

## **Gospel of John Study**

### **Session 31**

In our last session we continued studying Jesus' farewell address to His faithful disciples on the night of His betrayal and arrest. After comparing the normal Christian life to a branch that abides in a vine to bear fruit (with Christ being the vine and Christians being the branches) Jesus went on to further describe the three relationships that the disciples would need to understand so that they would be ready to take up the mantle of building the church and spreading the gospel to the world. The first and most vital relationship of a disciple is to Christ and this was depicted through the vine analogy. The second relationship of concern was that of the disciples to each other. Their relationship needed to be marked with a sacrificial love for and unity with one another rather than the competition they so often displayed. The third relationship Jesus brings up is that of the disciples to the world. He warns them in advance that they are going to be hated by the world. The world would cease being the world if it stopped hating God and His Son. Thus they needed to be prepared for rejection and persecution.

Now in this session, Jesus is going to wrap up His farewell discourse in chapter 16. He is going to give His disciples His last preparation for His departure so that they will at least not be blind-sided by the upcoming ministry and mission God has for them. In this chapter Jesus gives four revelations to His disciples so that they will know what to expect in the days to come. This chapter gives the disciples a summary of all Jesus has been saying and then ends with an encouraging word so that they know they will not be doomed for failure but rather victory.

#### 1. The revelation of rejection

##### **[John 16:1-4]**

Q: From how Jesus leads this section of His farewell address in v.1, what does Jesus consider the greatest danger or threat the disciples will face? (*v.1 - apostasy - Jesus wants to keep them from stumbling, from leaving the faith due to persecution or hatred from the world*)

Q: What would lead the disciples or other early believers to consider apostasy? (*v.2 - being expelled from the synagogue as that would lead to virtual expulsion from the Jewish community.*)

The book of Hebrews was written to fortify early believers against abandoning their faith in Christ and returning to Judaism. Life was very hard in some areas of the Roman empire for Christians at an early date, even before the systemic persecution from Rome began. The nature of persecution is that the one being persecuted can make it end by renouncing his or her faith and converting to the faith of the persecutor. Jesus understood that the religious, social and cultural pressure to abandon Him would be something the world would use against them. If these men could be hammered hard enough, they might renounce their faith in Christ and it would certainly make anyone wishing to convert to Christianity think twice as it would have such negative consequences. (As a side note of history, it is a credit to these men that once they were filled by the Spirit, they became bold beyond belief and they all died for their faith as martyrs, with the exception of possibly the apostle John.)

Q: What will be the mind set of those Jews who cast Christians out of the synagogue? (v.2 - *That they are offering service to God.*)

Q: Why will these Jews commit this form of persecution against Christians? (v.3 - *They do not know the Father or Jesus. Their ignorance was not intellectual in nature but rather the lack of knowledge of personal experience of God. They knew about God but had no relationship or experience with Him and thus not His Son, Jesus, either.*)

It should not come as a surprise that the first violent opposition to Christians should come from the Jews. Christianity sprang up from Judaism and all its earliest members were Jews.

**[II Corinthians 11:24]** - In this passage, Paul is distinguishing himself from the so-called “super-apostles” who are infecting Corinth with false teachings and slandering Paul in the process. One of the hardships he faced was that he received from the Jews 39 lashes on five different occasions. 39 lashes was a specific punishment meted out by synagogue authorities. 40 lashes was considered to be lethal and thus they could not inflict the death penalty without incurring Roman wrath. While a synagogue leader could inflict any number of lashes below 40, this shows us that Paul was treated with great contempt by his own people, the Jews in that he received the maximum penalty allowed on five occasions. Not long after the church began there was evidence of rabbinic authorities teaching that the slaying of heretics (mainly Christians) was an act of divine worship. As we know, these executions were carried out as in the execution of Stephen in Acts 7. What is interesting is that Jesus assigns these people honest religious motives. While this doesn’t make it right, it shows the level of ignorance they possess because they are deluded into thinking that killing so-called heretics is something that honors and pleases God. We see this sort of thinking still at work in the world as the most dangerous opposition persecution comes from zealots to a particular faith, whatever faith that may be.

