

LESSON FOUR

THE FAREWELL MESSAGE

Scriptural Reference: John 13:35 - 17:26.

A. **THE FAREWELL MESSAGE:**

Scriptural Reference:

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you... Whither I go, ye cannot come..." (John 13:33).

The Lord's announcement to the disciples of His departure to a place where they could not at present follow Him made their hearts sink. In order to encourage them He gave them His farewell message, which was concluded, with His prayer.

This farewell message was spoken immediately after Judas had left the room. Apparently there were promises spoken here that were not for Judas to hear but were to be addressed to His faithful disciples only. We do not know exactly just how long Jesus took in this sweet and tender communion with His disciples but we do know that this was one of the most sacred times spent with His disciples in teaching. He opened His heart to the little band and gave them some intimate and precious truths that they were unable to fully understand until they received the Holy Ghost. We should note that He addressed them as "Little children."

This farewell message contains some of the most well known and beloved passages of Scripture in the entire Bible.

B. **THE NEW COMMANDMENT:**

The new commandment, and also His last before His death and resurrection, was, *"That ye love one another."* Love for one another, in contrast to the hatred and selfishness of the world is the true test and condition for discipleship.

The Law of Moses had given them the precept; *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."* However, in the Old Testament they were wholly unable to keep this law. Now in the New Testament when they would receive the Holy Spirit they would be able to prove their discipleship by loving one another.

C. **LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED:**

The hearts of the disciples were made sorrowful by the word that Jesus would soon leave them. Here Jesus pours out His heart in consolation and reassurance.

"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Jesus pleads that they might have the same faith in Him as in God, thus putting Himself upon equality with Deity.

He assured them that He was going ahead to prepare lodging places for them. He gave them a promise of personally returning and receiving them into that eternal home. To the question of

Thomas concerning the way, our Lord replied, *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* Jesus is both the way of God and the way to God; He is the personification and the incarnation of truth; He is also life in its true essence.

D. SHOW US THE FATHER:

Philip requested that Jesus would show them the Father and they would be satisfied.

What did Philip expect? Did he expect some blinding splendor in the skies? Philip had wholly failed to comprehend that for three years he had been walking with God. He had not understood that he could not know more of God than that revealed by Jesus Christ.

Jesus seemed surprised that Philip had not understood. *"Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* Appealing to His words and to His works as only possible by the Father, He proceeded to tell them of the coming of the Comforter.

This passage of Scripture proves that Jesus Christ and the Father are one.

E. ANOTHER COMFORTER:

Scriptural Reference:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever" (John 14:16).

Jesus assured His disciples that He would not leave them comfortless. He promised to send them "another" Comforter. The adjective "another" was given many people difficulty and given them apparent grounds for arguing for the Trinity Tradition. However, the word "another" does not mean another person but rather a new ministry.

Jesus identifies the Comforter with Himself. He said that He dwelt with them and should be in them. The clear positive statement, *"I will come unto you"* places the whole question beyond any doubt. Actually what Jesus said meant, "I will not leave you fatherless or orphans, I will come to you."

F. THE MINISTRY OF THE COMFORTER:

Throughout the last message Jesus referred to the ministry of the Comforter, which we shall sum up here:

- John 14:16 - abide with them forever.
- John 14:17 - dwell with them and in them.
- John 14:26 - teach them all things.
- John 14:26 - testify of Christ.
- John 16:8 - reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and of judgment.
- John 16:13 - guide into all truth.

G. FINAL EXHORTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

1. THE NECESSITY OF BEARING FRUIT:

Jesus compared Himself with a fruitful vine and the disciples as being the branches. He warned them that if they bore no fruit, they would be cut off. He reminded them that He would help them and empower them if they would keep related to Him as vitally as the branches are related to the vine. Without Him they would be powerless.

2. **THEY COULD EXPECT PERSECUTION:**

Jesus told His disciples not to be surprised if the world should hate and persecute them. The world rejected Christ and they also could expect to be rejected.

3. **THE DISCIPLES WOULD DO GREATER WORKS:**

In John 14:12 Jesus promised His disciples that they would do greater works - the same kind of works in quality but greater in quantity. In John 14:13 and John 16:23 Jesus promised that what- soever they would ask in Jesus Name it would be granted. This, of course, means more than just repeating the Name of Jesus. To pray in His Name, one must be identified with Him in consecration and devotion to God's Kingdom. His name stands for obedience, humility and compassion for lost humanity. To pray in His name the Spirit of Christ must wholly direct in the purpose and utterance of the prayer.

H. THE LORD'S PRAYER: (John Chapter 17)

This may truly be called the Lord's Prayer for this certainly was His own prayer. He uttered this prayer in the presence of His disciples. The prayer may be divided into four petitions:

1. Jesus prayed for Himself: He prayed that He might be glorified. This was actually a prayer that the divine plan and purpose of God that had been planned from the beginning might be fulfilled in Him.
2. Jesus prayed for His disciples: He prayed that the disciples might be kept and sanctified.
3. Jesus prayed for all who should believe: He looked into the future and prayed for all who would be saved in the future through the ministry of His disciples and that they might be unified and sanctified.
4. Jesus prayed for all disciples in eternity: He prayed that they might be with Him in that place He is going to prepare and that they might see His divine glory.

LESSON FOUR

SELF HELP TEST

- A. Why was the New Commandment new?
- B. In the Farewell Message how did Jesus attempt to comfort His disciples?
- C. In what ways does this message prove the Oneness of God?
- D. Give the FOUR main petitions contained in His prayer as recorded in John chapter 17.