

Olivet Baptist Church

3500 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21229

Wednesday Night Bible Study (7:00 pm)

Book of John – Facilitator: Rev. Alex O. Stone

Overall Theme: Jesus' Preparation of His Disciples (13:1–17:26)

- I. The World's Hatred (John 15:18-16:4)
- II. The Promise of the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-16:15)
- III. The Prediction of Christ Death and Resurrection (John 16:16-16:33)

Chapter Review:

- The disciples are given two divine assignments: **spread the gospel** and **build the Church**.
- **Chapters 13–17** concentrate on His teachings on that fateful night in which He was arrested. Before the instruction, Jesus washed His disciples' feet and predicted His betrayal.
- Death should not be a terror to them because Jesus was leaving **to prepare a place for them in heaven, the Father's house**.
- **John 14:5–6**. Jesus' words, **I am the Way and the Truth and the Life**, are the **sixth of Jesus' seven "I am" statements in the Gospel of John** (6:48; 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1).
- Death should not be a terror to them because Jesus was leaving **to prepare a place for them in heaven, the Father's house**.
- **John 14:5–6**. Jesus' words, **I am the Way and the Truth and the Life**, are the **sixth of Jesus' seven "I am" statements in the Gospel of John** (6:48; 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1).
- **John 14:10–11**. The proof of the union of Jesus and His Father is threefold. They should **believe** Jesus
 - (a) because of His character (**I am in the Father and ... the Father is in Me**);
 - (b) because His words are the Father's (**The words I say to you are not just My own** (cf. 7:16; 12:49–50; 14:24); and
 - (c) because the miracles reveal God's working through Him (**the Father, living in Me ... is doing His work.... believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves**; cf. 5:36).
- **John 14:16–17**. This is the first of several passages on the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room Discourse. **The Holy Spirit is to be the Counselor** (*paraklētos*; also used in 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; for its meaning see comments on 16:7).

- **In a sense He has now replaced Jesus' physical presence;** and He mediates God to believers. **The Spirit is in a believer forever** (cf. Rom. 8:9).
- **He is also the Spirit of Truth** (lit., "Spirit of *the* truth"; cf. John 15:26; 16:13) and thus would guide the apostles.
- He is invisible (**the world cannot accept Him because it neither sees Him nor knows Him**), yet He is real and active.
- **The Holy Spirit is unnoticed by the unsaved who have no spiritual life.**
- **John 14:25–26.** Three things were needed for the apostles to understand Jesus' person and mission:
 - (1) His death had to occur.
 - (2) He had to rise again to vindicate His claim and demonstrate His victory.
 - (3) **The Spirit had to come** (He would be sent by **the Father ... in My name**, i.e., in Jesus' place and for Him) **and interpret the meanings of Jesus' words and deeds.**

CURRENT FOCUS: "I AM THE TRUE VINE" (15:1–15:17)

"These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁴ But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them.

"And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

⁵ "But now I go away 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 Nevertheless 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 depart, I will send Him to you.

⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because

I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

The Prediction of Christ’s Death and Resurrection

¹⁶ “A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.”

¹⁷ Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, “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 go to the Father’?” ¹⁸ They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.”

¹⁹ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’? ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. ²¹ A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

²² Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

²³ “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I 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 shall pray the Father for you; ²⁷ for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. ²⁸ I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”

²⁹ His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! ³⁰ Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”

³¹ Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? ³² Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Commentary: WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (CHAP. 16:1-16:15)

John 16:1–2. The disciples may have wondered why Jesus was telling them about *the world's hatred and persecution*. Jesus, anticipating this question,¹ indicated that expecting trouble beforehand would help them remain in the path of God's will. (He gave a second reason in v. 4.)

- The disciples would face excommunication and even death. Remembering that *Jesus was ostracized and martyred* and that He had predicted the same for His apostles would help fortify them.
- The earliest Christians were Jews (Acts 2:11, 14, 22), but quite soon after the church began to grow and spread, it was quickly thrust outside **the synagogue** (ca. A.D. 90).
- Persecution unto death occurred in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:59), James (Acts 12:2), and others (Acts 9:1–4).
- Some people throughout church history have been motivated to persecute believers because of a misguided zeal for God. They **think** they are **offering a service to God** (cf. Rom. 10:2).