Q: What was Jesus hoping would be the result of sharing these things with His disciples now? (v.4 - *That they would remember that He said this and be strengthened in their faith in Him and not flee the faith. They would understand that what was happening was not outside Jesus’ knowledge or control. It would also give them a sober reminder of what they were up against in the world.*)

Notice in v.4 that Jesus uses the term “their hour”. John uses this theme of “hour” to denote a specific time set by God for something in His plan to happen. The term has been used throughout John to refer to Jesus’ hour, the time when He would be crucified for as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. By using this word “hour” instead of the generic word for time, Jesus is making the disciples see that this “hour” is linked to His hour. These things will happen after He dies and rises from the dead. While Jesus was with the disciples, He absorbed and deflected all the persecution that came from the world towards Himself and the disciples. He acted as a shield against them being actively injured by the hatred of the world. His arrest is the last time that Jesus acted in this way.

**[John 18:7-9]**

These words were meant to prepare them for His departure in that He would no longer be there to shield them. That's the meaning of Jesus' words at the end of v.4 "because I was with you."

Q: So for us as believers today, what is the greatest damage persecution can do to us? (*Lead us to fall away from our faith in Christ. Death, while a real possibility, is not an active danger as we will live again and forever with the Lord after this life.*)

## **[II Thessalonians 2:1-3]**

### **[Matthew 24:9-13]**

Notice in v.13 of that passage Jesus is not stating that salvation is works based. The word "but" at the beginning of the sentence lets us know that it ties this verse to v.12. What Jesus is saying is that this is what a true believer looks like in the world at that time. Their love will not grow cold and they will not stray and follow false messiahs. This gives us a key to the nature of apostasy in that it involves the heart of a believer growing cold and loveless. Keep in mind here that in John we have seen Jesus elicit genuine faith in some while others appear to have faith in Him but it turns out superficial at best.

## 2. The revelation of the Holy Spirit

In the passage on the Holy Spirit, Jesus lays out three functions of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His disciples in the upcoming time.

### **[John 16:5-15]**

Now that we've studied the rest of Jesus' farewell discourse, it would seem that v.5 would be in contradiction to things Jesus said earlier in this discourse mainly 13:36 and 14:5.

### **[John 13:36]**

### **[John 14:5]**

These questions by Peter and Thomas are the actual words of the disciples but the intent of the disciples was not to actually ask a question of Jesus' location. Think of it this way. A little boy is disappointed when his dad is suddenly called away for an emergency meeting at work. Both the dad and his son expected to spend the day together fishing. Can you hear the little boy's frustration, "Aw, dad, where are you going?" In truth, the boy cares nothing for where the dad is going. The heart of the question is, "Why are you leaving me?" The question is actually a protest. The disciples have been asking many questions of this sort. At their heart, they are protests based on the confusion of not understanding the Man they believed to be the Messiah leaving them. They were so self-absorbed in their own loss to ever really care about where Jesus was going, despite Him telling them. All four gospels reveal the truth to us about the disciples that is crucial to this and that is none of them ever entertained the thought, before

the cross and resurrection, that the Messiah would be suffering servant, conquering king and resurrected Lord. This is why Jesus has to reiterate the point because of their blindness to what is about to happen.

Q: What emotion did Jesus say filled the disciples' hearts as He spoke to them? *(v.6 - sorrow or grief. This word for sorrow is never used of Jesus in the gospels and it is only used this one time in John. It signifies a grudging grievousness, a heavy sorrow that weighs a person down.)*

Another revelation of Jesus' departure was needed for the disciples at this point. The disciples needed someone to come along and take Jesus' place. This is where He told them again that He was not leaving them alone but sending them the Holy Spirit. While the disciples' main concern seems to be their own future, Jesus is giving them a reason to overcome the sorrow they are feeling with hope.

Q: Why did Jesus say it was to their advantage that He go away? *(v.7 - If Jesus didn't go away, the Helper would not come to them.)*

Listen to the next three passages and look for the one major theme they all have in common.

**[Isaiah 11:1-10]**

**[Ezekiel 11:17-20]**

**[Joel 2:28-32]**

Q: What is the one theme common to all these passages predicting the new covenant? *(The Holy Spirit would be poured out upon mankind. The Holy Spirit's permanent presence would be the characteristic of that age.)*

The Old Testament makes it clear that a new age was coming upon the earth and this coming age would be the age of the kingdom of God. It would be characterized by presence of the Holy Spirit. The saving reign of God was not going to come until Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven to be exalted to His Father's right hand, the place He was before the foundation of the world. It would be the Holy Spirit who would be poured out upon humanity and that would be the visible proof that this new age of grace would be active. So these Old Testament prophecies could not come to pass until Jesus left the scene.

