

Session 5 Twelve Primary Themes in John 13-17

I. JESUS INTENTIONALLY SPOKE ON SPECIFIC THEMES TO PREPARE HIS DISCIPLES

- A. Initially, Jesus spoke John 13-17 to the leadership of His new Church to *prepare His disciples to thrive spiritually* in the face of the pressures they would encounter as new leaders in the kingdom.
- B. The main themes of John 13-17 are identified from the truths, promises, and warnings that Jesus emphasized at the Last Supper. They were for the benefit of the Church throughout history but have significant application and fulfillment in the end-times as Jesus' Bride is prepared for His return.
⁷“...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” (Rev. 19:7)
- C. I encourage you to read Jesus' words prayerfully in the 5 chapters in ***John 13-17*** together with what He said when He revealed Himself to John and the churches in the 5 chapters in ***Revelation 1-5***.
- D. Jesus highlighted various pressures that He spoke about two days earlier in Matthew 24 (Lk. 21). He clarified that in the end times these pressures would be more intense than any other time in history (Mt. 24:21). They include a betrayal culture, hatred, offense, deception, and persecutions that occur inside and outside of those identifying with the Church. It will include loved ones being imprisoned and martyred, the capture of Jerusalem, the betrayal of Israel by the Antichrist, etc.
⁹They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another...¹¹Many false prophets will...deceive many. ¹²And because lawlessness will abound...²¹There will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time. (Mt. 24:9-12, 21)

II. THEME #1—THE PURPOSE OF HIS MESSAGE: IMPART JOY AND PEACE UNTO LOVE

- A. Jesus' multifaceted message in John 13-17 was spoken to equip His disciples to walk in *joy* (15:11; 17:13), *not stumble* or fall away (16:1), and have *peace* (16:33); *thus, to love and serve* the Lord and others (13:15, 34; 14:15, 23; 15:12) even in the face of great pressures.
¹¹These things I have spoken...that My joy may remain in you...that you love one another... (Jn. 15:11-12)
¹³...these things I speak...that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. (Jn. 17:13)
³³These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. (Jn. 16:33)
¹These things I have spoken to you, that you should not...stumble [fall away; ESV]. (Jn. 16:1)
¹⁴I washed your feet...¹⁵I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you...³⁴...that you love one another, as I have loved you... (Jn. 13:14-15, 34)
- B. Joy is emphasized 7x in John 13-17 (15:11 [2x]; 16:20, 21, 22, 24; 17:13).
²⁰...your sorrow will be turned into joy. ²¹A woman, when she is in labor...but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born...²²your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. (Jn. 16:20-22)

III. THEME #2—UNION WITH GOD: HOW WE ARE TO RELATE TO GOD

- A. Jesus gave insight into how He related to the Father as a “man filled with the Spirit”—to provide a model for how believers are to relate to God and to one another and how to walk as overcomers.
- B. Jesus described how He related to the Father *as a man* (14:7-11), and how His disciples are to relate to the Father in a similar way by the Spirit (14:12-27), and then He applied it in John 15:1-12.
- C. Jesus taught that the Father lives in the Son and the Son lives in the Father (Jn. 10:38; 14:10-11, 20; 17:11, 21-23). This is not a doctrinal lesson about Jesus’ deity, but of His Spirit-filled humanity—as the model of how a believer is to relate best to the Lord in a deep way. John highlighted Jesus’ relationship to the Father (14:6-7, 9-11, 28; 15:10, 23-24; 16:15; 17:1-2, 4-5, 6, 8, 10, 21-26).
*¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works...
²⁰At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (Jn. 14:10, 20)*
- D. The gospel of John highlights at least 5 aspects of the mutual indwelling or mystical union of the Father and Jesus—Their mind (thoughts), heart (feelings), will (values/decisions), words (speech), and works. They think, feel, speak, decide, and act in ways that are in full unity with each Other.
- E. Jesus invited His people to participate in the intimacy shared in the mutual indwelling of the Father and Son (14:10, 20). They enjoy, celebrate, honor, and partner with each Other in all that They think, feel, say, and do. We begin to participate in this reality by **thanking God** for this and by **asking for more insight** into the way. As we do this, we posture ourselves to receive more.

