

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XXXVIII: Trusting In Christ For His Gracious Edification Of True Believers, John 14-17

I. Trusting In Christ For His Word On Joy When His Disciples Were Still Too Immature To Apply It (John 16:16-33)

I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel claims that Jesus' disciples had received of His fullness "grace for grace" (KJV), the "constant reception of one evidence of God's grace replacing another," John 1:16; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 273.
- B. This truth is clarified in Christ's John 16:16-33 edifying work to inform His disciples on living joyfully amid a troubling world even when they were not yet mature enough to apply it in their walk (as follows):

II. Trusting In Christ For His Word On Joy When His Disciples Were Still Too Immature To Apply It.

- A. At John 16:16, Jesus spoke figuratively about His coming death, resurrection and ascension to the Father since His disciples were not able to bear a clear description of these facts, cf. John 16:12 with Matthew 16:21-23.
- B. Yet, from statements He made earlier in John 13:19 and 14:26, we know such teaching was given **before** the cross so that **afterward** His disciples would **better APPRECIATE and so HEED His EDIFYING insight!**
- C. Thus, Jesus' figurative speech, not being understood by the disciples, raised questions for them, John 16:17-18.
- D. Christ knew of their questions (John 16:19), so He added that they would grieve while the world rejoiced (John 16:20a,b), but their sorrow would be turned into joy, John 16:20c. He was alluding to their grief at His death and their joy at His resurrection when they would value His redemptive work on the cross, *Ibid.*, p. 329.
- E. To illustrate, Jesus likened the disciples' coming experience to a woman experiencing child birth: in labor she grieves, but upon delivering her child, she forgets her anguish and rejoices in her child's birth, John 16:21-22.
- F. Christ added that one day His disciples would ask Him for no explanations as they would understand it all, and that they should then ask the Father in prayer for anything and He would give it to them, John 16:23.
- G. Up to now, they had asked for nothing, so Jesus directed them to ask that their joy might be full, John 16:24.
- H. Realizing His disciples still did not comprehend the meaning of His figurative statements, Jesus added that the time would come when He would no longer communicate to them in figurative language, but speak plainly to them, that when they prayed to the Father in Jesus' name He would not need to pray to the Father in their behalf, but that the Father, Who also loved them since they had loved Jesus and believed He had come from Him, would thus Himself directly answer their prayer requests, John 16:25-27.
- I. Jesus again figuratively summed up His entire ministry, claiming He had come forth from the Father [in His incarnation], He had thus come into the world [in His humiliation at the cross] and would go to the Father again [in His resurrection, ascension and exaltation], John 16:28; *Ibid.*, p. 330.
- J. Thinking they finally understood Jesus' figurative language, the disciples said He was now speaking plainly to them, that they were thus sure that He knew all things and needed not that any man ask him, that by this they knew He had come forth from God, John 16:29-30.
- K. Jesus replied, "Do you now believe?" (John 16:31; *Ibid.*) Though they believed in Jesus, He knew their faith was weak and would not be strong until after His death and resurrection, and He predicted that soon every one of them would scatter from following Him due to their weak faith and dread of His cross, John 16:31-32a.
- L. Nevertheless, Jesus would not be negatively affected by their scattering, for He knew the Father was with Him and would not leave Him (John 16:32b). Jesus clarified that His inner spiritual nurture amid external trouble would one day be His disciple's experience, and he clarified that He had spoken these things to them that they might have peace in Him though experiencing tribulation in the world. They did not yet know how to have such peace and joy, so He was telling them beforehand of the value of spiritual union with Him that would provide the nurture of the inner man that was needed in facing trouble from a hostile, sinful world, John 16:33.

Lesson: *Jesus spoke figuratively of the peace and joy His disciples would have in a hostile world before they were able to bear the details involved in order to edify them when they DID understand so they might then know His joy.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 20:31. (2) If troubled by the hostile world around us, know that God wants us to find HIS peace and joy AMID life in this hostile world as Jesus knew in facing the cross that we might be real victors in Him. (3) If teaching immature Christians these truths, may we realize they may not even understand the truth we give, yet may we give it anyway that WHEN they through trials come to understand it, they will better APPRECIATE and so HEED God's Word to know His peace with joy in the world!*