Q: How do we see the Holy Spirit's work in the world today? *(Through miracles, spiritual gifts being used, the fruit of the Spirit being born out through the lives of believers, Christians given guidance and strength, the lost being convicted, the answers here are limitless.)*

Q: When will Jesus send the Helper to His disciples? *(v.7 - after He goes)*

In this sense, Jesus is telling His disciples that separation from Him was in their best

interest. As long as He was with them, God's work would be localized. It would be impossible to communicate with all of them simultaneously if Jesus stuck around.

Q: According to Jesus, what were the three things the Holy Spirit would do when He comes? (vv. 8 - *convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.*)

Conviction of the world is the first of the functions of the Holy Spirit in this passage. The Greek is very compressed here. To get the full impact of what Jesus is saying, one must understand the meaning of the word translated "convict" in the NASB. The KJV uses the word "reprove" but this is not strong enough a word. It is a legal term that means to pronounce a final judicial verdict by which the guilt of the culprit is defined and fixed. It carries the meaning to "put to shame or treat with contempt". Convict is a good English translation as long as it carries the full judicial sense of bringing down a negative verdict regardless of the convicted party's admission of guilt or not. In this sense of looking at the action of the Holy Spirit here, He does not merely accuse men but rather brings an inescapable sense of guilt so that they realize their shame and helplessness before God. Since the Spirit is God, He knows the hearts and minds and intentions of all people so His conviction is always just and right. The Spirit creates an inescapable awareness of sin so that it cannot be dismissed or excused or evaded. The world here is the same as we saw in chapter 15 as those people who are apathetic or hostile and rebellious against God, not the saved.

When the prophet Nathan approached David about his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, he told a story about a man who had one little sheep and a man with a huge herd of sheep stole that one little sheep from that man. When David heard the story, he was incensed and demanded the thief pay for that lamb with his life. Nathan then loudly retorted to David, "You are that man!" (II Samuel 12:7) David was compelled to acknowledge his sin and was reduced to a state of repentance. This is one of the works of the Holy Spirit.

What is interesting is the Jesus' use of the title "Helper" for the Holy Spirit. We tend to think of the Holy Spirit as the one who helps us in that He guides and strengthens and enlightens us. However, that's not all of it. By linking it with this conviction action, the Spirit helps us spread the gospel though convicting the those in the world of their guilt and thus need for a Savior. By shaming the world, the Spirit calls the world to repentance. We cannot bring the inescapable sense of guilt that only He can bring. He will continue to force the division among men that Jesus created by His coming so that the world sees that their deeds are evil. To be honest, the Spirit was going to extend the ministry of the disciples in ways they could not yet comprehend and Jesus was attempting to convince them that this was a good thing for their sakes and the sake of the upcoming mission of global evangelization.

Before we get into the details of these three activities of the Spirit, it is important to note the word "because". Jesus is giving the reason for the conviction brought about by the Spirit in the last part of these following verses (9-11). The interpretation must flow and be a reason that answers the "because" in each statement.

Q: Why did Jesus say the Spirit would convict the world of sin? (v.9 - *because they do not believe in Jesus*)

The heart of sin is unbelief. A court can convict a man of a crime but only the Spirit can convict a man of unbelief. Jesus continues to insist that sin is a repudiation of His message and mission. If the world did believe His statements about their guilt, they would turn from their sin and to Him. Yet, as it is, unbelief leads to condemnation and willful ignorance of the need for a Savior. Thus, the world misses the point that it walks in death and needs life. Despite the world's unbelief, the Spirit presses the world on its sin. In this sense, the work of the Spirit is gracious as it is designed to bring people to the place where they recognize both their sin and their need for Jesus to be their Savior.

