

Jesus - the true Vine

John 15 vs 1-17

The four questions from the disciples in chapters 13 and 14 ended with a question about how the world will come to see God. Today we are going to discover our part in the spreading of God's word.

Time for some research! Let's look back 1,000 years before Jesus to Psalm 80.



Psalm 80 vs 8-11:

⁸ You transplanted a vine from Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. ⁹ You cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land.

¹⁰ The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches. ¹¹ Its branches reached as far as the Sea, its shoots as far as the River.'

God brought His people out of Egypt to a promised land. His 'vine' was so fruitful it covered the entire land from the mountains to the sea.



Psalm 80 vs 14-19:

¹⁴ Return to us, God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine, ¹⁵ the root your right hand has planted, the son you have raised up for yourself. ¹⁶ Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire; at your rebuke your people perish. ¹⁷ Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself. ¹⁸ Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. ¹⁹ Restore us, LORD God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.'

But the people rejected God and the vine was cut down. Now the Son of Man (Jesus) is to be sent (v 17) so that we might be saved (v 19).



300 years after the psalm was written, Isaiah prophesied:

Isaiah chapter 5 vs 3,4,7:

³ Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.
⁴ What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?
⁷ The vineyard of the LoRD Almighty is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.'

What does God want from His vine/vineyard?

Good 'fruit' ... **v 4** but Israel did not deliver. **v 7**

So where will that fruit come from?

Remember Psalm 80 v 17 – the Son of Man – Jesus!

'Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself.'

Through Jesus, what will the result be?

Worldwide fruit. Isaiah had already prophesied:

● 'Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit.' **Isaiah chapter 27 v 6b**

Being joined to the Vine

Let's look at John 15 vs 1-3

Chapter 15

¹ 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

What is Jesus claiming by saying: 'I am the true vine'?

- He is claiming to be *the* key to all the Old Testament promises which said that God would have a 'fruitful' people who bring glory to Him!
- He is all that Israel never managed to be.

What is the severe warning in verse 2?

If we bear no fruit we will be cut off.

What is the promise for God's people who are joined to Him?

Pruning... Just as a gardener prunes a bush to strengthen it, so God prunes His 'vine' so that it brings more fruit.

How are we joined to God in the vine?

Through His word. **v 3**

And God's pruning comes the same way!

The fruit of the vine:

⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

If we separate ourselves from God, what does it lead to?

No fruit. **▼ 4**

Can we be fruitful on our own?

No! Verse 5 is really clear. We need to live in Jesus and He in us.

If we ignore this, what is the warning?

We face God's judgement. **▼ 6**

In contrast to the warning – what a promise in verse 7!

Is God writing us a blank cheque?

No! It says, '**if you remain in me and my words...**' This means – we can ask for anything that is in line with His word. **▼ 7**

Why?

Because this is how God the Father is gloried. **▼ 8**

How does this compare with the words of Psalm 80?

- the language of the vine growing tall – spreading wide
- a worldwide church through the teaching of Jesus' word
- acceptance to His word always leads to growth

...but how has the Father loved the Son?

The answer was given to us by Jesus back in John 5 v 20:

- 'For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.'

Jesus is explaining: God the Father loved God the Son by showing the Son all that He (the Father) is doing.

How then has Jesus (God the Son) loved us?

- by showing us the love of the Father
- by showing Himself to us
- by showing us the way to the Father

What does Jesus command His followers to do?

'remain in my love'. v 9
'love each other'. v 12

But how do we do this?

By keeping His commandments!
v 10

If we do this, what happens?

We'll be full of joy! Being right with our creator is the answer to a full life!

We don't keep Jesus' commandments to make us right with Him (we could never achieve that). Instead, we keep them because He has loved us first, and now, as His loving followers, we want to do as He commands.

⁹ 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

¹² My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

Look how often love is mentioned! Jesus begins in verse 9 by speaking about His love and His Father's love:

How do we do this?

With self-less, sacrificial love.

- Jesus will show us His love later, when He lays down His life for us. Such self-less love is what He calls us to show each other.

13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit - fruit that will last - and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

17 This is my command: love each other.

As we do so, what are the benefits?