John 16:3–4. The world will persecute Jesus' followers **because they have not known the Father or Me**. *They do not recognize the Father at work in the words and deeds of Jesus*. The Jewish people, for example, had a certain knowledge of God through the Law, but that knowledge was not a saving knowledge for God said their "hearts go astray and they have not known My ways" (Ps. 95:8–10).

¹ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 327). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- Jesus gave this warning to His disciples about coming persecution *in order to strengthen their faith*.
- By recognizing His knowledge of the future, they would grow in their confidence in Him.
- Jesus **did not** give them **this** warning before because the world's hatred was directed against Him. *He shielded them with His personal presence*, but now they would be His body on earth (Eph. 1:22–23).²

John 16:5–6. Learning of Jesus' departure brought depression to the disciples.

- *They were obsessed by their coming personal loss of His immediate physical presence.*
- If they could have understood why He was going and to whom He was going, then they would have rejoiced. Later (v. 22) Jesus predicted that their time of sorrow would be suddenly transformed into great joy.

Jesus' statement, **Now I am going to Him who sent Me**, should have led the disciples to ask questions, but they didn't (Even Thomas [14:5] did not ask, **Where are You going?**)

Their preoccupation *with their own problems* prevented their understanding the crucial nature of the time ("now") and the momentous significance of the events (His death, burial, resurrection, and Ascension).

² Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 327–328). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 16:7. The departure of Jesus was necessary—though painful and difficult—for the disciples. In fact, His leaving was profitable and beneficial (the meaning of the Gr. *sympherei*, here rendered **good**). Without His departing (which included His death, burial, resurrection, and Ascension) there would have been no gospel. Atonement for sin was necessary for Jesus to save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21).

Also **unless *he departed there would have been no glorified Lord to send ... the Counselor (the Holy Spirit) to apply the atonement.*** “The Counselor” translates the Greek *paraklētos*. This word was used of legal assistants who pleaded a cause or presented a case. This Counselor is the promised Spirit who came into the world in a new and distinctive sense on the day of Pentecost.

John 16:8. One of the Spirit’s new ministries (**first area**) was to **convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.** *Conviction is not the same as conversion* but is necessary to it. The ³ words “convict ... of guilt” translate the one word *elenxei*, “to present or expose facts, to convince of the truth.” *The Spirit works on the minds of the unsaved to show them the truth of God* for what it is. Normally this process includes human aid (cf. 15:26–27).

John 16:9. *Sin is rebellion against God and this rebellion reached its climax in the crucifixion of Jesus.* Today **the greatest sin is the failure to believe in Jesus** (cf. 3:18; 15:22, 24). Most people do not readily admit to being guilty of sin. They will admit to

³ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 328). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

failures or vices or even crimes. However, *sin is against God*, and people have suppressed the truth of God (cf. Rom. 1:18, 21, 25, 28).

➤ *The mighty working of the Holy Spirit is necessary to convince and convict people of their desperate plight.*

John 16:10. In crucifying Jesus, the Jewish people showed that they thought He was unrighteous, that only a wicked person would be hanged on a tree and thus be under God's curse (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). But the Resurrection and the Ascension vindicated Jesus as God's righteous Servant (Acts 3:14–15; Isa. 53:11). The Spirit convicts men of their faulty views of Jesus (**second area**) when the gospel with its stress on the Resurrection is proclaimed (1 Cor. 15:3–4).

John 16:11. The **third area** of the Holy Spirit's convicting work concerns **judgment**. The death and resurrection of Jesus were a condemnation of Satan (12:31; Col. 2:15), **the prince of this world** (cf. John 14:30). By Jesus' death, He defeated the devil, who held "the power of death" (Heb. 2:14). (Though *defeated at the Cross*, Satan is still active [1 Peter 5:8]. But, like a condemned criminal, his "execution" is coming [Rev. 20:2, 7–10].)

People in rebellion should take note of Satan's defeat and fear the Lord who holds the power to judge. As the fact of coming judgment (both Satan's and man's) is proclaimed, **the Spirit convicts people and prepares them for salvation** (cf. Acts 17:30–31).

