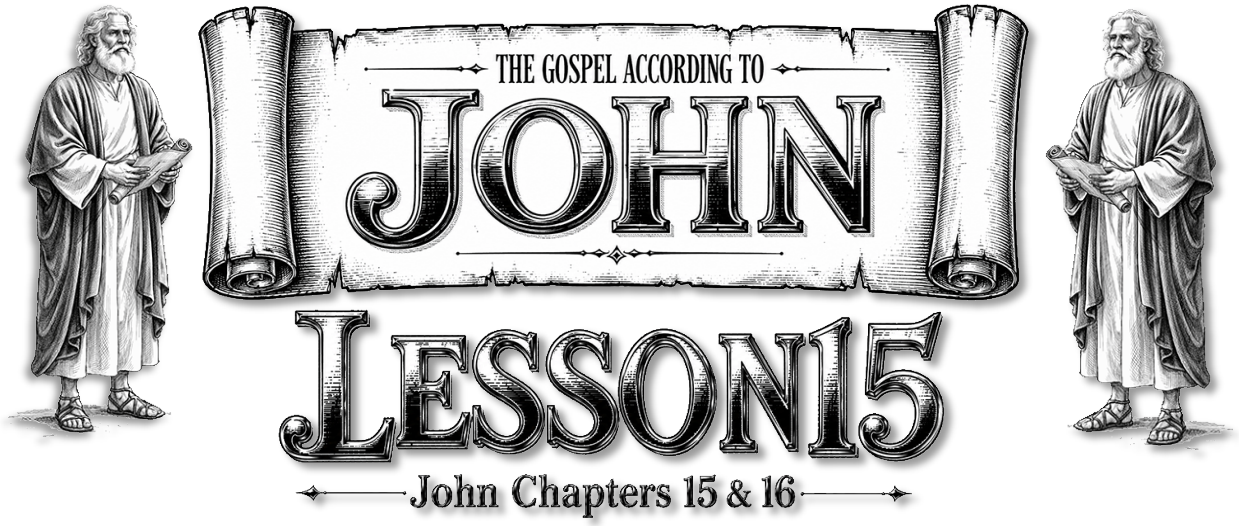



## Brief Review - The Gospel of John So Far:

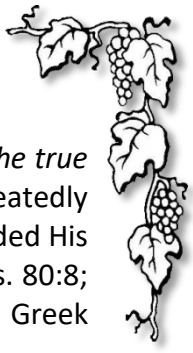



John has steadily presented Jesus Christ as **the eternal Son of God**, beginning with the Logos who "was God" and "was made flesh," then demonstrating His identity through the great signs and the "I AM" declarations. Chapters 2–11 formed the great **Book of Signs**, while Chapter 12 began the Final Week; Chapters 13–14 brought us into the Upper Room, where Jesus prepared His disciples for His departure, promised His return, declared Himself **"the way, the truth, and the life,"** and promised the coming Comforter. John's purpose remains unchanged: *"that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."* John 20:30–31.

Now, in Chapters 15 and 16, Jesus continues His final instructions before the Cross, but the emphasis shifts to **how His disciples are to live after His departure**. Chapter 15 develops three relationships: **our relationship with Christ** (15:1–11), **with one another** (15:12–17), and **with the world** (15:18–16:4); Chapter 16 then centers upon **the ministry of the Holy Spirit**, the disciples' coming sorrow, and Christ's triumphant assurance: *"I have overcome the world."* Note that the instructions in these chapters 14 through 17 are addressed to intimate believers only.

Also notice the progression: **abiding in Christ → loving one another → facing a hostile world → depending upon the Holy Spirit.** That is essentially Christ's preparation of His disciples—and ultimately His Church—for ministry in His physical absence.

## John Chapter 15



**John 15:1]** *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."*

Jesus now gives the **seventh and final great "I AM" declaration** in John: *"I am the true vine."* The imagery is deeply rooted in the Old Testament, where the vine repeatedly represents **Israel**. Isaiah 5 is especially important: God planted and carefully tended His vineyard, yet instead of the good fruit He desired, it produced "wild grapes" (Ps. 80:8; Isa. 5:1–7; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 15; 19:10; Hos. 10:1). Notice the word **"true."** The Greek emphasizes what is genuine, in contrast to what is false or inadequate.

