**Bethel Christian Fellowship**

**Fair Lawn, NJ**

**The Farewell Discourse of Jesus**

**“A Bird’s-Eye View”**

**John 13:1-16:33**

**August 11, 2024**

When we turn to the thirteenth chapter of John’s gospel, the long public ministry of Jesus has ended. The last two paragraphs of the twelfth chapter are transitional (vv. 37-50), shifting our attention to the few brief hours of His private ministry with His inner circle of disciples.

This ministry begins in the Upper Room (13:1-14:21) and continues as they make their way to the Garden of Gethsemane (15:1-16:33). Everything about this discourse is designed to *prepare these* *men for His departure* which will begin within the next twenty-four hours. Jesus is explaining the significance of His death and exaltation, and role of the promised Holy Spirit whom He will send through the Father to all believers after His exaltation.

Given this understanding, these chapters fall into two natural divisions: (a) the Lord’s ministry to the disciples in the Upper Room (13:1-14:31); and (b) the Lord’s ministry to the disciples on the way to the Garden (15:1-16:33).

**I. The Preparation of the Disciples in the Upper Room (13:1-14:21)**

**A. Jesus washes the disciples’ feet (13:1-17).** This was a lesson in humility, designed to illustrate the principle of selfless service that was to be exemplified in the life of His followers. It was also designed to rebuke the disciples, as they were quarrelling over who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Luke 22:24). Jesus’ answer was, “*For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves*” (Luke 22:27).

**B. Jesus Predicts His Betrayal and Dismisses the Betrayer (13:18-30).**  Judas’ departure puts “the machinery of Jesus’ arrest, trial, and execution into motion” (D. A. Carson).

**C. Jesus delivers the Upper Room Discourse (13:31-14:31).** This section contains the initial part of the farewell discourse, which was probably spoken just before they concluded the Passover meal. It consists of Jesus’ teaching, interrupted at intervals by the questions of His disciples and His replies to them (the original “Q & A”).

1. Jesus announces His departure and gives them a new commandment (13:31-35). The permanent badge of their discipleship and the foundation of their unity is: “*Love one another, even as I have loved you*.”

2. Jesus answers Peter’s question (13:36-38).

3. Jesus comforts His disciples (14:1-4).

4. Jesus answers Thomas’ question (14:5-7).

5. Jesus answers Philip’s question (14:8-11).

6. Jesus resumes His discourse and gives the *first* promise of the coming Holy Spirit (14:12-21). “*The Spirit remains with you and will be in you*” (v. 17).

7. Jesus answers the question of Judas, not Iscariot (14:22-24).

8. Jesus completes the Discourse and gives the *second* promise of the coming Holy Spirit (14:25-31). “*The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name . . . will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I said to you*” (vv. 25-26).

**II. The Preparation of the Disciples on the Way to the Garden (15:1-16:33).**

**A. The relationship of believers to Christ**: “*I am the vine; you are the branches*” (15:1-11).

B. **The relationship of believers to each other**: “*Love one another as I have loved you*” (15:12-17).

**C. The relationship of believers to the world**: “*If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first*” (15:18-25).

**D. The double witness of the Holy Spirit and the disciples to the world (15:26-27).**

**E. The warning about the world’s persecution of believers (16:1-4).**

**F. The ministry of the coming Holy Spirit to the world (16:5-11) and to believers (16:12-15)**

**G. The disciples’ sorrow will turn to everlasting joy (16:16-24).**

**H. The final summary of the discourse (16:25-33)**: “*In this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world*” (v. 33). Jesus affirms His final victory – victory over the forces of evil through His sacrificial death, resurrection, and exaltation. There *is* “Victory in Jesus.”

*O victory in Jesus, my Savior forever,*

*He sought me and bought me*

*With His redeeming blood;*

*He loved me ‘ere I knew Him,*

*And all my love is due Him.*

*He plunged me to victory*

*Beneath the cleansing flood.*

(Eugene M. Barlett)