John 16:12–13. The disciples were not able to receive any **more** spiritual truth at that time. *Their hearts were hardened, their concern was for their own preeminence in an earthly kingdom,* so they saw no need for Jesus' death.

Sorrow over His departure and dismay over the prophecy of a traitor among them, along with the prediction of their own desertion, rendered them insensitive to more spiritual truth. But ... **the Spirit of Truth** (cf. 15:26) would come after Jesus' death to lead the apostles **into the truth** about Jesus and His work.

The Spirit, Jesus said, would **not** teach the disciples **on His own** (i.e., on His own initiative) **but would teach only what He hears** from the Father. This points up the interdependence of the Persons in the Trinity. *The Father would tell the Spirit what to teach the apostles about the Son.*

Also the Spirit would teach **what is yet to come**. This statement helps one understand the promise, **He will guide you into all truth** (lit., "all *the* truth"). This was a promise to the apostles that *their partial understanding of the person and work of Jesus* as the Messiah would be completed as the Spirit would give them insight into the meanings of the soon-to-come Cross and the Resurrection as well as truths about Jesus' return (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10). **The New Testament books are the fulfillment of this teaching ministry of the Spirit.**

John 16:14–15. Because **Jesus is the Logos, the revelation of the Father** (or as Paul expressed it, "*the image of the invisible God*" [Col. 1:15]), **all that belongs to the Father is also the Son's.**

The Spirit of Truth brought **glory to** Jesus as He revealed to the apostles things pertaining to the person and work of the *Logos* (**taking from what is Mine and making it⁴ known to you**). The Spirit worked in the apostles' minds so that they could perceive, understand, and teach about the Savior.

I. The Prediction of Changes (16:16–33)

Jesus' instruction of His disciples shifted at this point from the Spirit's future work to what the immediate future would hold for them. Someday Jesus will reappear, but *sorrow, pain, and spiritual failure would be the apostles' lot first*. Then, however, joy, prayer, and peace will be their portion.

John 16:16. The words **in a little while** were bewildering to the disciples (and also possibly to the initial readers of John's Gospel). Also the prediction, "**you will see Me**" was not immediately understood. Did Jesus refer to:

- (a) The coming of the Holy Spirit or
 - (b) His Second Advent or
 - (c) His brief, 40-day ministry between His resurrection and His Ascension?
- The last interpretation fits this passage best.

John 16:17–18. The **disciples** were confused about the time interval. The words **they kept asking** (Gr. imperf. tense) indicate that considerable dialogue took place among the disciples without their arriving at an answer. They could not reconcile Jesus' statements because He said:

⁴ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 328–329). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- (a) **In a short time** they would not **see** Him,
- (b) They *would see* Him, and
- (c) He was **going to the Father**. Only His death, resurrection, post-resurrection ministry, and Ascension would make it all clear.

John 16:19–20. As a Master Teacher, **Jesus** understood the confusion among His students. He did not clarify His teaching; He knew it would all come into focus with the passage of time and with the aid of the Spirit's teaching ministry (cf. vv. 12–13).

- **I tell you the truth** (cf. comments on 1:51) introduces a solemn prediction that their coming grief would be followed by joy.
- His ⁵ death would be bitter agony for them but **the world** would be happy over it. However, the very event, the death of the Messiah, which would cause them to **weep and mourn** would bring them gladness: **your grief will turn to joy**.
- *His resurrection and the Spirit's work of interpretation would enable them to know* that *He had to die so that they could have forgiveness of sins*. Later the church would rejoice in His death (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2).

John 16:21–22. Jesus illustrated the truth of **pain** replaced by **joy** by the pain of childbirth followed by the joy of new life when **a child is born**. The disciples were entering the process of pain (**your time of grief**), **but** the light of **joy** was just ahead.

⁵ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 329). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

When they saw Him after His resurrection, their joy erupted—joy that will never end since **He died to sin once but now lives forever** (cf. Rom. 6:9–10; Luke 24:33–52; Heb. 7:24–25).

John 16:23–24. The forthcoming events brought about changed relations. Since Jesus would not be with them physically (**in that day** means after His Ascension), they would not be able to **ask** Him questions. But the Holy Spirit would help them (vv. 13–15).