John has already presented Christ as the **true Light** and the **true Bread**; now Jesus declares Himself the **true Vine**—the ultimate source of the spiritual life and fruit God desires (John 1:9; 6:32; Heb. 8:2, 5).

This passage points directly to **Isaiah 5** as the source of this imagery. Israel was God's vineyard, and the vine was so closely associated with Israel that a great **golden vine decorated the Temple**, and vine imagery also appeared on their coinage. Jesus deliberately takes an established national symbol and centers its ultimate reality on Himself.

The Father, meanwhile, is the **husbandman—the vinedresser**. He owns, tends, protects, watches, and cultivates the vineyard with one objective: **fruit**. This becomes the controlling theme of the chapter: *no fruit → fruit → more fruit → much fruit* (Isa. 53:2).

**John 15:2]** *"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."*

Jesus now moves from the identity of the Vine to the Father's work upon the **branches**. Notice that both kinds of branches receive the Husbandman's attention: the unfruitful branch is *"taken away,"* while the fruitful branch is *"purged"* so that it produces **more fruit**. The entire context concerns **fruit-bearing**, not establishing a doctrine that salvation is repeatedly gained and lost (John 4:14; 10:28; 18:9; Rom. 5:9–10; 8:35–39).



The Greek translated *"taketh away"* (airō) carries the sense of **taking up, raising, or lifting**, like a vinedresser lifting a trailing branch from the ground so it can receive light and become fruitful. The emphasis, then, is not on destruction but on the Husbandman's intervention to restore fruitfulness (Luke 17:13; Acts 4:24; John 11:41; Rev. 10:5; Dan. 7:4). There are several views taught on this passage:

1. **Legalism:** Legalists (Arminian) teach that a Christian who does not 'abide' in Christ loses his salvation. This creates contradictions in Scripture and is refuted by John 4:14, 10:28, 18:9; Rom. 5:9-10, 8:35-39.
2. **Eternal Security Position:** A true believer cannot lose their salvation; however, a mere professor, like Judas Iscariot, never truly believed in Christ and was not united to Him.
3. **Fruit-bearing Position:** This passage deals with pruning believers to encourage and give them opportunity to bear fruit. The emphasis is **on fruit-bearing rather than salvation: God works in His own people** so that their lives increasingly accomplish the purpose for which He called them (2 Pet. 1:5–8; Titus 3:14).



The pruning knife provides a powerful picture of God's dealings with the believer. Some things God removes are not necessarily sinful; they may simply hinder greater usefulness. The Husbandman sees what the branch cannot see—the fruit it **could** produce after pruning.

**John 15:3-4]** *"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."*

Verse 3 explains how the cleansing of verse 2 takes place: **"through the word."** Christ's Word cleanses the believer, and the Father uses that cleansing to prepare the branch for greater fruitfulness. When Jesus says *"**ye are clean**,"* he addresses the disciples collectively as one class, then turns from cleansing to the essential condition of fruitfulness: **abiding**.




"***Abide***" means **remain, stay, continue**. The branch possesses no independent capacity to produce grapes; everything necessary for fruit comes through its connection with the vine.

**~ Only Christ can produce the fruit—the branch cannot. ~**




This strikes directly at religious self-sufficiency. Our ultimate dependency is not upon a denomination, church organization, pastor, radio teacher, or favorite Bible teacher—helpful though such ministries may be. **The dependency must be upon Jesus Christ Himself** (John 15:4–5).

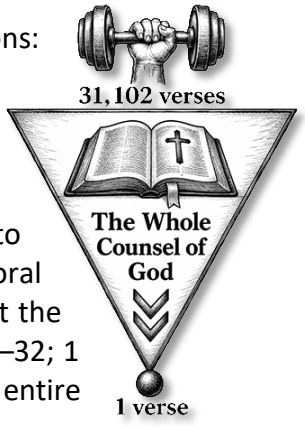
**John 15:5-6]** *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."*

Jesus now states the metaphor for the disciples plainly: **He is the Vine; ye are the branches.** The branch does not manufacture grapes—it simply bears what the vine's life produces through it. That is why Jesus' statement is absolute: *"without me ye can do nothing."* The issue is not our sufficiency, but **His sufficiency working through us**. (2 Cor. 3:5).

