples often failed to understand His sayings (cf. Jn 6:60). In reference to His death, He promised that the final result would be joy.

16:16-19 — The disciples were puzzled when Jesus said, "A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me" (v. 16).

16:20-22 — Jesus explained His statement to the disciples. The world would rejoice at His

death because they would think they had gotten rid of Him. To the contrary the disciples would sorrow over His death, but their sorrow would turn to joy at His resurrection. This joy no man could take away.

B. Answered Prayer — 16:23-24

16:23 — "In that day you shall ask Me nothing" - This "ask" refers to inquiries the disciples made of Jesus.

"In that day" — In the future the disciples would understand and not need to ask.

"Whatsoever you shall ask" — This "ask" refers to requests the disciple would make of the Father to supply a need.

"In My name" — Jesus' name represented His authority. Those who pray "in Jesus' name," pray on the basis of His authority.

16:24 — The Levitical priesthood was being done away with and believers would have direct access to God through Jesus. An obedient Christian will ask for only those things which will bring glory to God, His requests will be for spiritual and physical needs, not for fleshly wants. Such requests will bring answers and these answers will provide full joy for the praying Christian.

C. Understanding Hearts — 16:25-32

16:25-30 — Jesus had taught His disciples with proverbs (figures of speech). Now He helped them understand what He had meant in v. 16. It increased their faith.

16:31-32 — Jesus made it clear to them that their faith was still weak and they would fail in their own strength.

D. Peace and Victory — 16:33

16:33 — Jesus told them that they would have peace in Him. This did not mean they would have outward peace. They would have tribulation in the world, but Jesus promised them that they would have inward peace. This peace was based on His victory over the world.

IV. The Savior's Prayer — 17:1-26

A. For Himself — 17:1-5

17:1— Jesus prayed for His Father to restore to Him the glory they shared before the world was created (17:5). When He came to earth, His glory was veiled by human flesh; He looked like an ordinary man. He asked His Father to restore His glory so He might glorify Him. His prayer was answered when He was resurrected from the dead and ascended to Heaven.

17:2— "Given . . . give . . . given" - His Father has **given** His Son power/authority over all people through a prophecy (Ps 2:7-9). This prophecy will be fulfilled when His Son brings His Kingdom from Heaven to earth to rule over all people for 1000 years. He in turn will **give** eternal life to those people that the Father has **given** Him. What people does the Father give to His son so He can give them eternal life? Does He choose some people by a sovereign act of His will (Rom 9:11; Eph 1:4-5; 2:1) and these are given to His Son, Who gives them eternal life? Or, does He choose those people that He foreknows will respond positively to His sovereign offer of salvation (Isa 55:6-7; Rom 8:29-30; 10:13; 1 Pet 1:2) and they are given to His Son, Who gives them eternal life? Christians are divided over this doctrine, but we know that all believers are commanded to witness and plead with sinners on God's behalf to receive His Son as their Savior (Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:18-20). It does not seem reasonable that Paul would plead with people to come to Christ, if God has elected them by the sovereign act of His will.

Notice the words "give" and "given" in Jesus' prayer that tell what His Father has given to Him and what He has given to believers. First, His Father has given Him power/authority over all people (v. 2), which will be realized in His Millennial Kingdom; He has given Him believers (vv. 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24, which will come from every tribe and nation; He has given Him a work (v. 4), which He finished when He died on the cross for our sins; He has given His word (v. 8), which He (Jesus) faithfully spoke to the people; and He has given Him His glory (vv. 22, 24), which was restored after His resurrection and ascension to Heaven.

Second, Jesus has given the disciples and all believers eternal life (v. 2), which begins when they receive Him as their Savior; He has manifested / given the name of God to those given to Him (v. 6), which refers to God's attributes and true nature; He has given the words of God to believers (vv. 8, 14); which assured them that Jesus had been sent by Him and had separated them from the world; and He has given the glory of God to His followers (v.22), which unites them to God and His Son.

17:3 — "This is life eternal" - Who do we have to know to have eternal life? The usual answer is Jesus Christ, but notice what Jesus said to His Father: "that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You have sent." Must we know two divine Persons to have eternal life? Jesus taught His disciples, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me" (Jn 14:11). If we know Jesus, we know the Father, and we have eternal life. When Jesus called His Father "the only true God," He was separating His Father from the false gods of this world, but not separating His Father from Himself. Both are in the Godhead (Col 2:9). Both the Father and His Son have the power to forgive sin and give eternal life to those that believe (Mt 9:2-7). Jesus' entire earthly ministry had been one of doing the Father's will - cf. Jn 4:34; Phil 2:7-8.

17:5 — Jesus prayed for His pre-incarnate glory to be given back to Him. He had voluntarily laid aside His glory to redeem us, but now He requested a return of that glory.

B. For His Disciples — 17:6-19

17:6-11 — Jesus prayed that they would have unity with each other. This was not a unity of essence but a unity of spirit working together to do the Father's will.

17:12-16 — Jesus prayed that they would be kept from the evil (cf. v. 11). Jesus was concerned about His disciples' spiritual welfare. Of the twelve, however, only Judas was lost. Jesus had chosen Judas by His Father's foreknowledge of him. He knew that Judas would betray Jesus, so He told Jesus to choose him as His disciple that the Scripture might be fulfilled. God knew what Judas would do before the foundation of the world. The unsaved people hated the other disciples because they were not of the world. The disciples had to remain in the world to carry out their ministry, but Jesus prayed that they might be kept from the evil in the world. "The evil" might be a reference to Satan, the evil one.

17:17-19 — Jesus prayed that they would be sanctified by the Word. Not only must they be kept from the evil, but they also must be separated unto God. This is sanctification. Sanctification comes through obedience to the Word (cf. 2 Tim 2:20-23).

C. For All Believers — 17:20-26

17:20-23 — Jesus prayed that they might have spiritual unity. He wanted this to be a testimony to the world so that they might believe that He had been sent by the Father.

17:24-26 — Jesus prayed that they might behold His glory. Included in this would be the love of the Father for Him. Jesus prayed that each believer might one day be with Him in Heaven so they could see and share in His glory. Jesus wanted the believers to experience the glorious love that the Father had for Him. He wanted that glorious love to be in them and He wanted to be in them, too.

D. Five characteristics Should Identify Believers — 17:13-26

1. **Joy — 17:13.** To have Christ's joy.
2. **Sanctification / holiness — 17:17.** To be made holy by the truth of God's Word: separated from the world; separated unto God.
3. **Service — 17:18.** To be sent into the world as Christ was sent into the world.
4. **Unity — 17:11, 21, 22.** To be one family that honors the Father and the Son.
5. **Love — 17:26.** To have that love which the Father had for His Son.