- We'll be friends with Jesus, the Creator! v 14
- We are part of a loving community of God's family. v 15

So the 'much fruit' v 8 comes as we make Jesus known - so His family grows.

In this is true and complete joy!

- Expressed differently: 'I chose you so that you should go and share this good news with others!'
- A loving community that loves others and shares the good news about Jesus.

So... in summary:

- No one can 'do' God on their own!
- It means being in a church family - joining the 'vine'!
- Where we can 'remain in God's love', by hearing His word and acting on it by sharing it!

And how can we do that?

It might be a good time to stop and talk about how you can find a church near to you, that will help teach you more about what the Bible says.

John 15 vs 1-17

¹ 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain

in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. ⁹ 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit - fruit that will last - and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: love each other.

What's next?

We'll see how others react if we live like this.

What to expect

John 15 v 18 - 16 v 4

This section of John's Gospel is about life as a disciple of Jesus after his death and resurrection...

Last time we saw that belonging to Jesus makes us part of the true vine - the real people of God. Being part of Jesus' people means:

- Loving like Him, praying like Him, having joy like Him and bearing 'fruit' for Him in the world
- The 'fruit' we bear is the fruit of sacrificial love for God and His people.
- Like the love of the Father and the Son, those who love like this will reach out to others.

As we turn the pages we shall discover how the world will respond to us as God's people.

Today we have four parts...



Part 1: The world hates Jesus' disciples...

¹⁸ 'If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.'

¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

²⁰ Remember what I told you: "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

²¹ They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.

What is surprising in these verses?

The world will hate us!

Why shouldn't this surprise us?

Because the world hated Jesus first! **vs 18,20**

Why does the world hate us?

Because:

- We have been chosen out of the world, by Jesus. **v 19**
- We 'do not belong to the world'. **v 19**
- The world does not know the Father. **v 21**

What does this tell us about the world?

The world is essentially conformist – people go along with what the majority say and do.

We see this in what is socially acceptable i.e. fashion, trends and opinions. In short – we think someone is strange if they don't go with the flow!

Jesus says the world will hate us because living selfless, loving lives shows up the selfish sin of the world.

Part 2: The world is guilty!

²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.

²³ Whoever hates me hates my Father as well.

²⁴ If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.

²⁵ But this is to fulfil what is written in their Law: "They hated me without reason."

How does this section expose the world's guilt?

Jesus has spoken to them but they won't listen! **v 22a**

Where does this leave them?

- They have no excuse. **v 22b**
- They are rejecting the Son of God – with hate. **v 23**
- In hating Jesus, the world shows that it hates God the Father. **v 23**

Stop and think...

Turning our backs to God is not something to be done lightly. It is very serious!

The world is guilty because Jesus has done the work of God on earth – the evidence is all there!

Verse 24 leaves us with no excuse. Our response to what Jesus has done is our response to God.

Have we a valid reason to hate Jesus?

No! **v 25**

- Jesus here fulfils another prophecy from 1,000 years before. **Psalm 69 v 4a:** 'Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head.' Jesus is placing his Jewish opponents firmly in 'the world'.
- When they reject his words, they are rejecting their long-awaited King – the Messiah!

Part 3: The truth cannot be stopped!

How do these verses show us that God's truth will continue to be presented even to the world that hates Him?

²⁶ 'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father - the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father - he will testify about me.

²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

In the face of such opposition – the Advocate/helper (known as the Holy Spirit) comes...

- He is sent by Jesus from the Father.
- He tells the truth about Jesus.

• The eleven Apostles are able to spread the truth about Jesus because the Spirit is with them and because they have been with Jesus from the beginning.

Part 4: Be prepared...

Chapter 16

1 'All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.

2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God.

3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

4 I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you ...

Why has Jesus said all this?

So that we won't be taken by surprise and stop following Him.

What is the surprise in verses 2,3?

The strongest opposition will often come from the religious people! They will even try to kill Christians!

Examples:
• Regular reports of hatred towards Christians across the world.
• A new Christian finding that their local church does not want to study and obey God's word.
• Established churches not wanting to do what the Bible says e.g. On marriage/sexuality.