Verse 6, which is another controversially interpreted verse, gives the opposite condition: failure to abide results in **withered, useless branches**. ***We must keep the context of fruit-bearing separate from salvation*:** our union with Christ is secure, but we can lose fellowship and usefulness. A disconnected vine branch quickly **withers**, and vine wood has virtually no productive use once separated from its purpose.



**What About the Fire?** Again, verse 6 has several interpretations: loss of salvation; mere profession without genuine salvation; **loss of reward by an unfruitful believer**; or even divine discipline culminating in premature physical death. I believe it refers to fruit-bearing/reward, based on scriptural examples such as Lot, Ananias and Sapphira, abuses at the Lord's Table, and the "sin unto death." In extreme cases, genuine believers can suffer severe temporal consequences without losing eternal salvation, but the context must fit the whole counsel of God (2 Pet. 2:7–8; Acts 5:1–10; 1 Cor. 3:12–15; 11:29–32; 1 John 5:16). **Remember**, all Scripture must support the weight of the entire volume of Scripture.



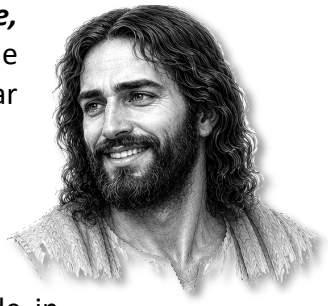

**John 15:7-8]** *"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."*

Jesus now connects **abiding with effective prayer**. When Christ's Word fills the believer, it reshapes his thinking and desires so that his requests increasingly agree with God's will.

Verse 8 reveals the ultimate purpose of the entire vine-and-branches picture: **the glory of the Father**. Abiding produces prayer aligned with Christ; answered prayer contributes to fruitfulness; and fruitfulness glorifies the Father. The progression has now reached its goal: ***fruit → more fruit → much fruit.***

***"Ask What Ye Will"***: This is an extraordinary privilege, but it requires intimate communion with Christ and His Word abiding within us. It is not a blank check for satisfying the flesh.

**John 15:9-11]** *"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."*



Verse 9 contains a staggering statement: **"*As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.*"** Jesus places His love for His disciples alongside the Father's love for the Son. Within hours, the Cross will show how far that love is willing to go.

"***Continue ye in my love***" carries forward the great theme of **abiding**. Jesus is not telling them to earn His love; He is telling them to live within its reality. The branch abides in the Vine, Christ's words abide in the disciple, and now the disciple is commanded to abide in Christ's love. Notice the beautiful sequence Jesus has constructed:

- **Abide in Christ** — the source (John 15:4).
- **Abide in His Word and love** — the relationship (John 15:7, 9).
- **Obedience, fruit, and joy follow** — the result (John 15:8, 10–11).

This is the anatomy of genuine Christian fruitfulness. It begins not with greater activity but with deeper fellowship with Christ.

**John 15:12-13]** *"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*

Jesus now moves from the disciples' **relationship with Him** to their **relationship with one another**. His command is not merely *"love one another,"* but *"as I have loved you."* Notice that love is again given as a **command.** Here is the progression: the **Father loves the Son → the Son loves His disciples → the disciples are commanded to love one another**. Divine love flows downward from the Father through Christ and then outward through His people.

Jesus now answers their fear of separation with a promise of **reunion**. He is going somewhere real, to prepare something real, and He promises that He Himself will return and take His people there. We need to slow down here because John 14:1–3 provides the framework for understanding what Paul later reveals in much greater detail – the **Rapture of the Church**, or the loving removal of believers prior to God's wrath.

**John 15:14-15]** *"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*

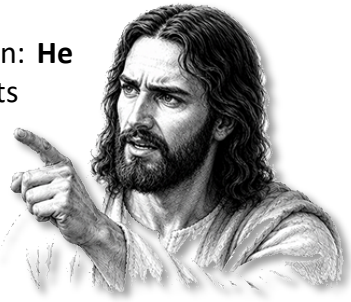
Jesus now makes a remarkable shift: **"I have called you friends."** Christ has disclosed to these disciples what He received from the Father, giving them privileged insight into God's purposes.

