

13:31-14:31

The next section in John's account is called 'the Farewell Discourse' (13:31-16:33). As the name suggests, in this address, the Lord is preparing his followers for a life *without* his physical presence to guide them.¹ However, given how this story goes, this title might be a misnomer, as his departure would last only three days.² Afterward, he would never again leave them (cf. 14:18-20). "Indeed, "presence in absence" is the greatest theme of Jesus' so-called Farewell Discourse."³ Thus, unlike other 'last words' (cf. Gen. 49; 50:22-26; Duet. 33; Josh. 23-24; 1 Chron. 29:10-20), Jesus was at a meal, not his deathbed and spoke knowing full well he would live again.⁴ Might a better name be the 'See You Later Discourse?'

While this scene is mostly one continuous dialogue between Jesus and his now *eleven* disciples, there is a natural break at the end of chapter 14. So, to put this famous section into a more manageable size, we'll divide it into two parts: 13:31-14:31 and 15:1-16:33. To try and tackle this portion of the narrative in its entirety is a task too great for this writer. Because, as we'll see, Jesus covers a ton of ground in the first part alone.

For example, the Lord talks about his departure but gives them a radical new commandment to guide their lives in his absence (13:31-35). Once again (cf. 13:6-11), Peter gets into a verbal sparring match with Jesus. And the Lord, *once again*, has to humble the lead apostle (13:36-38). This, noticeably, troubles the disciples; and so Jesus then offers some comforting words: "I go to prepare a place for you" (14:1-2). Eventually, the apostles will follow Jesus to that "place." In fact, they *already* know how to get there because they *already* believe in the One who is the "the way, the truth, and the life" (14:3-7).

However, throughout Jesus' speech, the apostles remain confused. This is demonstrated by Phillip's question when he asks Jesus to "show [them] the Father" (14:8-14). In response, the Lord gently chastises Phillip and explains that he has *already* seen God because he *already* believed in His Son. Believing Jesus is believing God. Seeing Jesus is seeing God. Of all people, the disciples should've realized this by now (cf. 14:9).

But if that revelation wasn't enough, Jesus revealed that the disciples would not be left alone to fend for themselves. In his absence, "another Comforter" will take the Lord's place called "the Spirit of truth" (14:15-26). And through their loving obedience to Jesus' commandments, the

¹ Kruse (2017), p. 338.

² Carson (1991), p. 480.

³ Thompson (2015), p. 295.

⁴ Ibid, p. 296-297.

Holy Spirit will empower the apostles to do greater things than even those that God's Son has done (14:12). Not only that, but this Comforter will aid in their apostolic work as he will act as both a teacher and as a reminder, helping the disciples in all things (14:26). From there, the Lord gives them another gift: *peace* (14:27-29). And this kind of peace will be, quite literally, other-worldly; it is a peace whereby the disciples will not be afraid or troubled no matter what this world throws at them.

Ultimately, the Lord ends the first part of the Farewell Discourse the same way he started it: *he spoke about love* (14:30-31; cf. 13:31-35). But rather than encourage his disciples to love each other, the Son of God clarified that he has obeyed every command from God so "that the world may know that I love the Father..." (14:31). God so loved the world that he gave us his Son and the Son so loved the Father that he gave us his life. There is no greater expression of love than sacrificial love. But that is a topic for part two of the Farewell Discourse (cf. 15:13).

VIDEO DESCRIPTION

Wednesday Night Live | John | Week 43

Text: John 13:31-14:31

Tonight, we'll get an overview of the 'Farewell Discourse.' If you'll recall from last week, the Lord has just given leave to his betrayer (cf. 13:21-30); thus, for the first time since this whole thing started, Jesus can address his genuine disciples. Similar to how the Lord threw out the money changers in the Temple (cf. Jn. 2), Jesus has now purged his new covenant community of unbelief. And so, finally, "his own" is ready to receive some final instructions. After all, they must be prepared for what's to come.

What will they do when Jesus leaves them? What should they expect? Will they be alone forever? The Farewell Discourse answer these questions, as well as many others.

Pastor's manuscript can be found here: