

Bible Study Class
Clayton Presbyterian Church
Lesson 23 Jesus
The Last Week of the Life of Jesus V

Opening verses: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, The Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts in all our troubles. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Today's lesson comes from the book of John chapters 14 thru 17. If this sounds familiar, then you listened to Blant's sermon last Sunday. We didn't plan it, sometimes God intervenes even in the small things of life.

Farewell Discourse to the Disciples

Read John 14:1-14

1. Why did Jesus tell His disciples He was going to leave them and go to the Father? He was going to prepare a place for them to be with Him in eternity.
2. What did Jesus promise to do for His disciples after He went away? He promises to return and take them to be with Him. NIV Application Commentary points to Blant's word in last week's sermon. Abide. Jesus left but He will return and these verses point to the Second coming. The cause for the departure becomes the assurance of the return. Fourfold explains the way was Jesus' manner of life and since the disciples had been following Him, they knew His way of life.
3. What question did Thomas ask? Lord if we don't know where You are going how can we know the way. He claims that they know neither the destination of Jesus nor the way he will take to get there. This reflects the disciples' inability to comprehend that the cross will be the way Jesus will return to the Father — a way, if they understood, they would have trouble accepting. How does Jesus answer it? I am the way, the truth and the life. Jesus is the truth, the authoritative representative and revealer of God. He hears what God says and obeys what God tells him to do. He reveals God like no other human because He has seen God. Thus, this verse places Jesus in the role of mediator, creating the only avenue to God.
4. How does one reach the Father? No one comes to the Father except through Jesus. Is there any other way? Explain. Access to the Father's presence in heaven will only be through Jesus and no other. He is the only one who can lead his followers back to the places he will prepare. However, while a person may not be conscious of Jesus, they may be conscious of and respond to agape love. If they act in that kind of love they know Jesus, but may not call Him by name that we

know. I base this on individuals who weren't Hebrew but were adopted in the Hebrew family because of their faith in God.

5. What question did Philip ask? He wanted to be shown the Father. How does Jesus answer it? Jesus says that if you know me then you know the Father. Both disciples are asking very concrete, physical questions while Jesus is speaking of the spiritual. Fourfold also explains that a physical revelation would not have helped the disciples. Think of the people at Mt. Sinai, they were soon making a golden calf. His question is to ask Jesus to reveal His soul, so Jesus answers that he should look at the works that He has done and know that those were done with great spiritual power which comes from God.

6. Explain the relationship between Jesus and the Father as set forth in 14:9-11. At the most basic level Jesus is God's envoy, He has been sent by God and has the authority to act on God's behalf, but the relationship is much deeper. Jesus is in God and God is in Jesus. Jesus is truly God in human form. As He says, "the Father and I are one." The purpose of Jesus' discussion is to comfort and encourage the disciples. Once Jesus goes to the Father remarkable works and realized prayer will begin. We have to remember that as remarkable as John the Baptist was. He performed no miracles. Whatever believers do is done in Jesus' name and must be according to the will of the Father. While the disciples won't perform greater miracles, look at some Biblical facts. For instance, at his death Jesus had converted about five hundred disciples, but at Pentecost the apostles converted three thousand in one day. The converts of Paul also greatly outnumbered those of Christ's own ministry.

1 John 5:14 "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us"

Read John 14:15-31

7. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do if they loved Him? They will obey His commandments. The Spirit's gift in these verses is controlled by verse 15a, "if you love me." The gift, then, is an outgrowth of the loving relationship between Jesus and his disciples, not an entitlement earned by the disciple. How is that an expression of love? David Guzik reminds us that it is easy to think of loving Jesus in merely sentimental or emotional terms. It is wonderful when our love for Jesus has sentiment and passion, but it must always be connected to keeping His commandments, or it isn't love at all.

8. Who is the "comforter?" The Holy Spirit, and advocate. One who is called to be beside us. Comforter in old English means one who strengthens. If your translation uses counselor, it isn't in the same context as a therapeutic counselor

but rather a legal counselor. God the Son prays to God the Father that He might send God the Holy Spirit to us. What is promised concerning Him? The Spirit, being present in the person of Christ, had been abiding with the apostles who followed him. Hereafter the intimacy of the relation would be increased, and the Spirit should abide within them.

9. What would be the work of the Spirit when He came? This means that the ongoing work of the Spirit will be a continuation of the work of Jesus during the disciples' lifetime. The Spirit will recreate the person of Jesus within them.