Throughout Scripture, **intimacy with God is repeatedly linked to the disclosure of God's plans**. Abraham was called the friend of God and was given insight about Sodom's judgment. That same pattern appeared with Daniel and John. Daniel was *"greatly beloved"* and received extraordinary prophetic revelation; John was the beloved disciple and was entrusted with **the Revelation of Jesus Christ**.




**Friends Should Recognize the Season:** Paul says believers are **"children of light"** and therefore the Day of the Lord should not overtake them *"as a thief."* We do not know the exact day or hour, but Scripture has revealed enough of God's prophetic program that the attentive believer should know the season and live in expectancy rather than spiritual darkness (1 Thess. 5:1–6).

**John 15:16-18]** *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."*



Jesus brings the first major movement of John 15 to its conclusion: **He chose and appointed His disciples to produce lasting fruit**. He repeats His command that they love one another, then immediately turns to their relationship with the world—and the tone changes dramatically.

Love is to characterize Christ's people toward one another; **hatred will characterize the world's response to Christ and those identified with Him**.

The Church is therefore not commissioned to gain the world's approval. Faithfulness to Christ will eventually collide with a world system whose values and allegiance oppose Him.

**Two Radically Different Relationships**

- **Toward believers:** "Love one another."
- **From the world:** "It hated me before it hated you."




**The Conflict Behind the Conflict:** John is beginning to expose the deeper spiritual conflict running beneath human history. Opposition to Christ is not merely political, cultural, or philosophical—it is spiritual. Behind the visible hostility lies the rebellion of a world system alienated from its Creator. The disciples are about to discover that following the true Vine places them directly inside that cosmic conflict—as it will you if you follow Jesus Christ.

**John 15:19]** *"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."*

Jesus now explains **why** the world hates His disciples: they no longer belong to its system. Christ has chosen them *"out of the world,"* creating a fundamental separation between the believer and the world order that rejects Him. This is not merely social friction and reflects the spiritual divide between two kingdoms (darkness and light).

**John 15:20]** *"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."*

Jesus now reminds the disciples of something He had already taught them: **the servant cannot expect better treatment than his Master received**. Identification with Christ brings both sides of the response—some will receive His Word, while others will actively oppose those who carry it. The believer's standard is therefore faithfulness to Christ, not popularity with the world.

**John 15:21-22]** *"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."*



Jesus now identifies the root of the world's hostility: rejection of Christ reveals that men **do not truly know the Father who sent Him**. His coming brought unprecedented light, and with greater revelation comes greater accountability. Christ says they now have **"*no cloke for their sin.*"** His words exposed what had previously been concealed: faced directly with the Son of God and His revelation, unbelief could no longer hide behind ignorance.

Verse 22 does not mean these people were previously sinless. Jesus speaks comparatively: His coming and teaching brought such clear revelation that rejection now carried correspondingly greater guilt. Light increases accountability (Isa. 40:17; 1 Cor. 3:7).

This establishes an important biblical principle: **judgment corresponds to the light received**. Jesus Himself taught degrees of punishment, and Hebrews makes the same point concerning greater knowledge and greater accountability (Matt. 11:22; Heb. 10:28–29).

**John 15:23-25]** *"He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."*

Jesus here destroys the idea that someone can reject Him while still claiming a proper relationship with God. **The Father and Son cannot be separated that way**: hatred of Christ is hatred of the Father who sent Him.

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**The Deeper Rebellion:** Mankind's natural fallen condition is ultimately hostility toward God. Paul later includes **"haters of God"** in his description of fallen humanity; rejecting Christ merely brings that underlying rebellion into the open (Rom. 1:30; John 15:23–25).

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**John 15:26-27]** *"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."*

Here Jesus introduces the ministry that will dominate Chapter 16, **the Comforter**.

Although He is departing, the disciples will not be left alone: the Holy Spirit will come from the Father and testify of Christ, while the apostles will bear the historical eyewitness testimony of those who had been with Him from the beginning. Note this chapter moves from persecution directly to the supernatural provision for testimony.




Verse 26 shows a Trinitarian architecture. The **Son sends the Spirit from the Father**, while the Spirit *"proceedeth from the Father."* The Greek expression (*para tou patros ekporeuetai)* means **"from beside the Father."**

## John Chapter 16

**John 16:1-2]** *"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."*

Chapter 16 continues without a break from Jesus' warning about the world's hatred that He began in Chapter 15. He tells the disciples beforehand what persecution will look like so that, when it comes, **they will not stumble in their faith**. Most chillingly, their persecutors will often be religious people convinced that opposing and even killing Christ's followers is service rendered to God (John 15:18–25; 16:1–2; 1 John 3:13).