IV. THEME #3—THE INDWELLING SPIRIT: 5 SAYINGS ABOUT THE HELPER (PARACLETE)

- A. Jesus’ answer to their crisis was to send “**the Helper**”—the Greek word for *Helper* is “**Paraclete.**” *Paraclete* is translated by some as “Helper,” or “Counsellor,” or “Comforter,” or “Advocate.” Jesus’ 5 passages about the Spirit as our Helper (14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-8, 13-14) are given in context to His other statements about the Spirit (1:32-33; 3:5, 34; 4:23-24; 7:37-39; 20:22-23).
- B. The Spirit teaches, renews, and inspires our mind and emotions. He makes known Jesus’ thoughts, words, and deeds and empowers us to express them. He both wills and works in us (Phil. 2:13).
- C. The first mention of the Spirit highlights Him as the One who helps us to love and obey Jesus and ministers the Father’s heart to us so we should not feel as helpless orphans in this hostile world.
¹⁵If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever ¹⁷the Spirit of truth...He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. (Jn. 14:15-18)
- D. The second mention of the Spirit highlights Him teaching and reminding us at key times of God’s truths and promises and how to apply them.
²⁶The Helper, the Holy Spirit...will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. (Jn. 14:26)

- E. The third mention of the Spirit highlights Him revealing more of Jesus to and through His people.
²⁶But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷And you also will bear witness... (Jn. 15:26-27)
- F. The fourth mention of the Spirit highlights Him convicting unbelievers as they spoke God's word. He convinces them of their sinfulness, the gift of righteousness, and that Satan is already defeated.
⁷...if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸When He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment... (Jn. 16:7-8)
- G. The fifth mention of the Spirit highlights Him guiding us into all truth, including things to come.
¹³When the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth...He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (Jn. 16:13-14)

V. THEME #4—GOD'S LOVE FOR GOD

- A. Jesus declared His love for the Father (14:31).
³¹...that the world may know that I love the Father...as [He]...gave Me commandment, so I do. (Jn. 14:31)
- B. Jesus spoke of the Father's love for Him (15:9; 17:23-24, 26).
²³...that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. (Jn. 17:23-24)
- C. Out of love for the Father, Jesus declared and continues to declare the Father's name (17:26) and gave the disciples the Father's words or message (14:10; 17:14).
²⁶And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (Jn. 17:26)

VI. THEME #5—GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE

- A. Jesus expressed His love in serving His disciples by washing their feet and encouraging their hearts (He mentioned loving them 7 times—13:1 [2x], 23, 34; 14:21; 15:9, 12).
¹...Jesus knew that His hour had come...having loved His own...He loved them to the end. (Jn. 13:1)
⁹"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (Jn. 15:9)
- B. The Father loves His people (14:21, 23; 16:27; 17:23).
²³...that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (Jn. 17:23)

VII. THEME #6—OUR LOVE FOR JESUS EXPRESSED BY KEEPING HIS COMMANDS

- A. Our love for Jesus is expressed by keeping His commands (14:15, 21, 24; 15:10, 12-14, 17; 17:26).

¹⁵If you love Me, keep My commandments...²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...²³If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word... (Jn. 14:15-23)

- B. To “keep” His commands speaks of obeying them, but more—in the Old Testament it means to treasure, watch over, and guard something as precious. The Lord watches over us (Ps. 91:11). This “keeping” parallels our meditating on the Word to engage in conversation with the Spirit.

¹¹For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. (Ps. 91:11)

¹²While I was...in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept. (Jn. 17:12)

VIII. THEME #7—LOVING PEOPLE AND THE CALL TO SERVANTHOOD

- A. Jesus called His people to love one another as He loves us (13:34; 15:12-13; 17:21). This includes loving our adversaries (15:17-18). Jesus loved His disciples as demonstrated by washing their feet, laying down His life, and engaging in what troubled them by investing time and effort to encourage them even while His greatest personal crisis including a cruel death was hours away.

¹⁴I washed your feet...¹⁵I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you...³⁴...that you love one another, as I have loved you... (Jn. 13:14-15, 34)

- B. This is the pinnacle of God’s supernatural work in the human heart. It is the ultimate human experience and is a primary aspect of pleasure, victory, and safety of God’s eternal kingdom.

¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another. ¹⁸If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. (Jn. 15:17-18)

- C. Jesus was talking to a group who would be tempted not to even like each other once He was not physically with them. They would not naturally be connected. Some were zealots with nationalistic agendas, some tax collectors, others were fishermen, and a few were followers of John the Baptist. They were not naturally friends, and they would not naturally stick together after His death.

- D. Before entering Jerusalem, they debated who was the greatest and who would sit at His right hand (Mk. 9:33; 10:38). Each of them forsook or denied Him (Mt. 26:31). This undoubtedly led to accusations against one another. The persecution against them would bring new temptations.

- E. We are to contend for each other’s destiny in God, personal honor, and family blessing. This is one definition of loyalty—it includes not verbalizing our frustrations over the deficiencies or failures of our family and friends to others, but we express “love that covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8).