Q: What is the second area of conviction brought about by the Spirit? (*v.10 - righteousness. Side note, this is the only place in John where the word "righteousness" is used.*)

Q: According to Jesus in v.10, why does the Spirit convict the world of righteousness? (*v.10 - because Jesus is going to the Father.*)

Up to this point, Jesus has been the One who is showing God's righteousness to the world. He is the One who is contrasting the "religious righteousness" of the Jewish leadership with God's genuine righteousness. For an example, just think back to all the miraculous healing Jesus performed during His ministry on the Sabbath. The Jews did not consider these miracles from God because Jesus did them on the Sabbath, against their man-made rules on the matter. (In fact, the often accused Him of having a demon.) While Jesus was in the world, He was the standard of God's righteousness in the world. His life displayed genuine righteousness to everyone around Him. Now He's going back to the Father and He would be around to expose the pretentious nature of the world and its darkness masquerading as light. Now this convicting work will fall upon the Holy Spirit in Jesus' absence. As the Holy Spirit will be dwelling in each believer bringing their lives into conformity with Christ's life, the impact upon the world around each believer will be one of the Spirit's conviction. Notice at the end of the verse, Jesus uses the pronoun "you" instead of "they". The disciples will follow Jesus and will be the ones to convict the world of empty righteousness because they will house the Spirit in them. In addition to this, going to the Father also represents total vindication for Jesus and His ministry in the world. Before Jesus, righteousness was defined by precepts and rules but now it had been revealed through the incarnate Son of God. Jesus exemplified righteousness perfectly in all of His relationships.

**[II Corinthians 5:21]** - According to this verse, our identity in Christ is righteous. He is righteous and His life is now in us as our life so we are the very righteousness of God in Christ.

**[Acts 3:14-15]**

Q: According to Jesus in v.11, why does the Spirit convict the world of judgment? (*v.11 - Because the ruler of this world has been judged.*)

The word "judged" or "condemned" in some translations is in the perfect tense. It means that the devil's judgment is a settled state. His sentence is fixed and permanent. It's also in the passive voice which means this judgment was done to the devil already. God judged him

completely and it's a matter or completed record without a possible appeal or reversal.

Judgment always occurs when an act or thought is evaluated by an absolute standard. Judgment in this passage refers to the condemnation of satanic self-will and rebellion by the obedience and love towards the Father exhibited by Christ. The cross was the utter condemnation and defeat of the "prince of this world". The Spirit's role is to convict the world of their blindness to who Jesus truly is, the one who perfectly obeyed the Father. When we consider the judgment of this world, we see that it is perverse and profoundly wrong. Now the Spirit convicts the world of their false judgment. Since all false judgment is related to the devil and he stands condemned, all those who follow him stand equally condemned. Jesus was not shy in exposing the false and satanic judgments of the world. In this sense the world desperately needs to clearly see their plight through the conviction of the Spirit.

**[John 7:23-24]**

Q: In v.12 Jesus stated the He had more things to share with His disciples but that they could not bear them at that moment. Why do you think that was the case? *(They were emotionally overwrought. Jesus told them that one of their own was going to betray Him. Peter was going to deny Him three times. He was leaving them to return to the Father without them. They were also theologically challenged beyond their ability to process what Jesus had told them already that night. How could the Messiah who was supposed to live forever, die and leave them? Why wasn't the kingdom appearing at this time? They had heard all they could process by this point.)*

Q: Despite the disciples' inability to process any more from Jesus, what did Jesus promise them? *(v.13 - When the Spirit of truth comes, He would guide them into all truth. v.15 - He will disclose what the Father had given to Jesus to reveal to them.)*

So we see the first function of the Holy Spirit was to bring conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment. The second function of the Holy Spirit was to bring remembrance and full comprehension of all the truth Jesus was given to give to them.

Q: Would the Spirit present an independent message from what they had heard from Jesus? *(vv. 13-15 - No, like Jesus, He will not speak on His own initiative but rather what He hear He will disclose to the disciples. He will take what Jesus gives to Him and disclose it to the disciples. In other words, the Holy Spirit always speaks and acts in perfect conformity with the Father and Son. He never branches out to give "new" revelation that is distinct from that of the Father and Son. )*

Here we see another aspect the love and kindness of Jesus and the nature of the disciples' relationship to Him. The Spirit would unfold or unpack the truth as the disciples grew in their spiritual capacity to understand and put that truth to use. There were truths which had not yet penetrated the disciples' minds and hearts. As Jesus is the truth, as they walked with Him and experienced Him through their lives, the Spirit would reveal more of Jesus (truth) to them. The Spirit would reveal to the disciples what was yet to come and He would unpack the significance of the death, burial, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus through the ministry of the disciples.