10. What is the question of Judas (not Iscariot)? "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" What is Jesus' response? "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. The words you hear aren't mine; they belong to the Father who sent me. In other words, while from the world's perspective Jesus will disappear from view (in his death), in his resurrection he will return to them alone and validate that the power of the Father has been with him all along. What does that response teach concerning the nature of love? Out of love for his disciples Jesus will "reveal" himself to them, which will result in a profound spiritual union beyond the world's comprehension. The question of Judas presses Jesus on the nature of his appearance to the disciples, which will exclude the world. Surely, the disciples are thinking, the revelation of Jesus must happen before the world so that Jesus' testimony and indeed, their testimonies, will be validated publicly. Jesus talks about obedience as a key to what is planned V 23: Those who love Jesus show it by their fidelity to his word. Out of love, the Father and Jesus will come to them and make their home with them. But the reverse is also the case V 24 Those who fail to invest faith in Jesus — who do not love him and refuse to obey him — are not connected either to Jesus or the Father and so cannot share in this divine union.

11. Why was Jesus' ascension to the Father cause for rejoicing rather than sorrow and fear? Jesus comes to the disciples at Easter, His Second coming and the presence of the Holy Spirit is an ongoing presence. What are the implications of the ascension? He goes to heaven to prepare a place for His followers, He appears to them on Easter, and through the indwelling Holy Spirit, God the Father, and Jesus the son make a home or dwelling place within believers. Their love for him should lead to celebration because he is returning to where he began, to the Father. It is the Father who sent him, who gave him his words, and whose love for the world initiated Jesus' mission and the planned indwelling of the Spirit. To receive the father's gifts is blessed; to return to live with the Giver is beyond comprehension. This legacy of peace is by no means to be confined to the period of

doubt and fear which accompanied the crucifixion; in fact, it seems to overstep that period, and to begin after it, and continue throughout all the trouble ministry of the apostles.

Read John 15:1-17

Some commentators believe that Jesus and His disciples may have gone to the temple to pray and this analogy is based on a gigantic grapevine of pure gold, that represented Israel and hung above the door frame of the temple.

12. Who is the "true vine?" Jesus. The vine and the vineyard were old and sacred images in Judaism. The vine represented the covenant people of God, planted and tended by him so that Israel would produce fruit. NIV Application Commentary says that usually when mentioned in the Old Testament, they are being chastised for not bearing fruit.

Psalms 80:7 - 9 Restore us, O God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved. You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land.

Isaiah 5:3-5 Now you dwellers of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could I have done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard. I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled.

What qualifies Him for that position? In this ancient imagery he has taken the place of Israel as God's true planting. The new concept is that God's vineyard holds one vine and Israel must inquire if it is attached to him. No longer is Israel automatically seen as vines growing in God's vineyard. Men and women are now branches growing from one stock. Vine dressers both trim branches so that they will produce more fruit and cut away dead branches that have no life in them. In each case the assumption is that fruit-bearing is the test of life-giving attachment to the vine.

13. Who are the "branches?" Believers. This commentary cites the word abide or remain. You can't just accept Christ; you must remain and grow. The growing disciple in whom the Father and Son live through the Spirit is one whose life is utterly dependent on Christ. Discipleship is not just a matter of acknowledging who Jesus is; it is having Jesus spiritually connected to our inner lives. What fruit is to be borne by these branches? To be connected to the vine means that the life of

Jesus is flowing through us, and this leads to fruitfulness. Those whose lives are so in harmony with Jesus will find their prayers controlled by his word, and such prayers will be answered and bring added glory to God. Those who have the spirit of Christ perform charitable deeds, convert sinners and inspire a spirit of goodness in those around them. This becomes an evidence or demonstration of true discipleship.

14. What is to happen to the branches which do not bear "fruit?" They are cut away and die.

15. What is the greatest expression of love? To sacrifice one's life for their friends. This human love cannot be viewed in isolation, as if simply exhibiting such love satisfies the call to discipleship. Such love is an outgrowth of a life that has witnessed the dramatic quality of God's love when his Son died on behalf of those he loves. Such love requires that we also love God with our entire heart, soul, and strength. Why? Jesus gives, as his supreme commandment, this law of love. The disciples are to love one another as intensely as Jesus loved them, and the measure of the intensity of his love is prophetically set forth by an allusion to his death on their behalf.

16. Explain the difference between "friends" and "servants." Jesus now calls his disciples "friends" to distinguish them from servants, who do not know the deeper thoughts of their masters. Jesus had shown his friendship by receiving his apostles into confidence as to the things which he had heard from his Father. What characterizes such friends is that they obey him. In the Old Testament both Abraham and Moses are called friends of God. This title is unusual and speaks of the highest relationship possible between God and a human being. This friendship is not our doing; rather, Jesus chooses us as friends, which gives us tremendous security that his affection for us will not disappear.

