

### Exegesis

**Vs. 18-19** – “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” The Greek term from which we get “comfortless” is **ὀρφανός** (*or-fa-nos*) and, as you likely noticed, it sounds similar to our English word “orphan.” This is for good reason, as “orphan” is, in fact, a transliteration of *orphanós*, and, unsurprisingly, *both* words refer to the *same* thing: *a parentless child* (cf. Ja. 1:27).<sup>1</sup> Thus, Jesus reassured his disciples that he would not leave them as *orphans*. They were not like the ‘Lost Boys’ in J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, who were bereft of parental care, doomed to live out some trivial fantasy in Neverland. They were living a *real-life* adventure story, and though Jesus would indeed be leaving them, it would not be forever. He reassures his followers, “I will come to you.”

But the same cannot be said for those who were not the disciples of Jesus, for the Lord says, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more....” That is to say, the Son of God showed himself only to those who were his disciples already or would be shortly—i.e., James and Saul (cf. Ac. 9:7; 1 Cor. 15:7-80). In other words, those who lack the faith to believe will not be given the privilege to *see* the resurrected Lord, at least in this life (cf. Rev. 1:7).

But, ever the encourager, Jesus reassures his disciples that, unlike the world, they will get to “see” him in this life. In fact, he tells them, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” The apostles will live forever *because* they will see Jesus again (cf. 20:19-20). And likewise, just as death was not the end for the Christ, nor will it be the end for the Christian (cf. 2 Cor. 5:8). There is life after death for those who believe in the Son of God precisely *because* Jesus died and rose again (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Or, as the beloved hymn writer put it,

*God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus  
He came to love, heal, and forgive  
He bled and died, to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove, my Savior lives*

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know, He holds the future  
And life is worth the living, just because He lives*

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<sup>1</sup> Carson (1991), p. 501, explains, “though in secular Greek the word *orphans* is also used...of disciples stripped of their master;” Klink (2016), p. 636, also claims that *orphanós* could be used to describe a slave without a master.

**Vs. 20** - Jesus explains, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." Which "day" is the Lord referring to? Admittedly, the phrase "at that day" has an eschatological ring, but that seems to ignore the immediate context wherein his crucifixion and resurrection are in view. Considering the Holy Spirit is emphasized in this passage (cf. vs. 16-17, 25-26), it is possible to see the Lord referring to the Day of Pentecost (Ac. 2).<sup>2</sup> However, given the personalized language (e.g., "I will not leave you...I will come to you," "because I live, ye shall live also," and "ye in me, and I in you"), it is far more likely that Jesus is referring to the "day" of his resurrection.<sup>3</sup>

All doubt about Jesus' work and words evaporated because of Easter. On that glorious Sunday morn, his followers would "know" that the things he said were true (vs. 9-11) because they would see him with their own eyes (cf. 20:24-29). Seeing the empty tomb and the risen Savior *proved* that the Son of God was, indeed, "in" God. And, if so, that *also* meant that the disciples were "in" Jesus and, furthermore, that he was "in" them. As the resurrection validated Jesus' *sonship* with the "Father," it confirmed the believers' *citizenship* in the Kingdom of God (cf. Gal. 3:26-28). This citizenship is not only a reality that will be perfected sometime in the future but is also a reality that can be experienced today (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12).<sup>4</sup>

As we'll soon learn, the Son of God does not lose a single man, woman, or child given to him by the Father (cf. 17:12; 18:9). Jesus has never once *orphaned* anyone. In God's presence, there's room enough for the stray, a seat saved for the outcast, a home set aside for the homeless, and there they will be forever (cf. Lu. 14:21-24).

**Vs. 21** – If you'll recall, these truths stood on the foundation of obedience (cf. 13:34-35; 14:15). Thus, unwilling for his followers to lose sight of that foundation, the Lord says, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Obeying Jesus' commandments is the only way to show that we love him. This has been made abundantly clear at this point. However, the Lord expands on this foundation to show us that those who love the Son will "be loved of [the] Father." Few things garner favor from a parent more than

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<sup>2</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 439; Kruse (2017), p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> Carson (1991), p. 501; Klink (2016), p. 636-637; Morris (1995), p. 579.

<sup>4</sup> Klink (2016), p. 637-638, "Jesus speaks of the new state that will exist between the Father, Son, (Spirit), and the disciples. This is not merely a depiction of life in the kingdom, for this is also a depiction of the kingdom in this life; the cosmological reality to which the Gospel has witnessed is coalescing through Christ and in the Spirit into the historical reality of created existence."

when someone loves their child. God is no different. Love the Son of God the way he wants to be loved, and rest assured, you will be loved by God.

To be clear, this sort of love is not earned. We cannot coerce God into loving us; though, if there were ever such a way, Christ's commands would be our best strategy. But, no, we cannot manipulate God into loving us. Instead, the believer who truly loves the Son will be truly loved by the Father only because they were first loved by God (cf. 1 Jn. 4:19). As Morris puts it, "love calls to love."<sup>5</sup> Just as God's love for us was expressed in loving acts (cf. 3:16), so is our love for God expressed in loving obedience.