Why will people hate Jesus' followers?

Why is Jesus telling the Apostles this?

- Because when He was with His Apostles, He was there to take the 'heat'...
• But now He is leaving, they will face the opposition...
• So they must be prepared.

John 15 v 18 - 16 v 4

¹⁸ 'If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember what I told you: "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. ²¹ They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Whoever hates me hates my Father as well. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But this is to fulfil what is written in their Law: "They hated me without reason." ²⁶ 'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father - the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father - he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. ¹ 'All this I have told you so that you will not fall away. ² They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. ³ They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴ I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you ...

Next...

This all sounds very bleak...
Next time we see a huge
encouragement for when Jesus
has gone back to heaven...

The Holy Spirit's work in the world...

John 16 vs 5-15

From chapter 15 to chapter 17 we are being taught what it means to have life in the period after Jesus' death and resurrection, and before He returns.

In the last two notes we have seen...

- Jesus' promise that those who listen and keep His words will be part of the true 'fruit-bearing vine' of God - i.e. part of His people who will be truly effective in the world; and...
- Jesus explains that the world will hate those who live and speak for Him because the world hates the Father and the Son. But that the eleven disciples will nevertheless be Jesus' witnesses (Apostles) in the world because God still wants to reach the world with the truth of His word.

In today's verses Jesus promises that His going to the Father (i.e. going to the cross) will provide real help... He will send the Spirit.

We will see that the Spirit has two areas of work that are closely related:

- 1) vs 5-11: the Spirit's work in the world
- 2) vs 12-15: the Spirit's work in the Apostles

⁵ but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, "Where are you going?"

⁶ Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things.

Part 1: The Spirit's work in the world: to convict

● Jesus tells the Apostles He is going to His Father. ▾ 5

Why is it to their advantage that Jesus goes?

'The Advocate' (helper) will come – only when Jesus has gone ▾ 7

What will the Advocate do?

He will prove the world wrong about: sin... righteousness... judgement
Let's look at each of these words in turn and see what they mean.

⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:

⁹ about sin, because people do not believe in me;

¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;

¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

Prove the world to be in the wrong

What does this mean?

- The Spirit is showing/exposing how wrong the world is. Remember John 3 v 20: 'Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.'
- Verse 8 carries the sense of shaming the world and convincing it of its own guilt – and so calling everyone to repentance.
- The Spirit's work is to expose people of their sin & guilt.
- Once Jesus has gone to His Father, He will send His Spirit and His Spirit will carry on the work Jesus was doing in the world.
- It is important to note that this is the unique and only work of God's Holy Spirit in the non-Christian.

Now let's move to the next word, 'sin':

Sin

'... about sin, because people do not believe in me;'
verse 9

What have we learned about 'sin' in John's Gospel?

John 5 v 23: '... Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.'

In John 5 we saw that there is therefore a difference between **sins** and **sin!**

Sin is:

- A refusal to recognize that Jesus is God, and...
- A rejection of Jesus being our King and therefore in charge of our lives.

Sins are:

- The things we **do**, living with ourselves in charge, instead of Jesus.



To illustrate this – two children had chickenpox: one child was covered in spots... and the other had just two spots!

Question: Which child had chickenpox?!

Answer: **Both!**

It's the same with sin. You can have two people living their life their way instead of Jesus being in charge. One does lots of sinful things and another only a few... **but both are equally guilty of sin!**

When Jesus was on earth, His authority to rule was clear as He convicted people of their sin and sins.

When Jesus has gone to the Father, the Spirit will continue this work.

- The Spirit makes me realize I am a sinner.
- How? – because I do not believe in Jesus. **v 9**



Now let's move to the next word, 'righteousness':

Righteousness

What have we learned about 'righteousness' before in John's Gospel?

- When Jesus was on earth, He showed what true righteousness is. He lived a perfect life, without sin.
- In His presence we would feel constantly ashamed!

The prophet Isaiah describes our 'good deeds' as being like 'filthy rags' before God:

'... all our righteous acts are like filthy rags ...'

Isaiah 64 v 6

- When Jesus has gone, the Spirit will convict the world of a lack of righteousness – and therefore drive the world to seek forgiveness.