Think of it, this work of the Holy Spirit to remind and continue to teach the original disciples is what led to them writing the books of the New Testament. The reason this is loving and relational is that the Spirit will not just blast them with various truths but will reveal these truths to the disciples as they follow Jesus and continue to fulfill the mission and will of God. That's how God deals with us today. As we walk with Him through our various circumstances in life, He reveals to us what we need to know and do. He guides us to remember various truths from various testimonies - from Scripture and our lives. He never overwhelms us but gives us what we can handle at any particular time in our journey with Him.

Q: There is a third function of the Holy Spirit brought out in these verses as well. What is the third function of the Holy Spirit? (*v. 14 - He will glorify Jesus*)

Q: How will the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus? (*v.14 - He will take what is of Jesus and disclose it to the disciples.*)

Just as the Son brought the Father glory, so the Spirit will bring the Son glory. His role is bound up in the person and work of Christ. The Spirit never magnifies Himself but rather always glorifies and points to Jesus. The content of "what is Mine" is the revelation of the Father, since the Father gave the Son all that was needed. The Spirit interprets, illuminates, and applies the activity and teaching of Jesus to the disciples and makes Christ central to their thinking. It is the work of the Spirit, in glorifying Jesus (making Him known) that makes God a reality to mankind.

### 3. Revelation of Jesus' reappearance

#### **[John 16: 16-24]**

Q: Which departure and reappearance is Jesus speaking of in v.16? (*He is speaking of His death on the cross the next day and His resurrection three days later.*)

Let's keep in mind the disciples' state of mind at this point. They had no reference for a Messiah who would die, rise from the dead, then abandon His people to another Counselor. This is why they cannot bear all Jesus had for them at that moment. Now this confusion bleeds into this current part of the discourse in that they are perplexed about Jesus' double use of the phrase "a little while". Jesus fully understands that His disciples want to question Him about this phrase but His main truth they need to understand is that He will be leaving them shortly but will return shortly after that. (Thus, this is speaking of the immediate situation, not a time dealing with the last days.) Remember, Jesus' main goal of this discourse is to give them direction and comfort and hope in terms of the present situation. Notice in v.18 the questions cease and the disciples all admit to their ignorance of what Jesus is trying to tell them.

One thing that vv. 17-8 show us is that this discourse of Jesus was not just a single monologue by Jesus. They were holding a consultation among themselves to discuss what the meaning of the message Jesus just gave them. Thus, the discourse did not flow in an uninterrupted manner. There were times of silences and side-conversations throughout this time.

Q: According to Jesus, what will the emotional state of the disciples be after Jesus leaves them? *(v. 20 - They will weep and lament and grieve.)*

Q: What will the emotional state of those in the world be when Jesus leaves? *(v.20 - They will rejoice.)*

Q: What will happen to the disciples' grief? *(v. 20 - It will be turned into joy.)*

Q: What do we know now that will be the cause of this reversal of the disciples' emotional state? *(The resurrection of Jesus)*

Q: To what did Jesus compare the pain the disciples would suffer and its reversal into joy? *(v. 21 - a woman in labor who is in pain during the labor but rejoices and forgets the pain when the baby is born)*

Q: So according to this parable, when would the disciples' fear and grief be settled? *(After the resurrection)*

The disciples were still disappointed because the kingdom had not yet come and there was a calamity on the horizon that would befall Jesus and take Him from them. They would mourn His loss but the resurrection would reverse the conditions as Jesus would return to them.

The analogy of a woman in childbirth is used in the Old Testament to describe the terrible period of trouble that had to proceed to birth pangs of the Messiah's coming.

**[Micah 4:9-10]**

**[Isaiah 26:16-21]**

Both of these passages were used to describe the troubles of the world surrounding the time of the coming of the Messiah. Jesus used similar language to describe His leaving but also returning and the pain and joy brought by them respectively. Jesus applies this parable directly to His disciples. "Now" means the cross is upon Him. Yet the resurrection will happen, after which no one will be able to take their joy from them. This is because it will be the dawn of a new age - the age of the Holy Spirit. Notice the shift of language in v.22. We would expect it to read "you will see Me again" but that's not what it says. Jesus said, "I will see you again". Jesus seeing us is far more foundational to our relationship with Him than us seeing Him. Paul understood this.