- **I tell you the truth** again introduced an important statement. They would be His ambassadors and therefore had the right to **ask** the **Father** for **whatever** they needed to accomplish His will.
- The words **in My name** are not a magical formula which enable the user to get *his* will done; instead those words tied the requests to the work of the Son in doing the *Father's* will (cf. “in My name” in 14:13–14; 15:16; 16:24, 26).
- **Up to this point the disciples had not prayed in the name of Jesus.** Now they are to do this *since Jesus' death and the Spirit's coming would enable them to enter into God's new program* of the Church Age.
- Answered prayer brings complete **joy** (cf. 15:11; 16:22) because God ⁶ is at work in them.

John 16:25. **Though** Jesus was a Master Teacher and *taught His disciples for three years* by example and word, *yet their perception of His revelation of the Father remained limited* (14:9; cf. 2:22; 6:60; 13:7, 15–17). Veiled utterances (His **speaking**

⁶ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 329–330). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

figuratively) would give way to plain speech. In His post-resurrection teaching (cf. Acts 1:3) the Son spoke **plainly about the Father** (cf. John 14:25–26).

John 16:26–27. The coming new **day** would give the disciples intimacy with **the Father** and clarity of understanding. The disciples would have *direct personal access to the Father* by the **name** of, that is, *through Jesus* (cf. “in My name” in 14:13–14; 15:16; 16:24).

- **Jesus would no longer need to pray on their behalf** since they could ask for **themselves**. This truth does not negate the promise of Christ’s intercessory work in overcoming a believer’s sin (cf. Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1–2).
- The disciples were now in *a personal love-and-faith relationship with the Father*. Only children have this privilege of access to their Father (Rom. 5:2).

John 16:28. Jesus summarized His mission in one sentence:

- His Incarnation (**I came from the Father**),
- His humiliation (**and entered the world**), and
- His resurrection, Ascension, and exaltation (**now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father**). This is what the disciples had come to believe.

John 16:29–30. The response of the **disciples** to the Lord’s teaching was that **now** they understood and believed. They felt the teaching was so plain that recognizing Jesus’ omniscience (**You know all things**) and divine origin (**You came from God**) was their only proper response.

John 16:31–32. Though the disciples were honest and sincere in their affirmations of faith (v. 30), **Jesus knew their limitations** far better than they did (cf. 2:24–25).

- The ⁷ words “**You believe at last!**” could also be translated “Do you now believe?” (NIV marg.) This seems to capture the thought better.
- *They did believe but it was not complete faith or strong faith until after the death and resurrection of Jesus and the advent of the Spirit.*
- **You will be scattered** is a fulfillment of Zechariah’s words which spoke of the Shepherd (the Messiah) smitten by decree of the Lord Almighty, which resulted in the scattering of the sheep (Zech 13:7).
- *In spite of the disciples’ loyalty, faith, and love, they soon failed Him miserably.*
- His prediction, **You will leave Me all alone**, was fulfilled by all His disciples deserting Him (Matt. 26:56) when He was arrested and by Peter’s denial (John 18:17, 25–26).
- **Yet** the Father had not forsaken Him; **I am not alone for My Father is with Me** (cf. 8:29; Pss. 23:4; 73:25–26), though the Father did forsake Jesus when He was on the cross (Matt. 27:46).

John 16:33. Jesus’ instructions about **these things** (**chaps. 14–16**) were intended to sustain them, to give them **peace** in Him.

- **Believers have a dual existence:** they are **in Christ** and **in this world**.
- In union with Jesus (*through grace*), His disciples have peace, but the world exerts a hostile pressure.

⁷ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 330). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- The world system, the enemy of God and His people, opposed Jesus' message and ministry (cf. 1:5, 10; 7:7).
- **But *Jesus won the victory over the system***; He has **overcome the world**.
- As the “strong man” who came and ruined Satan’s kingdom (Matt. 12:25–29), Jesus is the Victor.
- Jesus wanted the disciples to remember this fact and to rejoice in His victory.
Take heart! means “*Be courageous.*” (In the NT the word *tharseō* [“take heart, be courageous, cheer up”] was spoken only by the Lord [Matt. 9:2, 22; 14:27; Mark 6:50; 10:49; John 16:33; Acts 23:11].)
- Because He won they, in union with Him, we can win also (Rom. 8:37).⁸

⁸ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 330). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.