Now let's move to the last word, 'judgement':

Judgement

What have we learned about 'judgement' in John's Gospel?

In **John chapter 12 vs 31-32** Jesus had said:

'Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.'

- Jesus taught that the devil's evil work would be exposed and defeated through His death on the cross.
- The cross is a **victory** of God's love and goodness over evil.
- At the cross Jesus takes on Himself all of God's just judgement and anger at our sin.
- Jesus' resurrection shows that death has been defeated and that the devil is a beaten enemy. The price has been paid in full!
- The Spirit will come and convict the world of the coming judgement!
- If God's greatest enemy has been exposed and defeated, then there is no hope for any who stand against Jesus!! Judgement **will** definitely come!

As we have read God's word, have you experienced the work of God the Holy Spirit showing up your sin?

This is the Spirit's work in the world... now for His work in the Apostles: →

Part 2: The Spirit's work in the Apostles

Once again, Jesus highlights His approaching departure. Remember, Jesus is speaking here specifically to His eleven chosen Apostles.

12 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into **all the truth**. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.'

What does Jesus promise that the Spirit will do for His Apostles?

- Guide them into all the truth. **v 13**
- This is truth from Jesus. **v 13**
- Truth that is yet to come. **v 13**
- In doing this, He will glorify Jesus. **v 14**

How?

- Because it is from Jesus that He will receive this truth.

Why is this so important?

Because the truth belongs to God and Jesus has been given it all.

And now the Spirit will lead the Apostles into all that truth!

The Spirit will take what Jesus has revealed and enable the Apostles to 'get it' so that they are in a position to be witnesses.

The Apostles are the ones who were responsible for the writing of the New Testament.



What does this passage say about the accuracy, completeness and authority of what they wrote?

It is:

- From Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.
- True - we can trust them!
- Complete - we do not need to add to them!
- From God - All truth - past, present and future.

What confidence does this give you as you read the New Testament?

You can trust and believe it!

Where would you go if you want to know what God has to say to you today?

Simply to His word - the Bible.

Now that Jesus has gone - how should we expect the relationship with Him to continue?

- By the Holy Spirit...
- Through the Apostles words... in the Bible!

Beware!

There are developments within the church where people have added to the Bible or think that the Bible is not sufficient.

Sometimes people suggest that we need new 'words' from the Spirit if we are going to know God personally today.

This is wrong!



God has given all He has to say to Jesus.



Jesus has led His Apostles into all His truth by the work of His Spirit.

We now have all God wants us to know in His word - the Bible.

So - back to the beginning - Jesus said his death was to their advantage because the Spirit would come and work in:

- 1) The World - to convict us of our sin, show Jesus' righteousness and why we deserve judgement...
- 2) The Apostles - to completely reveal the truth of God's word.

John 16 vs 5-15

⁵ but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, "Where are you going?" ⁶ Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. ⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because people do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. ¹² 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.'

Next time...

Sorrow... is to be followed by
great joy!

Deep joy!

John 16 vs 16-33

The story so far...

Since chapter 13, Jesus has been teaching His Apostles how they are to live for Him in faith, as they wait for His return.

He has answered four questions about what life will be like when He is physically absent. Life will come through His Holy Spirit who will reveal Jesus to His people, through His word.

Jesus has explained that His disciples are the true people of God connected to the true vine (Him).

He has spoken of the world's hostility. They shouldn't be surprised when the world hates them: **'If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first'** ... and has taught them that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of its sin, and fully and finally reveal all the truth about Jesus to them.

Now Jesus begins to spell out the details of what our relationship with Him will look like once He is gone. →

¹⁶ Jesus went on to say, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.’

¹⁷ At this, some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean by saying, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,” and “Because I am going to the Father”?’

¹⁸ They kept asking, ‘What does he mean by “a little while”? We don’t understand what he is saying.’

¹⁹ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, ‘Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me”?’

- In these verses John appears to record Jesus and His Apostles saying the same thing over and over again!

What is the phrase John records seven times?

‘A little while’.

Why is John being so repetitive?

It seems that the Apostles are still very confused, and Jesus’ death and resurrection are just hours away... so Jesus spells it out yet again.

