

IN THE BEGGINNING WAS THE
WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH
GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.

the gospel of

JOHN

John 13:31-38

Introduction

Jesus' time is extremely short with His disciples here on Earth. In 24 hours He will be in the grave. Jesus begins to explain why it is so important that He goes away. The disciples could not understand these words at the present time.

John 13:31-38

So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. 32 If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. 33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. 34A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” 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.” 37 Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” 38 Jesus answered him, “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' Departure Brings Glory

John 13:31-32

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Jesus' death brought a threefold glory.

1. There was the Son of Man's glory. Jesus was glorified in the cross.

It was here that Jesus secured the eternal righteousness for man. Jesus, as the “Son of Man” was perfectly obedient to the Father, even to the point of dying on the cross. He therefore could offer Himself up as the perfect and final sacrifice for man.

There was also glory, for in the cross, Jesus triumphed over Satan by redeeming man out from the curse of sin and death. Man no longer has to remain in Satan's kingdom. In fact, Jesus as the Son of Man reclaimed creation back to Himself.

There was also glory in that Jesus demonstrated what perfect sacrifice and self-denial, courage and strength, love and compassion really are when He died on the cross.

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2. There is God's glory. The glory of God was in the perfect obedience of Jesus as He paid the price upon the cross for our sin. It was on the cross that God's justice for sin was perfectly satisfied.

God was also glorified in that His perfect love for man was demonstrated on the cross. He gave His only Son to pay the supreme price for man: to sacrifice His life for man.

3. There is Jesus' glory "in Himself." Jesus' glory "in Himself" is the resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. God accepted Jesus' payment for sin and He rose from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus' Departure Brings A New Commandment

John 13:33-35

“Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. 34A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus' departure demanded a new commandment.

1. Jesus said that He was departing, that He would be with the disciples for only a little while longer. This was the reason Jesus had to give His disciples a new commandment. There were three reasons the new commandment on love was needed by every generation of believers.

a. There are times when believers differ. There is always the danger of becoming critical, judgmental, censorious, and divisive. Remember, the disciples had just been arguing over who should receive the highest positions of authority in Jesus' new government. They had been divided. The need for a new commandment and a new supernatural love existed then even as it does today.

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- b. There are times when believers feel a keen need for Jesus' physical presence. That is the reason He said that the disciples would seek His presence. Believers do have the Holy Spirit, but being human, believers need another human presence with them. They need a brother or a sister, who loves them with the supernatural love of Jesus Himself. Jesus knew this, so He commanded believers to love each other. Believers are to meet the needs of each other for companionship and fellowship and for care and concern.
- c. There is the need for some supernatural force to hold the disciples together. Jesus' physical presence had been the cohesive force that had held the disciples together when He was on earth. But once He had gone, His followers would need something else to hold them together.

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The Holy Spirit can create within the believer a love that can melt and mold his heart to the hearts of other believers. The commandment is conditional. The Holy Spirit can create such a love, but believers have to receive it. When the love of Jesus dwells in the heart of a believer, several things happen. The believer has a love that causes him...

- to bind his life to the lives of other believers.
- to tie his life to the same purpose as other believers.
- to surrender his will and to be of the same mind as other believers.
 - to understand and feel with other believers.
 - to forgive other believers—always.
 - to sacrifice himself for other believers—always.
- to seek the welfare of other believers before his own.
 - to deny self completely.

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c. The new commandment is the mark of a true disciple. The distinguishing mark of a true believer is not the normal human love of neighbors, not even the love of brothers and sisters or of husband and wife. It is the spiritual and supernatural love of Jesus Himself that dwells within the life of the believer. By this love shall all men know that a person is a true disciple of the Lord.

Jesus' Departure Brings Stumbling

John 13:36-38

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." 37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." 38 Jesus answered him, "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' death revealed stumbling of the heart.. Note what Peter did. He paid no attention to the new commandment Jesus had just given. Jesus had just said that He was going away and leaving them, but Jesus had not been clear. He had spoken in veiled terms. It was this that had gripped Peter's heart. Jesus had said that He was going away and that they could not come. Jesus uses the same language but now adds that they would follow Him later.

Peter did not understand that Jesus was returning to heaven and going back to the Father from whom He had come. Jesus could not say it any clearer than what He had said. The disciples could not and would not understand until after the resurrection and ascension.

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Peter struggled with Jesus reply for two reasons

1. Peter misunderstood Jesus' death. Jesus was going to die and arise from the dead and then return to the Father. He had drilled this fact into the disciples for some months now, using words as clear and simple as possible. Yet, they refused to accept His prediction. They thought of God's kingdom in terms of a physical kingdom and government set up upon this earth. They saw the Messiah ruling over all the nations of the earth with Israel as the central capital of the world. They thought in terms of earthly freedom, position, power, fame, wealth, possessions, comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction.

Very simply stated, it was the idea of Jesus hanging upon the cross that was going to cause Peter to deny Jesus. Jesus had told Peter about the cross, but Peter had refused to believe it.

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2. Peter's commitment was a fleshy commitment. He did not understand himself and his weaknesses. He thought that He was one, if not the strongest of the disciples.

As a result of his false confidence, and his shattered expectations, Peter will deny Jesus three times before the rooster will crow.

We also must be aware of our weaknesses. We follow Christ in the very strength that He gives us. We yield our flesh to His Spirit and allow Him to transform us to His image.

What about you? Who are you depending upon.

Jesus departed physically out of this world, but we one day will join Him in His house. That is next weeks story!