Read John 15:18-27

17. Why is it important for disciples to love one another? Jesus explains the hatred of the world in verses 18-21, as a continuation of the hatred he personally witnessed throughout his public ministry. Jesus has been hated because as the light, he exposes the world's deeds and unmask them as evil. Because the disciples are now separated from the world by virtue of their faith in Jesus, they qualify for similar treatment.

18. What treatment could the disciples expect from the world? This anticipation of conflict recalls the role of the prophets in the Old Testament. As bearers of God's word, they expected harsh treatment when their announcements were unpopular. Since this world-spirit hated him, the disciples need not be

surprised to find that it hated them when manifesting his spirit. Why? No one likes to hear or be confronted with their sins or wrongdoing.

19. What is meant when Jesus twice says "they would have no sin?" Jesus discusses the guilt of the world in verses 22 -25 by explaining that it is accountable before the revelation of God. Jesus' ministry provided both words and works that pointed to God. Now that they have seen and heard him, their guilt is certain. For instance, in the story of the healed blind man the Jewish leadership refused to accept the miracle as a sign from God. Yet because they claimed to see, Jesus pronounced their guilt.

20. What had left the world entirely without excuse from its unbelief? Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him". Similarly, following Jesus' debate with the leaders on Sabbath, he claims that the historic revelation given by Moses will be their judge. The cumulative effect of this is to undermine the justification of the world's hostility against Jesus. When Jesus cites the Old Testament "They hated me without a cause," he ironically points to even more revelation that judges their unwarranted anger.

Read John 16:1-4

21. What forms would the persecution of the disciples take? They are thrown out of the synagogue. They will be brought before courts. The disciples will be forced to witness about Jesus as they are confronted. But the words they utter will be "the truth" because they are speaking about the work of God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Suffering and even martyrdom may be theirs.

Luke 6: 22 Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

Matthew 23:34 Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.

What is the reason behind such persecution? They hated Jesus' exposure of their sins. Why do you think Jesus told of these persecutions in advance? Jesus' point is that to know in advance is to be equipped. To step into suffering and recognize that it follows the pattern of Jesus' life and fulfills his word may strengthen men and women for whom faith comes at a severe cost. Verse 4 says "their hour."

Throughout John "the hour" refers to Jesus' death and glorification, but now it is the "disciples' hour" that will test their devotion to their faith.

22. What was the apostles' reaction to the announcement of Jesus' departure? Jesus' candor about the coming sufferings stems from his awareness that he will not be with them to absorb the hostility of the religious authorities. In past times he has been with them; but in the future, while he will be within them in the Spirit, they will have to bear the brunt of persecution. As in the earlier chapters Jesus' departure brought dismay so now Jesus returns to the subject of his going away. How was it to their advantage that Jesus go away? The Holy Spirit can only be sent to the disciples after Jesus' departure. If he does not go away, if he is not glorified, then the Spirit cannot come. The Spirit is a gift that must await the trigger of Jesus' going.

Read John 16:5-15

23. What three aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit are brought out in 16:7-15? "When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" The sense here is that the Spirit is a prosecuting counsel, now exposing the world of its sinfulness. The first error v 9 is the refusal to believe. The second error v10 thinks that through Jesus' death shows his unrighteousness. But God reverses this and makes the cross a place of glorification in which Jesus' innocence and righteousness are proclaimed. The third error concerns judgment v12. Jesus has not been judged by his trial; rather, the world has been judged.

Read John 16:16-24

24. Why would the disciples weep and the world rejoice? Jesus' death will bring them sorrow while the world thinks that it has put an end to Jesus. Why would the sorrow of the disciples be turned to joy? They would see Him after He resurrected. They would receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Read John 16:25-33

There is an added dimension to prayer in these verses, they should now say just as we do, "in Jesus' name." Because of Jesus' great work, disciples have unlimited, undeniable access to God through Him. One commentator likens this to a passport into the chamber of God and the medium of the Divine answer. Jesus makes it clear that the Son did not need to persuade an angry Father to be gracious; but His work would provide a righteous basis for God's graciousness. Discipleship is about learning how to discover peace when surrounded by threat, how to possess tranquility despite those hostile to your faith. The solution is "courage" Jesus is trying to comfort the disciples who are expressing belief, but Jesus knows that

they don't understand completely and won't understand until they receive the Holy Spirit. They will remember His last words to them, "I have overcome the world."