- He’ll be gone – out of sight.
- And then He’ll be seen again.

²⁰ Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.

²² So with you: now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

- Verses 20 - 33 shed more light on what Jesus is talking about. The verses fall into three sections:

Part 1: Tears and joy at Jesus' death and resurrection

What is the cause of such grief and joy?

- His death brings grief.
- His resurrection brings joy.

Why can this joy never be taken away?

Our joy comes from Jesus being alive – and He lives forever!

How does verse 21 help us understand the situation?

His disciples will have great pain at His crucifixion. Their pain will be short-lived. His death on the cross has a purpose.

Once Jesus has risen their joy will be incredible and no one can take it away!

Part 2: Joy at a new relationship with the Father

²³ In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

²⁵ 'Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father.

²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.'

What brings our joy in these verses?

- Relationship – 'Ask and you will receive'. **v 24**
- Revelation – '... tell you plainly about the Father.' **v 25**
- Relationship again: 'ask [the Father] in my name.' **v 26**

What is new about our relationship with God in these verses?

Through the finished work of Jesus, dying on the cross, we have direct access to God the Father.

How is this relationship possible?

Following His death and resurrection, Jesus will clearly spell out everything He has been doing.

What is the foundation for this new relationship?

Love! **v 27**

Part 3: Pain and suffering / peace and victory

²⁹ Then Jesus' disciples said, 'Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech.'

³⁰ Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.'

³¹ 'Do you now believe?' Jesus replied.

³² 'A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.'

³³ 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.'

What will happen to the disciples?

- In Jesus – they will have 'peace'.
v 33
- In the world – they will have 'trouble'. v 33

But why does Jesus say they can 'take heart'?

He has overcome the world.

In summary:

Jesus says his death is going to bring:

vs 20-22 – Grief and joy

vs 23-28 – Revelation and relationship

vs 29-33 – Trouble and peace

From these verses – how would you describe the normal Christian experience?

It doesn't mean everything will be rosy. In fact, Jesus says the Christian life will bring trouble. But, in the middle of that, the Christian can have great peace and joy from God, because Jesus has 'overcome the world'.

Where does this joy and peace come from?

The relationship with God the Father, through God the Spirit, comes as a result of Jesus' death and resurrection.

What, then, should we say in the following situations?

- Someone says: 'The normal Christian experience is health, wealth and success.'

No! - 'In this world you will have trouble.' v 33

- Someone says: 'I feel no joy and peace.'

Joy and peace come through our personal relationship with God and our intimate prayer to Him as we respond to His word.

- Someone says: 'It seems like Bible Christians have no vibrant Christian experience. It's all head knowledge and book work!'

No! Joy and peace are the normal Christian experience. They come through the Spirit as we come to Jesus in His word.

John 16 vs 16-33

¹⁶ Jesus went on to say, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.'
¹⁷ At this, some of his disciples said to one another, 'What does he mean by saying, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me," and "Because I am going to the Father"?' ¹⁸ They kept asking, 'What does he mean by "a little while"? We don't understand what he is saying.'
¹⁹ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, 'Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me"?' ²⁰ Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.
²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. ²² So with you: now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. ²³ In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. ²⁵ 'Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell

you plainly about my Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.' ²⁹ Then Jesus' disciples said, 'Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. ³⁰ Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.' ³¹ 'Do you now believe?' Jesus replied. ³² 'A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. ³³ 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.'

Next time...

What Jesus wants...

Jesus Prays...

John 17 vs 1-26

Jesus finishes this intimate time with His Apostles by praying for Himself and the church. The prayer is prayed minutes before His arrest and trial, so it's intense and will need some unpacking.

This prayer summarizes Jesus' teaching in chapters 13-17. It spells out His greatest concerns:

- His mission in the world. (vs 1-5)
- What He wants for His Apostles. (vs 6-19)
- What He wants for His Church. (vs 20-26)

Jesus' mission in the world

Chapter 17

¹ After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.'

² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

³ Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

What does Jesus ask for in verses 1 and 5?

That God might glorify the Son.

Why is God going to glorify the Son?

So that the Son might glorify God.

How will this happen?