**Historical Background — "Put You Out of the Synagogues":** Remember from our previous lessons in John that, for a first-century Jewish believer, expulsion from the synagogue meant far more than losing a place to attend worship. It could mean being **cut off socially from family and friends, lasting disgrace, continuing danger, and ultimately even death**. The apostles would soon experience exactly this kind of religious hostility. Jesus is not frightening them unnecessarily—He is **preparing them accurately**. Religious sincerity, then, is no guarantee of spiritual truth. A person can possess tremendous religious zeal while actively opposing God's purposes.



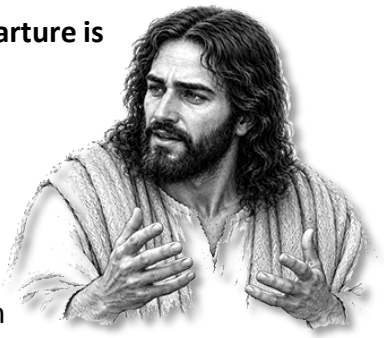

**Some of the fiercest persecution today comes clothed in religion**. A stark contrast exists between a personal relationship with Christ and man's attempt, through religion, to reconcile himself to God. Remember, the initiative in salvation must come from God toward man, not the other way around. That makes verse 2 particularly sobering. Persecutors will not necessarily think themselves enemies of God; they will believe they are **defending God** by attacking God's people (Prov. 29:27; Amos 5:10). **Religious sincerity does not guarantee spiritual truth.** A person can possess tremendous religious zeal while actively opposing God's purposes. Men will persecute Christ's followers while imagining their actions to be holy service before God.




**Has the Church Converted the World?** Let's pose a provocative question here: **Has the Church converted the world—or has the world converted the professing Church?** Look at Christ's seven letters in Revelation 2–3 as report cards on churches, individually and collectively. That fits perfectly with Jesus' warning. Religious institutions can retain Christian vocabulary while gradually absorbing the values of the surrounding world; eventually, genuine biblical faith becomes offensive even **inside professing Christianity**.

**John 16:3-4]** *"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you."*

**John 16:5-7]** *"But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."*



Jesus now explains both **why persecution comes and why His departure is necessary**.

First, verse 3 exposes the contradiction of religious persecution. Men may sincerely believe they are serving God while opposing Christ's followers, but Jesus identifies the real problem: **"they have not known the Father, nor me."** Religious zeal is no substitute for knowing God through His Son. Also, that persecution will confirm rather than destroy their confidence in Him. When opposition comes, they can remember, *"He told us this was coming."*

Then comes the astonishing reversal: although the disciples are overwhelmed with sorrow, Christ's departure will actually bring them an extraordinary advantage—**the coming ministry of the Holy Spirit**. This opens the door to the distinctive ministry of the Holy Spirit associated with the Church. Following Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would dwell **within** believers (Acts 2:1–4; 1 Cor. 6:19).

**John 16:8-11]** *"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."*

Jesus now explains the **Comforter's ministry <u>to the unbelieving world</u>** (The Holy Spirit's ministry to believers starts in verse 12). The Holy Spirit confronts the unbelieving world on three fundamental issues: **sin, righteousness, and judgment**. Notice that Jesus Himself defines all three—the central sin is unbelief in Christ, the standard of righteousness is Christ, and judgment is certain because the ruler of this world already stands judged.

1. **Of Sin:** Jesus does not give the disciples a catalog of society's individual sins. He goes directly to the foundational issue: **"*because they believe not on me.*"** Why? Because every person's eternal destiny ultimately turns upon his response to Jesus Christ.
2. **Of Righteousness:** The world establishes its own standards of goodness, while God establishes **Christ as the standard of righteousness**.
3. **Of Judgment:** The Cross is the decisive judgment of the supernatural ruler behind this fallen world system. Satan's sentence is settled; his final execution awaits the prophetic timetable. For now, the Holy Spirit restrains his wickedness.

**John 16:12-13]** *"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."*

Jesus says there are still **"*many things*"** the disciples need to understand, but they cannot *"bear them now."* The Greek for "bear" (*bastazein)*—to bear or carry—suggests they do not yet have the capacity to carry the full revelation Christ intends for them. **The Holy Spirit will complete their understanding**.

That explains much of what follows the Gospels. Acts and the Epistles unfold truths concerning the Church, the believer's position in Christ, spiritual gifts, the indwelling Spirit, and God's prophetic program that these men could not yet fully comprehend.

Notice Jesus does **not** say the Spirit will guide them into *most* truth. He says, **"*all truth*."** The Greek emphasizes completeness: the Spirit's revelation of New Testament truth to the apostles would be **complete, not partial**. This becomes enormously important for understanding Scripture. This promise is directly connected to the **inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of the New Testament**: what the apostles presently lack, the Spirit of truth will supply.




**Remez — The Unnamed Servant:** There is a fascinating pattern here: **"*he shall not speak of himself.*"** This is a recurring biblical picture: the **unnamed servant**—operating quietly in the background while advancing the purposes of another. Genesis 24 provides the classic example: Abraham's servant is sent to obtain a bride for Isaac. In the narrative itself, he functions as the servant carrying out the father's commission on behalf of the son—a striking picture of the Holy Spirit calling and preparing a Bride for Christ (Gen. 24:2; cf. Gen. 15:2). Another example is the pattern in Ruth, where a servant helps introduce Ruth into the field of Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 2:5–6).



Jesus then gives a remarkable promise: **"*he will shew you things to come.*"** The Spirit's ministry includes the future. This reaches beyond eschatology alone to the later revelation of ecclesiology (the study of the Christian Church), pneumatology (the study of the Holy Spirit), and the other great doctrines developed through Acts and the Epistles. But prophecy is unmistakably included. The same Spirit who reveals Christ also reveals the prophetic program ahead—and Revelation explicitly calls believers to hear **"*what the Spirit saith unto the churches*"** (Rev. 2–3).

**John 16:14-15]** *"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."*

Verse 14 completes the description begun in verse 13. The Spirit guides into truth, reveals things to come, and now Jesus says, **"*He shall glorify me.*"** The Holy Spirit's ministry consistently directs attention toward the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

We can summarize the Spirit's ministry here with three powerful words: **Guide, Declare, and Glorify.** He guides believers into truth, declares the things of Christ, and glorifies Christ before His people (1 Cor. 2:9–11; Isa. 64). Where the Holy Spirit is genuinely working, **Jesus Christ becomes clearer, greater, and more central**.

| Holy Spirit's Ministry | |
|---|---|
| 1. He would act as the Spirit of the Truth | 1. He quickens us – John 3:6 |
| 2. He would guide believers into all Truth | 2. He indwells us – 1 Cor. 6:19 |
| 3. He would not speak of Himself | 3. He loves us – Rom. 15:30 |
| 4. He would speak what He heard | 4. He leads us – Rom. 8:14 |
| 5. He would show believers things to come. | 5. He gives us assurance – Rom. 8:16 |
| 6. He would Glorify Christ | 6. He helps our infirmities – Rom. 8:26 |
| 7. He would show believers things of Christ | 7. He seals us until redemption – Eph. 4:30 |

**John 16:16-17]** *"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?"*

Jesus now returns to His approaching departure, but His words leave the disciples confused. **"*A little while*"** points immediately toward His death and Resurrection, while the larger pattern reaches through His Ascension and ultimately His return. The disciples are standing on the edge of enormous prophetic events, but they cannot yet assemble the pieces.

**The disciples should have known**. The Hebrew Scriptures had already laid out the pattern of the Messiah's suffering, victory, ascension, and return to the Father (Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Isa. 26; Hos. 5:15). The religious leaders of the day, despite having all the information and being the main teachers to the people, were blind to the revelations before them. For the disciples, the problem was not the absence of revelation; it was their inability to put it together before the events occurred. Afterward, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, those same Scriptures would suddenly become clear.




We occupy a position remarkably similar to the disciples in *one respect*: **we possess prophetic revelation concerning events still ahead, but we do not yet see exactly how every piece will converge**. Global realignments, technological systems, cultural upheaval, increasing cultural hostility toward biblical truth, and poor teaching from the pulpits should make true believers **more attentive** to Scripture for authority. The disciples eventually discovered that every word Christ spoke was exact; His promises concerning His **final return will prove equally exact** (Heb. 10:37.)