You will also be loved by the Son, and he will even "manifest"—i.e., show—himself to you. This referred to how the Lord would reveal himself after the resurrection in the disciple's context. But, generally speaking, the Lord does not hide from those who humbly seek him (cf. Psa. 138:6; Pro. 3:34; 29:23; Mat. 7:7-8). James said it best in 4:8 of his book, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Even children who've turned from their wayward ways will find their heavenly Father running to them, ready with a warm embrace and an affectionate kiss (cf. Lu. 15:20). We need not doubt whether the Lord will show himself to us; he will, *if* we will be obedient to his commands. This is no game of chance but a guaranteed outcome. In the realm of sure things, it is the surest of them all. He who said in Matt. 28:20, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," is *still* with us and still *manifests* himself to us today. We may wonder about many things, but Jesus' self-disclosure should not be one of them.

**Vs. 22-24** – "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Judas-not-Iscariot, aka 'Judas the son of James' (Lu. 6:16; Ac 1:13), uses the same Greek word for "manifest" in verse 22 that Jesus uses in verse 21.<sup>6</sup> But the disciple is confused, and for good reason. How is it possible that the Lord will "appear" to the disciples and not physically show himself to everyone else? Is not the Messiah supposed to appear in such evident splendor that *everyone*, believer and unbeliever alike, will acknowledge his existence (cf. Isa. 11; Dan. 7; Hab. 3:3-15; Zech. 9)?<sup>7</sup> Thus, despite Jesus' best efforts, this disciple had no mental framework for a

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<sup>5</sup> Morris (1995), p. 580.

<sup>6</sup> ἐμφανίζω (em-fa-need-zo) - Mat. 27:53; Heb. 9:24; 11:14

<sup>7</sup> Klink (2016), p. 638.

suffering messiah (cf. Isa 53).<sup>8</sup> Even at this advanced stage of God's redemptive plan, those closest to Jesus—i.e., the other Judas—still thought of the Lord's messianic role as primarily political.<sup>9</sup> It would take a resurrection to correct such thinking.

But at the heart of Judas' question is a crucial distinction: those who *love* Jesus and those who do *not*. This is why, rather than explain the nuances of the resurrection, the Lord prefers to repeat much of what he's already said: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings...." Judas wanted to know why Jesus would manifest himself to the disciples but not to anyone else. And the short answer to that question is that the apostles were the only ones who loved Jesus. Thus, as Jesus said before that the disciples will be "in" Christ and Christ will be "in" them (vs. 20), so now, he says that both Father and Son "make [their] abode with" those who *love* Christ and "keep" his words (cf. vs. 3, 18).<sup>10</sup> The same Greek word **μονή** (*monē*), here translated as "abode," is translated as "mansions" in verse 2. Thus, it seems Jesus is engaging in some wordplay: as his going away *prepared a home* for the disciples, so does the believer's obedience *make a home* for God. In other words, the Lord feels right at home when we obey Christ's commands (cf. vs. 15). Whereas *disobedience* is the trademark characteristic of those who do not love the Son of God.

He concludes by saying, "And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." Even though the things he was telling them might be hard to believe, they are valid, for they are not Christ's words but God's (cf. 5:19-20; 7:16-17; 8:26, 28; 12:49-50; 17:14).

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<sup>8</sup> Morris (1995), p. 580-581, "Like the Jews in general, [Judas-not-Iscaiot] expects the Messiah to stand forth in all his glory before all the people. The way he puts it seems to imply that he now thinks that something has happened to disrupt Jesus' planned program."

<sup>9</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 357, "Jesus' promise to show himself to his disciples was not enough for Judas, so he asked why Jesus was not going to show himself to the world as well."

<sup>10</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 441, "This is the only place in the NT where the Father and the Son are both said to indwell believers."

## VIDEO DESCRIPTION

### **Deep Dive: The Gospel of John | Week 50 | John 14:18-24**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

As we'll learn this evening, the apostles were not like the 'Lost Boys' in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, who were bereft of parental care, doomed to live out some trivial fantasy in Neverland. They were living a *real-life* adventure story, and though Jesus would indeed be leaving them, it would not be forever. He reassures his followers, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." And when the Lord returns, via the resurrection, they will never be separated again. For as the resurrection validated Jesus' *sonship* with the "Father," so it confirmed the believers' *citizenship* in the Kingdom of God (cf. Gal. 3:26-28). This citizenship is not only a reality that will be perfected sometime in the future but is also a reality that can be experienced today (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12).

The Son of God does not lose a single man, woman, or child given to him by the Father (cf. 17:12; 18:9). Jesus has never once *orphaned* anyone. In God's presence, there's room enough for the stray, a seat saved for the outcast, a home set aside for the homeless, and there they will be forever (cf. Lu. 14:21-24).

**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

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#### **Grace Pointe Baptist Church**

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

**Contact:** [info@GracePointeLife.com](mailto:info@GracePointeLife.com)

**Website:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

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