

In search of...

Truth & Right

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John Sixteen

The Disciples Informed

Jesus begins this chapter with "these things." What things? Jesus proceeded to review things that he had just told his disciples, but now gives them more information. In Jn. 15:20, Jesus reminded the disciples of the principle that He had mentioned in which a slave is not greater than his master. And so, ultimately, the disciples would experience opposition because of Jesus. And, people would reject Jesus because they did not know God who had sent Him. Thus, by His preaching and working miracles, he had confronted people with their rebellion against God. But, their hatred did not jeopardize God's plan. And so, even though the world rejected Jesus, there was no cause for it. But upon Jesus leaving his disciples, he would send the Comforter who would then be with the apostles. Yet as Jesus' disciples, they could not love the world (1 John 2:15-17) or be conformed to the world (Rom. 12:1-2). And in fact, the apostle's situation would even be

dangerous because the world's opposition was of hatred (Jn. 15:18-19), persecution (Jn. 15:20), excommunication, and even death (Jn. 16:1-4) would turn towards them because they would be identified with Christ.

Now, for three years, Jesus had been with them to protect them from attack; but now He was about to leave them. And, Jesus tells them the reason for Him to return to the Father is so the Comforter would come so as to help them be witnesses of the life of Jesus. Of course, he also left so that He could intercede for His people (Christians). Yet, this was difficult for them to grasp at this time (vs. 12). Thus, the Spirit becomes the teacher, through the apostles (vs. 13). He testifies of Jesus and He glorifies Him (vs. 14). So, people who claim that the Spirit of God led them to do things contrary to the example of Christ or the teaching of the Word are mistaken and are being led astray by Satan. For, Jesus is the truth (Jn. 14:6), and

the Word is truth (Jn. 17:17), and the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of Truth." So, where the Holy Spirit is at work is never separate and apart from the truth. That is why when we study the Word, we see Jesus Christ which helps us to know God better and to glorify Him in our lives. And, as we teach in a hostile world, the Spirit uses the Word he has taught us and that we share, to convict the lost.

Now, in vs. 16-22, Jesus announced that in a little while, they would not see Him; then, in a little while, they would see Him. It was a puzzling statement (vs. 25) and the disciples did not understand. What did Jesus mean? It could be about his burial and how he would die and then rise from the grave or it may be that he was speaking of His return to the Father (vs. 16, 10). Instead of asking Jesus to explain His words, the men began to discuss it among themselves, almost as though they were embarrassed to admit their ignorance. However, you do not get very far by exchanging your ignorance! It is when we come to the Lord and ask for His help that we learn the important lessons of life. And what we learn is to wait for the coming of Jesus. But while we are waiting, we must deal with our trials and hurts on the basis of transformation if we expect to mature in the Christian life (Rom. 12:1-2).

Now, in vs. 23-28, we learn of the time after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. It would be a time when Jesus would no longer be with them and they would have to request answers to their questions from the Father in

prayer. Now, Jesus knew they wanted to ask Him a question (vs. 19). But, Jesus encouraged the disciples to ask the Father for whatever they needed and that they would be granted as long as they were offered "in Jesus' name" (Jn. 14:13-14). But, the disciples had not appealed to the Father in Jesus' name before now. So, Jesus urges His disciples a second time to "ask" the Father realizing that while Jesus was on earth, He met all the needs of the disciples. But upon returning to the Father, the Father would meet their needs. Things were certainly changing there in the Upper Room, He had used a number of symbolic images to get His message across: the washing of their feet, the "Father's house," the vine and branches, and the birth of a baby. In the days that followed, these images would become clearer to the disciples as they would be taught by the Spirit of God. Jesus would return to heaven to be with the Father, and there He would minister as our High Priest, making intercession for us (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25).

Now, in John 16:29-30, the disciples suddenly moved out of their spiritual stupor and made a tremendous affirmation of faith. First, they claimed to understand what He had been teaching them, though this claim was probably presumptuous, as their actions proved. They seemed unable to grasp the meaning of His promised resurrection. In fact, they were bewildered even after His resurrection as to the future of Israel (Acts 1:6ff). Yet, they not only affirmed their understanding, but they also affirmed their faith and assurance. Well, Jesus would

later speak to the Father about their spiritual condition (Jn. 17:6-8). Certainly He knew their weaknesses, but He was quick to approve their growing evidences of faith and assurance. But it is possible to have faith, understanding, and assurance and still fail the Lord. And, unless we practice that faith, apply that understanding, and rest on that assurance, we will fail when the time of testing comes.

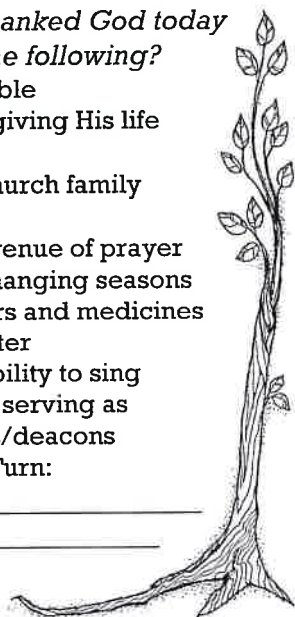
That is what happened to the disciples, and Jesus warned them that it would happen. He had already warned Peter that he would deny Him, but now He warned the entire band of disciples that they would all forsake Him. But, why did He tell them all this? It was so the disciples might have peace in a world of tribulation. What? Every believer is either overcome or an overcomer. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 Jn. 5:4). The world wants to overcome us; this is why Satan uses the world to persecute and pressure believers. The world wants us to conform; it does not want us to be different. When we yield ourselves to Christ and trust Him, He enables us to be overcomers. Thus, we are told to "cheer up!" (vs. 33). His victory over the world can make us overcomers because He has first overcome for us. There is joy when we permit God to transform sorrow into joy, when he answers our prayers and when we overcome the world.

Robert Notgrass

God gave you a gift of
86,400
 seconds today. Have
 you used one to say
THANK YOU?

*Have you thanked God today
 for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:



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John Killed

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DIRECTIONS: Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

Mark 6:15, Some said Jesus was this prophet

Mark 6:14, he was the king of Judea at the time

Mark 6:16, "John, whom I _____, has been raised."

Mark 6:17, John had been seized and put into here

Mark 6:17, for the sake of this woman

Mark 6:17, this was her husband's name

Mark 6:18, It was not _____ for him to have his brother's wife

Mark 6:21, there was a celebration for the king's _____

Mark 6:22, the _____ of Herodias came and danced

Mark 6:23, the king would give her up to half of his _____

Mark 6:25, she asked for John's head on a _____

Mark 6:26, "and she was exceedingly _____"