**John 16:18-20]** *"They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."*

The disciples remain fixed on Jesus' mysterious phrase **"*a little while*,"** but Jesus knows the question they are afraid to ask. Jesus introduces His answer with the characteristic double affirmation: **"Verily, verily."** Then He tells them exactly what is coming: they will weep while the world celebrates His death. Yet the world's apparent victory will be dramatically overturned—their **sorrow itself will be turned into joy**.

**John 16:21]** *"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."*

Jesus now explains **how sorrow can actually become joy** by using the picture of childbirth. The anguish is real, but temporary and purposeful; the very event that produces the pain ultimately produces the joy.

Here we see an Old Testament hyperlink in Jesus' illustration. **Travail followed by deliverance** is an established prophetic idiom, and Isaiah 26 uses this imagery precisely (Isa. 26:17–18). That makes Isaiah 26 especially interesting because the passage moves from travail directly into resurrection language: **"*Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust...*"** — Isa. 26:19

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**Remez — Isaiah 26 and the Rapture:** Isaiah 26 is an **Old Testament glimpse (allusion) of the Rapture pattern**. In Isaiah, the sequence is: **travail → resurrection → God's people hidden → indignation upon the earth (**Isa. 26:17–21).




**"*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.*"** — Isa. 26:20

That sequence fits beautifully with the pre-Tribulational distinction between the Church's removal and the subsequent outpouring of divine judgment. The same prophetic architecture appears elsewhere: God's people are not appointed to wrath (1 Thess. 1:10; 4:16–18; 5:9).

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Scripture repeatedly warns that the closing stages of this age will resemble **travail**—pressure intensifying as history approaches God's appointed conclusion. The believer should therefore recognize that increasing global instability, cultural rebellion, and geopolitical upheaval do not mean God's prophetic program has failed; rather, history is moving toward its appointed destination. Isaiah's sequence remains striking: **travail, resurrection, God's people hidden, then indignation upon the earth** (Isa. 26:17–21; 1 Thess. 4:16–18; 5:9).

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**John 16:22-23]** *"And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."*




This is the culmination of the childbirth illustration. The mother passes through anguish, but once the child is born, the same event that brought sorrow also brings overwhelming joy. So it will be with the disciples. The Cross will temporarily crush them, but after the Resurrection they will understand that the apparent catastrophe was actually God's victory.

"***And in that day...***" (Resurrection), their relationship with Christ is about to operate differently because Jesus is returning to the Father. Rather than bringing every question directly to the physically present Jesus, they will possess direct access to the Father **in Christ's name**. Christ returns to the Father, the Comforter comes, and believers enter a new relationship of access and communion.

**John 16:24-25]** *"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father."*

Jesus continues describing the remarkable new relationship His completed work will open between believers and the Father. Prayer in **His name** will become the believer's normal privilege, and Jesus connects answered prayer directly with fullness of joy.

After His interactions with the Pharisees (more elaborated in the synoptic Gospels), Jesus has repeatedly taught spiritual realities through pictures (proverbs) that required further understanding. Each picture contains profound truth, but the disciples frequently struggle to understand what Jesus means. The coming ministry of the Holy Spirit will illuminate what presently remains difficult for them.

**John 16:26-28]** *"At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."*

**John 16:29-31]** *"His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?"*

**John 16:32-33]** *"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*

Jesus brings the Upper Room Discourse to a magnificent conclusion: the Father loves His own, the Son came from the Father and is returning to Him, the disciples will soon scatter, yet Christ's victory is certain. Their confidence will fail before the night is over, but **His victory does not depend upon theirs**. Jesus closes not by promising an easy world, but something far greater—**peace in Him because He has already overcome the world**.

Christ's expression **"*be of good cheer*"** calls for courage in the face of perceived danger. Jesus is not telling them to pretend circumstances are pleasant; He gives them a reason to be courageous: **"*I have overcome the world.*"**



A beautiful connection across Christ's earthly ministry. His entrance into the world was accompanied by the angelic declaration of **peace**, and His final message to His disciples before the Cross closes with **peace**.

**Next Lesson:** Read John 17. We will go over the Lord's intimate prayer which many consider the *Holy of Holies* of the New Testament.