**[Galatians 4:8-9]**

Q: In v.23 Jesus says, "In that day..." What day is He speaking of? *(He is speaking of the time after His resurrection. Notice that He is referring to the time after His resurrection as the end of history in that what He is saying here will be in force from that time forward.)*

It is important to interpret the beginning of v.23 that you understand that Jesus was talking purely to His disciples. What He was telling them was that after His resurrection they would no longer need to question Him about anything because His claims would be self-evident.

The word “ask” at the end of v.23 means both to ask a question or present a request. What is new here is that in this time after the resurrection, the disciples would be eligible for the Father Himself to respond to their needs. To grasp the significance of this we need to go back to chapter 15 (15:14-15) where Jesus told the disciples that He now called them friends, not slaves. The main characteristic of the Christian era is that His disciples will know what Jesus is doing. This is a new era of history under the new covenant as we, believers, are called Jesus’ friends. For the disciples at that time, it was an appeal for them to wait just a little bit longer before enjoying the understanding He was promising them at that time. For us today, becoming a Christian is the only way to have religious and spiritual questions answered with finality and then be able to rest in the quietness of the satisfaction of knowing that the answer or request has come from the Father Himself. These requests being answered further the rejoicing of the believer in the new covenant age. Being able to ask in Jesus’ name is the key that unlocks this whole process as asking in Jesus’ name is made possible because we are His friends and not His slaves. We know what He is doing and are participating directly with Him through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Q: Up to this point in the disciples’ walk with Jesus, how much had they asked the Father for? (v.24 - *nothing*)

Q: Based on what we know from the rest of this chapter so far, why had they not asked for anything in Jesus’ name? (v.24 - *This was a privilege of the new age only. The resurrection had to happen first so that Jesus could send the Spirit into the world.*)

Q: According to Jesus in v.24, what is the route to joy? (*Asking for things in Jesus’ name. They will ask in His name and then Jesus will respond so that they receive the request. The consequence of receiving the request is joy. As their requests are answered, fruit is born out in the world, the mission of God is furthered and the kingdom advanced. The disciple’s consistent obedience and abiding in the vine shows their love for Jesus and His Word and thus is it actually Jesus’ joy to answer these requests as they continue to glorify God.*)

Jesus says that those who ask will experience the fulness of joy. The word “full” means crammed full, stuffed completely, or perfectly supplied. When God answers a prayer, this is one of the effects - having our joy made full for a number of reasons.

#### 4. The revelation of the Father

##### **[John 16:25-33]**

The figurative language means obscure utterances. He had to do this due to the disciple’s immaturity in their faith. After the resurrection however, He would be at liberty to speak to them plainly. “Plainly” means “public, not cryptic”. The cross was less than a day away and it would

be the most dramatic self-disclosure ever. More than anything else, the cross will display the love, the character, and purposes of God. The eyes of the disciples will be opened to understand the purposes of God at that point. Once again, John points out Jesus' use of the term "hour" which in John always points in some way to the cross. In this case the cross will bring about the new era of God's kingdom.

Making requests in Jesus' name shows Jesus' sponsorship of His disciples. The standing of the disciples before the Father will rest entirely upon the merits and work of Jesus, not themselves. It is because of His work that they will be able to approach the Father directly. The relationship Jesus displayed with His Father laid the groundwork for their direct relationship with the Father. Because they believed Jesus, their relationship with the Father was fixed.

Q: According to Jesus in v.27, why will He not request the Father on His disciples' behalf? (v.27 - *Because the Father loves them because they have loved Jesus and believed He came from the Father.*)

This short passage deals with the mediatorial role the Son plays in the plan of redemption. According to Jesus here, prayer is never mechanical but relational. The love of the Father is directed towards believers. The Father loves the believers because they love His Son and believe that He came from Him.

