

LIFE GROUP LESSON

John the Life-Giving Gospel • Week of July 26

Introduction

Preparing to be away requires a lot of thoughtful planning. For example, if you have kids or elderly parents, careful arrangements must be made for them. How much cash will they need for expenses, who will oversee their schedules, and provide transportation to school, games, or doctors' appointments? Are there bills that will need to be paid early, so you don't come home to a house with no water or electricity? Are there upcoming assignments or projects at work that will require someone else to step in and assist in your absence?

Background

John, chapters 13-16, are called the 'farewell passages.' In these chapters, Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure from this world. He must return to his Father in heaven; timing is critical. Chapter sixteen, opens with Jesus telling his disciples: "I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith" (John 16:1). How tragic it would have been had the apostles abandoned their faith! Thus, Jesus' words are direct and forthright. He knows they will face persecution; he does not want them to fall away, for they must continue the work.

Read John 16:1-15

In this passage Jesus is clear about the necessity of his departure: "... it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you" (v7). Let this sink in. If Jesus had not gone to the Father, we would not have the Holy Spirit. The disciples would not have experienced Pentecost. The church would not have been birthed. There would be no indwelling Comforter. No hope of being holy, set apart, or 'sealed' for the day of redemption. But Jesus was obedient and fulfilled all the Father required of him. Think for a moment how we as believers depend on the Holy Spirit, Christ's presence alive in our hearts and in day-to-day life. Do you see how critical timing is as Jesus speaks to his disciples about the necessity of his impending departure from this world, and returning to the Father?

- According to v8, what three things will the Holy Spirit do?
- What else will the Holy Spirit do, according to v13-15?
- What do the following Scriptures say about the Holy Spirit?

Acts 2:32-33, 37-39 Romans 5:5; 8:11 1 Corinthians 12:1-7 Ephesians 1:13-14

Read John 16:16-33

Verse 19 says *Jesus realized they wanted to ask him about it...* The disciples have questions, yet what does he say? "... you have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy" (v22). Imagine trying to process all Jesus is saying. Perhaps you have experienced a time when *what you sensed* the Lord saying made no sense. As with the disciples, there are times we can't make sense of things, and we are troubled. Jesus knows *and* cares. We can take heart, for he has overcome the world (v33). We are not victims, but victors.

- Joy is not the absence of sorrow, but proof that sorrow does not have the last word. How have you known this to be true in your life?
- What metaphor does Jesus use in v21?

Old-timers used an expression when a woman went into labor: they would say that *she was about to go down into the jaws of death*. Jesus was about to go down into the jaws of death. On this eve, he knows betrayal, arrest, and suffering lie imminently before him. Yet, the only way back to the Father *for Jesus* is through his own death on the cross. There is no other way. Can you imagine the mixed emotion of our Savior! He knows the only way *for us* to be saved is through him; and his only way to finish the assignment for which he was sent and return to heaven, is through his own death on the cross. Mission accomplished *sole via* Golgotha.

- What does it mean to be born again?

We are *born from above*, by accepting Jesus' finished work on the cross personally, and publicly professing faith in him ... in Christ alone. Not works, not in merits, or multiple gods. Only in Jesus Christ are we saved. This message runs counter to this world. Like the disciples, we will face trials and sorrows when we accept Jesus as Savior. All the more reason we need the Holy Spirit and one another. Life Groups and worship attendance are vital because not one of us drifts into spiritual maturity or will have strength to stand in the hour of trial if we fall away. We must remain connected to Jesus and his church, and the Holy Spirit helps us.

- We must choose daily to follow Christ and grow in grace. It's been said, *Disciples are not made in a day, but disciples are made daily*. In what ways are you growing in your faith?
- Baptism is a picture of dying to our sinful nature, and being raised to inherit a new nature with Christ's very presence *in us*. Read Romans 6:3-11. How would you talk to a friend seeking Christ? What is meant by being born again – made new like a baby?

Jesus said, "Yes, I came from the Father into the world, and now I will leave the world

and return to the Father” (v28). In the gospel of Luke, we read these words: “As the time drew near for him to ascend to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51). It is no wonder “as he came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city ahead, he began to weep. ‘How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes’” (Luke 19:41-42).

- Are you all in for Christ? ... or are you sitting-on-the-fence, indifferent, straying, hardened of heart due to some hurt, habit, or hang-up? Are you missing the way to peace with God? Today is a good day to lay it all before him and repent.
- Maybe there is an assignment ahead for you. What is your ‘Jerusalem’?

Because of the death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we have direct access to God the Father. Go before the Lord now. Praise him. Thank him for taking your place on the cross. For the gift of knowing him personally. Confess and repent of your sin. Ask him to forgive you, make you new, and then receive his forgiveness! Be honest about any struggles, troubles, or confusion. Ask him for grace and strength to stand. Thank him for the gift of his presence, the Holy Spirit.

Close by Reading Together:

Jesus was all alone on the cross ... so I would never be alone.

Jesus was stripped of his clothes ... so I could one day be clothed in righteousness.

Jesus was a man of sorrows ... so we could have abundant joy.

Jesus was despised ... so we could be accepted by the Father.

Jesus was beaten ... so we could be whole.

Jesus was whipped ... so we could be healed.

Jesus was thirsty ... so we could drink from grace and never thirst again.

Jesus was crowned with thorns ... so we could throw our crowns at his feet.

Jesus became sin ... so our sins could be forgiven.

Jesus died ... so we could live forever with the Father in Heaven.

One Year Bible Reading

July 26: 2 Chronicles 17:1-18:34, Romans 9:25-10:13, Psalm 20:1-9, Prov. 20:2-3
July 27: 2 Chronicles 19:1-20:37, Romans 10:14-11:12, Psalm 21:1-13, Prov. 20:4-6
July 28: 2 Chronicles 21:1-23:21, Romans 11:13-36, Psalm 22:1-18, Proverbs 20:7
July 29: 2 Chronicles 24:1-25:28, Romans 12:1-21, Psalm 22:19-31, Prov. 20:8-10
July 30: 2 Chronicles 26:1-28:27, Romans 13:1-14, Psalm 23:1-6, Proverbs 20:11
July 31: 2 Chronicles 29:1-36, Romans 14:1-23, Psalm 24:1-10, Proverbs 20:12
August 1: 2 Chronicles 30:1-31:21, Romans 15:1-22, Psalm 25:1-15, Prov. 20:13-15



Text: John 16

PLAIN TRUTH:

Jesus' way _____ to the Father was
through the _____ and our way to God is
through _____.

1. Jesus gives them the _____ so they can be
_____ about the _____.
2. Jesus had to _____ to the _____ so the
_____ could _____ us.

What does the Spirit do?

- A. The Spirit both _____ and _____.
- B. The Spirit _____ and _____.
- C. The Spirit _____ what is from _____.

3. Jesus grants both _____ access to the Father
and _____ from the Father.

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