The Lord's Prayer

David Guzik recognizes that there are other prayers in the Bible, but this he says is the greatest prayer in the Bible. Jesus is facing His earthly death on a cross and He takes time to pay for His friends and for future believers like us. Some of the themes or words that stand out in this chapter are glory, glorify, sent, believe, world, love. In the prayer customs of the western world, we often bow our head and close our eyes. Jesus prayed with the customs of prayer common in His own day. He lifted His eyes toward heaven. This posture also tells us that this isn't a gloomy prayer but one of faith and confidence.

Read John 17: 1-26

25. How was the Son to be glorified? Jesus wants to successfully complete His earthly mission of crucifixion, resurrection so that He and the Father are glorified. Spurgeon remarks on verse one that any child will run to its father for protection. Why was this necessary for further glorification of the Father? As Jesus is glorified, the Father is glorified because the Father is the gift giver. One of the purposes of Jesus coming was to point humankind toward God the Father. The revelation of God is the first step toward eternal life. The second step is the internal reception of this into our hearts and minds. We can't accept God if we don't know Him and we can't know Him if He isn't revealed to us. The Son glorified the Father by dying on the cross the sovereignty of God over evil, the compassion of God for men, and the finality of redemption for believers."

26. What characteristics of the apostles allow them to be commended to the Father? They are the property of Jesus given to Him by the Father. There was some sense in which the disciples first belonged to God the Father, then were given to God the Son.

John 17:6 explains their salvation in the election of God the men You have given Me out of the world, seeing it from God's point of view.

John 17:8 explains their salvation in their faith they have believed that You sent Me, seeing it from humanity's point of view.

Jesus asks that they receive and retain the truth which the Father sent Him to reveal. Where knowledge failed, they would believe because they trusted Jesus. He prays that His glorification be shown through their work. Jesus asks that they even though they would scatter that their unity may be as perfect as that existing between the Father and the Son.

27. How were the apostles "not of the world?" Jesus specifically had His disciples in mind in this prayer. He did not pray in a general sense for the world; instead, Jesus prayed for the disciples who would carry His message of love and redemption to the world. The reception of the Father's word had brought upon them the hatred of the world, so they would need God's protection to keep them safe spiritually. What would keep them that way? God's protection. He prays that they are kept in unity, kept from the world and the devil, and that they may be set apart and equipped for the gospel service. Jesus does not merely want to dwell in or live in the believer, but to be glorified in them. V 11-12 This was His recognition that His work on earth was almost done, and He was on His way to heaven. In the Jewish world of that day no one continued as a disciple to a dead rabbi. Yet these disciples were to continue, to be kept as disciples to Jesus.

28. In addition to the apostles, for whom else does Jesus pray? He prays for all future believers. Christians often think of Jesus as God's gift to us; we rarely think of ourselves as God's gift to Jesus." (Carson) What is His request for them? Jesus has prayed for us "Father, keep them." · We need keeping from division: Keep them that they may be one. · We need keeping from error · We need keeping from sin · We need keeping from hypocrisy
Keep through Your name: Jesus didn't pray, "keep through an angel" or "keep through a church leader" or "keep through their own effort." The work of keeping a believer is so significant that it takes the name of God - the whole character and authority of God. The repetition and extension of this prayer to all future believers is important. It shows that unity among the broader body of Jesus Christ was and is very important to Jesus.

29. Why is unity so important among believers in Christ? The unity of Christians brings about the conversion of the world. Christian unity will mean uniformity or unity of structure. It will mean unity of spirit, unity of heart, unity of purpose, and unity of destiny. Jesus essentially gave the world permission to judge the validity of His ministry based on the unity of His people. Unity among God's people helps the world to believe that the Father sent the Son.

30. What was Jesus' ultimate desire for those given to Him? Jesus prayed not only for the keeping of and the unity of His disciples, as if He only longed to leave behind good employees. He deeply cared for and prayed for joy fulfilled in their life. Specifically, Jesus prayed for His own joy to be fulfilled in His life. God wants joy fulfilled in our lives. Job and Moses and Elijah and Jonah all prayed that they would be taken out of the world, but God did not answer. He also wants us to stay in the world, to complete the work He gives us to do. Jesus prayed for a unity of love and common identity in Him. Jesus longed for heaven's completion of all

things. Jesus prayed that His disciples would not only be filled with the love of God the Father, but that they would also know the indwelling presence of Jesus Himself. This continues the emphasis on abiding and the indwelling Jesus from the words of Jesus earlier that evening

Closing prayer: from Jude 24-25 Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. All glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

John 14:1-14	John 15:1-17	John 16:1-4	John 17: 1-26
John 14:15-31	John 15:18-27	John 16:5-15	
		John 16:16-24	
		John 16:25-33	