⁸And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” (1 Pet. 4:8)

⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you... (Mt. 5:44)

IX. THEME #8—JESUS’ DEATH—TRUSTING GOD WHEN UNEXPECTED CRISES COME

- A. Jesus viewed death as going to the Father (Jn. 13:1, 3; 14:12, 28; 15:26; 16:5, 10; 16, 28; 17:11, 13)
¹...Jesus knew...that He should depart from this world to the Father...³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He...was going to God... (Jn. 13:1, 3)
²⁸You have heard Me say to you, “I am going away and coming back to you.” If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, “I am going to the Father” ... (Jn. 14:28)
- B. After Jesus’ death, the disciples were to trust in God in the face of this totally unexpected crisis of Jesus being suddenly taken from them in death, the crisis of Jesus being gone from them after 3½ years of being daily in His presence and rejoicing in His light. His sudden absence forced them to question their faith and change the way they related to Him. This theme includes other shocking and painful aspects of God’s plan that are not understood ahead of time because the Lord wants us to trust His leadership in unexpected pains.

X. THEME #9 —PRAYER (WORDS) RELEASINGS GOD’S POWER, PROVISION, & PRESENCE

- A. Jesus emphasized the effectiveness of “Spirit-led prayer” 5 times (14:13, 14; 15:7; 16:23-24).
¹²...he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. (Jn. 14:12-14)
- B. Access to God through Spirit-led prayer includes the assurance of God supplying our needs.
²³“...I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you... (Jn. 16:23)
¹⁹My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:19)
- C. To be “in” the Father or the Son includes being in agreement with what He thinks, feels, and says. This lifestyle is not out of reach because Jesus sent a divine Helper to us (14:16, 26).
- D. We must see the significance of speaking words. Our words are in His heart, and His words are in our heart. Our active intimacy and union with Jesus grow by speaking words (15:7)—the Christian life is an ongoing dialogue with a Person. Jesus’ words are *spirit and life* (Jn. 6:63), and His Word is *living and active* (Heb. 4:12). Over time, what He thinks, feels, and says gradually fills our hearts.
⁷If...My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. (Jn. 15:7)
- E. I see 5 parts of the “intimacy process” with God—they overlap and flow together, yet it begins with *knowing* the truth mentally (Jn. 8:32). The 5 parts are *knowledge, conversation, illumination, inspiration*, and then *transformation* which are deeply satisfying, pleasurable, and unifying.
- F. Hosea taught that returning to the Lord includes bringing words to speak to Him (Hos. 14:1-3).
¹O Israel, return to the LORD...²Take words with you, and return to the LORD. (Hos. 14:1-2)
- G. It is a common error to try to live the Christian life without Christ—*without conversation with Him.*

XI. THEME #10—BETRAYAL AND FAILURE AND HOW JESUS RESPONDS TO THEM

- A. This theme is how Jesus treats those who betray and fail Him—both enemies and sincere believers, e.g., the crisis of the pain of betrayal by a trusted friend and team member—Judas (13:2, 11, 18, 21-30; 17:12). Judas’ betrayal of Jesus, leading to His death, was also a betrayal of the eleven.
- ²And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas...to betray Him ...¹¹He knew who would betray Him...¹⁸“I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’” (Jn. 13:2, 11, 18)*
- ⁵⁰But Jesus said to him [Judas], “Friend, why have you come?” (Mt. 26:50)*
- B. The crisis of denying Jesus that very night was one of their greatest personal failures (13:38; 16:33).
- ³⁸Jesus answered him [Peter], “...the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.” (Jn. 13:38)*
- ³²...the hour...has now come, that you will be scattered...and will leave Me alone. (Jn. 16:33)*
- ⁸Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He...let these go their way...” (Jn. 18:8)*

XII. THEME #11—PERSECUTION

- A. Jesus told the disciples that they would be persecuted (Jn. 15:18-16:4).
- ¹⁸If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you...²⁰If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you...²⁵“They hated Me without a cause.” (Jn. 15:18-25)*
- B. Jesus’ words gave them courage to be faithful to Him until the end.
- ¹These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble [fall away].*
²They will put you out of the synagogues...[and] whoever kills you... (Jn. 16:1-2)

XIII. THEME #12—THE GLORY THAT GOD GAVE JESUS IS GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE

- A. The glory the Father has given to Jesus is also given in part to His people (Jn. 17:5, 22, 24).
- ⁵...Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had...before the world was ...²²The glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one as We are one...*
²⁴Father, I desire that they...may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. (Jn. 17:5, 22, 24)
- B. There are many facets and expressions of God’s glory that Scripture mentions.
1. Talk to the Father about the glory He possesses.
 2. Talk to the Father about the glory that He gave to Jesus before and after His earthly life.
 3. Talk to the Father about the glory that Jesus gives to His people.
- C. Talk to the Lord about each area—*thank Him for each area and ask Him to show you more.*