
Day 1

Learn: Prayerfully read John 14.12-24. Christ told the apostles he would do even greater things through them than he had done in his own person, and he would grant prayers in line with his will to accomplish God's glory. Then he told them that evidence of their love for him would be obedience to his commands. If we love Christ, we will pursue his commands and mission, and thus we will be praying for success in ministry endeavors which would bring God glory, and therefore Christ will grant our requests. If we love Christ, we will obey his commands and learn to live like him, and thus we will be open to hearing from God, being led by the Spirit, and experiencing Christ revealing himself to us. Does that seem fantastic, to have Christ reveal himself to you? This is a biblical promise!

We do not obey to earn God's love. Rather – assuming the apostles knew what he already had taught about the Father and the Son choosing them and extending grace and love which transformed them to love and obey the Father and the Son – Jesus now told them they could be assured that the Father and Son would continue loving them, and have the Son reveal himself to them. This came true in a physical sense at the resurrection of Christ, when he appeared to them and explained further about himself. It comes true for disciples today in a spiritual sense, as we experience the reality of Christ and an intimate relationship with him. Jesus before mentioned he was leaving to prepare dwelling places in the Father's house, to make provision for them to have eternal life with the Father and the Son. Now he said believers who loved and obeyed him would have the Father and Son dwelling with them. The world cannot receive this revelation, because it does not believe, does not walk in the light with Christ.

Reflect: Jesus said lack of obedience reflected a lack of love for him and disrespect for God and his revelation. Knowing that is how God the Father and Jesus view your sin – whether willful sin or just neglect to pursue the life they laid out for you in scripture – what adjustments will you make to learn more about the biblical life or pursue it? We will not do great things for God, experience God working through us for his glory, if we try to enforce our will on God, try to manipulate God or Christ, or try to use them for our own ends. How much of your prayer time and life is about bringing God glory and how much is about satisfying your desires? Are you willing to improve in this? How?

Day 2

Learn: Prayerfully read John 14.15-17. The Holy Spirit is called “another helper” or “advocate” or “counselor.” There is no truly appropriate English word for the Greek term παράκλητος [pah-RAH-clay-tahs]. Christ had been empowering, encouraging, comforting, exhorting, helping them, but he was leaving, so he would send another to do this for them, the Holy Spirit. The Spirit already was with them, but he later would indwell them and experientially relate to them after Pentecost [the official “sending” of the Spirit to the church].

Jesus said if we love him, we will obey him, and the Holy Spirit will empower us! Those praying in the name of Christ, pursuing his commands and mission, will need empowerment by the Holy Spirit to achieve success for God's glory, and this is how Jesus will answer their prayers: the Holy Spirit will empower them, work miraculously and supernaturally through them, to the glory of God and the furtherance of the gospel mission. We are not buying the gift with our love and obedience; rather this is about essential relationships. We cannot bring God glory or ask for things in Christ's name if we are not relationally connected to them in love and walking intimately with them in the light. Anyone who believes in the identity and saving work of Jesus receives the Holy Spirit, but we must yield to the Spirit [be willing to obey] to sense his guidance and empowerment. If we believe, we will experience transformation of character over time, and thus sense a growing love and appreciation for Christ and thus willingness to obey.

Reflect: Can you sense the Spirit with you, in you? How often do you experience God doing something amazing and supernatural through you to help others come to faith or grow in faith? If you are not experiencing these promises, what do you discern might be wrong based on this passage and the above information? What can you do about it?

Day 3

Learn: Prayerfully read John 14.15-26. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Truth is a characteristic of God, but perhaps this name comes more from the truth the Spirit will convey to the apostles as he testifies about Christ who

is the truth [the revelation] of God. The Spirit comes not as a substitute for Christ, but as Christ's emissary, carrying on the gospel mission in the Son's name as Jesus had carried it out in the Father's name [5.43; 10.25]. 14.25-26 are words Christ spoke specifically for the apostles. He was teaching them these things while he was alive, but the Holy Spirit would come and teach them all they needed to know, specifically reminding them of all which they had learned from Jesus, so they could fully understand his revelation in the light of the resurrection, and write the New Testament accurately. It was not John's goal to explain to his readers how they might be taught by the Spirit, but to explain to his readers how it is that the apostles came to an accurate and full understanding of the truth about Christ and could be trustworthy to write the New Testament. This is not even about the apostles receiving new revelation, but about inspiring the apostles to comprehend the revelation they had received from Christ.

14.18-20 also are words Christ spoke specifically for the apostles. He would not leave them as orphans. This could be an idiom meaning he would not leave them helpless, but it also means he would not abandon them to be without a spiritual master or father. Jesus would return to them after his resurrection – the world would no longer see him, but his apostles would – and that would give them evidence of their own eternal life and eternal relationship with God and Christ, because Jesus would have risen from the dead, proving his identity as the Son of God, his victory over sin and death and evil, God the Father's satisfaction with the sacrifice, and his power to resurrect them.

Reflect: We too can be reassured by the resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit. We are not orphans either. Rather, we are “adopted sons” [heirs] in God's family, with our own eternal life and eternal relationship with God the Father and Christ guaranteed. What situations make you feel helpless or impotent? Can you trust that the Holy Spirit will empower you as God the Father wills it, such that if God desires, you can accomplish anything? Are you willing to persevere in prayer as you wait?

Day 4

Learn: Prayerfully read John 14.27-29. Again, we see words specifically for the apostles, but again we will find application for ourselves. With the Holy Spirit indwelling them, they would have evidence of their ongoing peace with God through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. “Atoning” means Christ's sacrifice appeased God's wrath about sin, so God would mercifully forgive them and reconcile in relationship with them. Thus the apostles would know they had permanent peace with God. They also could have inner peace by trusting in the sovereign plan of God [see Philippians 4.6-7], which would help them understand that the death of Christ was under God's control and part of his plan. They could anticipate the earthly peace that would come in Christ's kingdom [see Isaiah 9.6-7; 52.7], but for now the world would war against itself and them, yet they could have peace inside because they had peace with God. All of what Jesus said to them in this passage should help them rejoice – it is going to bless them! – but even if they were unhappy, Jesus told them they should rejoice for him, because he would be returning to the Father.

Reflect: God denounces those who seek inner peace or political peace without facing the problems [see Jeremiah 6.13-16]. The world cannot find peace, because it is in rebellion against God. True peace comes from knowing God, walking in his light and trusting him with the results. How can this passage and the thoughts above help you?

Day 5

Learn: Prayerfully read John 14.22, 28-31. The disciple who asked the question in 14.22 was Judas, son of James [Luke 6.16; Acts 1.13; known as “Thaddaeus” in Matthew 10.3; Mark 3.18]. The apostles were expecting Christ to establish the Messianic kingdom, which must startle the world with his disclosure, so how could it be that he would not reveal himself to the world? Jesus had been telling them that he had to leave, he had to die. The time is coming for an end to their dialogue, for Satan is coming to make his play through Judas Iscariot. Satan has no hold over Jesus, for Jesus is sinless and divine, but Satan's will would be done at that time, and Jesus would die. But this would not really be a victory for Satan, for Jesus would die to obey God the Father and prove his love for the Father, and thus bring them both glory and victory over sin, death, and evil, including Satan. This sacrifice would make possible the freedom of mankind from Satan's power and the eventual destruction of Satan's reign.

Reflect: Even in our darkest moments, God is at work and will work to bring some good. Don't ever despair! Stay prayerful, stay faithful, stay obedient and waiting on the Lord's deliverance! Pray for help with this now...