#### **[Hebrews 4: 14-16]**

Q: According to v.28, what would we say Jesus' role or mission was in coming into the world? (*emissary or ambassador or messenger, etc.*)

In vv.29-30 the misunderstanding still exists though the disciples thought it had been resolved. They thought they had things figured out finally. There is little more frustrating than dealing with a person who thinks they know what you are saying yet you know they still don't get it. They make the confession that Jesus supremely reveals God. That is a good start. They are also embracing the right conclusion (that Jesus came from the Father). However, this shows just how frail the foundation of their claim to understand Jesus was at that time. It shows they had an immature but genuine faith.

Q: What was Jesus' response to the disciples' confession they had just spoken? (v.31 - *Jesus was skeptical of the firmness of their belief in what they just said.*)

Human pretensions lead to another rebuke here. This is a statement of irony and exasperation. Jesus knew that the test of their faith coming in light of the cross would find them all lacking. Peter had already been warned of his impending failure. Now they all needed to face the fear honestly.

Q: What would happen in the "hour" Jesus spoke of in v.32? (*The disciples would all scatter and desert Him. Notice again the use of the word "hour" and how it is related directly to the experience of the cross.*)

**[Zechariah 13:7]**

Q: Why was Jesus not despairing the immanent desertion of His disciples? (*v.32 - Because He would not be alone. The Father would be with Him.*)

VV. 29-32 seem rather odd. Why would Jesus tamp down His disciples' enthusiastic confession of faith in the upcoming moment of trouble? There are two reasons for this. First, we see this as a pattern in the faith of the disciples before the coming of the Spirit. But this is for our benefit in that secondly it shows us the genius of the church. The foundation of the church, these disciples were discredited men. Yet, the church did not owe its existence to these deeply flawed and often obtuse men who showed little faith and no courage or virtue in the trial and execution of their leader. Instead the church owed its existence fully the what Christ had done with them after His resurrection and these disciples would never forget the grace bestowed upon them.

Q: How does Jesus deal with us when we fail Him? Give a Bible story as an illustration of your answer. (*Story of Peter denying Jesus three times yet after the resurrection, Jesus appeared to Him in front of the other disciples and restored his faith and position among His disciples. John 21. Adam and Eve, Prodigal Son, Lost Sheep, Jonah, Moses just to name a few. He gives us mercy and has compassion upon us - more than we usually give ourselves.*)

The end of v.32 points out the faithfulness of the Father over the fickleness of the disciples or for that matter, other humans. Jesus knew that because the Father remained with Him, as He had always done, He would be able to faithfully execute the Father's will of dying on the cross for the sins of the world.

Q: V.33 begins with the phrase "These things..." What is Jesus referring to by the use of that phrase "these things"? (*The entire farewell discourse from John 13: 31 - 16:33*)

Q: What was Jesus' stated goal for this discourse in v.33? (*He wanted His disciples to have peace in Him*)

However grave the disciples' temporary defection may be, Jesus looked beyond this collapse to their restoration and ends His discourse with encouragement. His desire is for them to have peace, peace as only He can give them.

Q: What are the two spheres Jesus mentions in v.33? (*Being in the world and being in Him*)

These two spheres will be a source of constant conflict for the disciples. Christians exist in both spheres. As long as they are in the world, they will experience conflict and trouble. But at the same time, when in Jesus - firmly abiding in the vine - we will experience peace. Whatever the trouble, for the believer peace can prevail. The word "overcome" always means a spiritual victory in the New Testament. It is in the perfect tense which means the victory is already a completed action and no more is necessary for this statement to be true. Jesus has overcome the world - done! Jesus did not overlook the great trial awaiting Him and His disciples but He proclaimed victory over it.

**[Romans 8: 31-39]**

The cornerstone and foundation for the Christian's perseverance through this age of grace is the triumph of Jesus Christ. Jesus has indeed overcome the world and has defeated the prince of this world (Satan). By His death, Jesus has made the world's opposition pointless. The decisive battle was fought and won on the cross. Though the world is still continuing its wretched attacks upon Christians, we share in Christ's victory that He has already won. We, believers, cannot be harmed by the attacks and evil of this world because we know of Jesus' triumph. From this perspective, God's perspective, we can take heart and share in Jesus' peace. We can enter into His rest as He has completed and won the victory for us. The victory of Jesus is the high note of this entire discourse where believers can hang their hats through this life.

Q: Do you have any questions, comments, rebukes or rebuttals?