By Jesus finishing the work that God the Father gave Him to do **vs 2,5**

What was this work?

To give eternal life, so that they may know God **v 3**

So this isn't about floating on a cloud in heaven, but a personal relationship with our creator, starting now!



Summary:

- The Father glorifying the Son...
- because the Son has finished the work He was given
- to bring us into relationship with God...
- which is 'eternal life'

At what unexpected place do we see the Father's glory?

Jesus' death on the cross.

How can this be?

Because at the cross Jesus achieves the great work of bringing us (sinful people) into relationship with (a perfect) God.

Why is this such a surprise?!

We don't understand the depth and seriousness of our sin... and just what a huge thing it is for Jesus to deal with.

Instead we would expect God to be glorified by dazzling displays of power or spectacular works of wisdom!

What Jesus wants for His Apostles

- 6 'I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.
- 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.
- 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.
- 9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.
- 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

Jesus is talking to God the Father about the Apostles.

He gives assurance that they are the 'real deal' – they are true believers of Jesus who will be able to record the truth He has revealed.

How do we know this?

- God gave them to Jesus – they've kept God's word! **v 6**
- They accepted Jesus as the Son of God. **v 8**
- They belong to both Jesus and God... and bring glory to Jesus. **vs 9,10**

¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except ^{*}the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ 'I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.'

Here we read that Jesus prays for the Apostles' protection - that they may keep believing in Him.

Why is it so important that God not only chose the Apostles and protected them, but also recognized them as authentic believers?

They go on to found the church - God's people - who glorify God.

* Verse 12 'the one doomed to destruction' - this is Judas, who has already gone out to betray Jesus.

14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Why is Jesus praying like this for them?

Because He is about to go back to heaven.

- He wants God to protect them. v 11
- He wants them to remain in relationship with Him, full of His joy. v 13
- He knows the world will be against them. v 14
- He wants them protected from the devil. v 15
- He wants them to remain true to Jesus, through His word. v 17
- He wants them to take the truth to the whole world. v 18

In summary, Jesus' prayer provides us with real confidence as we look at Jesus' words of truth, given by the Apostles – on which the church is founded.

What Jesus wants for his church

Who is Jesus talking
about in v 20?

Every believer over all time.

What is His prayer
for us in v 21?

That they believe in, and are united by, the Apostles' words – this is called the New Testament teaching about Jesus.

²⁰ 'My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Why is the church so often seen to be dis-united?

- Because churches are often not teaching Jesus word, the Bible.
- Jesus is passionate about Christian unity – and prays for it. This will only come as we submit to the teaching of His word, as we find it in the New Testament.

So then, how does disunity come about?

- Through people following their own ideas.
- By people putting other ideas ahead of obedience to the words of Jesus.
- By church leaders falsely teaching away from the Bible.

What things, other than the words of Jesus and the Apostles, do people listen to?

- Church traditions. ('We've always done it like this!')
- My own ideas. ('I don't like to think of God like that!')
- Experience. ('It doesn't feel right.')

Why does Jesus
want unity?

'... so that the world may believe ...' **v 21**

²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one -

²³ I in them and you in me - so that they may be brought to **complete unity**. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.'

²⁵ 'Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.'

²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.'

What has God (Father and Son) given?

'the glory', which is the word and work of Jesus. **v 22**

What does this produce?

Complete unity.

What is the goal of that unity?

Certainty of who Jesus is. **v 23**

What does Jesus pray for His disciples in v 24?

He wants them to see it through to the end and to be with Him in heaven.

How does Jesus finish His prayer to God?

With this summary:

The world does not know God – but it does know that Jesus has been sent by God. **v 25**

Jesus has made God known and will continue to do so, so that God's love might be clear to see in the lives of Jesus' followers. **v 26**

Summary:

What does Jesus pray for?

- Jesus to be glorified through his work on the cross that will bring eternal life (a relationship with God).
- His chosen Apostles are to be protected so that they might teach his word and start the church.
- That we might believe his word and be united by it.
- And as we are united in this way... the world may believe, and come to receive eternal life.

John 17 vs 1-26

¹ After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. ⁶ 'I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am

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the Word

one to one

The Word One to One

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