

John 16

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 06 May 2015 15:49

Jesus' words in this chapter are right up to date. Is it not true that Islam thinks it "doeth God service" (that is, their corrupt version of God, 'Allah' the moon-god) by killing us? And do not homosexuals think they do society a favour by getting rid of us? And do not environmentalists think they help the planet by depopulating the world? And do not socialists think the world would be a better place if they take wealth from wealth-creators and give to everyone else, thus reducing the whole world to poverty? And do not politicians think it best to keep citizens in the dark because citizens are too stupid to think for themselves? Jesus would have had much to say about these imposed sinful atrocities!

The farther away from God's laws we travel, the more troubles the world accrues. It must be admitted that even though we have faith, worldly attacks can sometimes diminish our spiritual sight and will. Yet, Jesus promised, and gave, the Comforter, precisely so that in times of woe, we will be able to seek safety in the Lord. As Jesus said, while we suffer agonies the world rejoices! They think that our woes mean we have been defeated. Not so!

Verses 1-5

1.

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2.

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3.

And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4.

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.

5.

But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

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Jesus is giving His disciples instructions so they would not be “offended”. We should not interpret this word in the modern sense. In scripture, skandalizō can have a number of meanings. In the context of this verse, Jesus meant that He did not want the disciples to fall away from the truth as given by God... they must continue to trust in Christ even after He leaves the earth.

One of the biggest fears of the Jews was to be cast out of their local synagogue, because it implied they were cast out of Israel. It is the same error found today amongst Catholics, who fear ‘excommunication’ if they do not obey the pope and their priests. So, they do whatever they are told, good or bad, biblical or not. And so do many whom claim to be reformed or Protestant!

Jesus warned that it would go even farther than being cast out – Jews would be put to death for following Christ instead of obeying the Pharisaical version of the Torah. So corrupt were the Jewish leaders they would say they had God on their side if they put people to death (as they did with Jesus). Islam has the same belief and openly states it. Jesus, however, is kinder and has compassion for folks who happen to make errors of judgment.

Note that the same word for ‘killeth’, apokteinō, does not necessarily mean ‘murder’, but any form of killing, even spiritual killing (preventing people from believing truth). The Roman Catholic priests, in periods of ‘Inquisition’, thought they served God by murdering people. Even modern people who call themselves ‘Christian’ are guilty of this warped thinking. They do it because they do not know the Father or Christ. In other words, their claim to belong to God is fake, a delusion, or even a direct lie; they use the same form of words, and behave in a way similar to real Christians, but they are false, unbelievers.

Jesus said He wanted the disciples to remember His words when He was no longer with them. There was no need to go into these details earlier, because He was with them personally. But, now, He was almost ready to leave them to return to His Father – yet none of them asked Him where He was going! They were so busy in their anxieties, they did not even think of asking this obvious question.

Verses 6-11

1.

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But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

2.

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.

3.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

4.

Of sin, because they believe not on me;

5.

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

6.

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

The disciples were filled with trepidation at Jesus' words, and were filled with sorrow – grief as in mourning. Though Jesus understood their grief, He told them it was necessary for Him to leave, so that the Comforter could come in His stead. As soon as Jesus left them He would be able to send the Comforter (Holy Spirit).

Jesus came to call the promised people, the Jews, and to die for the elect. Once that had been accomplished His reason for being on earth was redundant. The Comforter, however, had a mandate to fill every believer and to act in their lives until the end of time, on behalf of Christ.

Jesus previously told listeners that He had not come to judge. His immediate task was to initiate

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the Gospel. When the Holy Spirit arrived, it was His task to show people their sins, to require repentance, to promise His presence if they were accepted by the Lord, and to judge evil.

These tasks were vital; sin had to be identified and dealt with (v9), because the root of sin was that a man did not believe in Christ. Righteousness had to be encouraged because Jesus was no longer on earth, and the disciples had to be reminded of their duty before God (v10). Judgment was necessary because Satan himself was now judged (v11), and all who follow him will receive the same punishment. Remember that Jesus linked our sin with the sin of Satan! Is this not something to fear?

Verses 12-16

1.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

2.

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.

3.

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

4.

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

5.

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.

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Jesus told them that He still had so much more to teach them, but His time was almost up. Also, they were still immature in their faith, and could not take much more at this time. However, when the Holy Spirit came He would show them all truth, based on His own Person of Truth; like Christ, He heard the Father speak, and so what He passed on to the disciples would be absolute truth. He would even show them what was to come in prophetic teachings.

In teaching them, the Spirit would glorify the Son Who gave His life for them. The Spirit would continue what Jesus began, and in this way Jesus would still be with them. Jesus shared what the Father shared with Him, and whatever belonged to the Father also belonged to Him. Jesus said He would not be with them much longer. Yet, after a short while, He would return to them after seeing His Father. This was a reference to His post-resurrection activity.

Verses 17&18

1.

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?

2.

They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

At this very late stage the disciples were still baffled by what Jesus told them. So many modern believers have no idea what Jesus taught, so they invent their own meanings for scripture. Or, they read or listen to what others teach them, not knowing if it is genuinely from God! In this way they hide their ignorance... the churches are filled with this appalling ignorance.

Verses 19-22

1.

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?

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2.

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.

3.

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.

4.

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.

In school, not many pupils dare to admit to ignorance because they fear being held to ridicule. In college I finally understood maths. But, in school, I had no idea what it was about! I thought I was the only one who did not 'get it', because no-one asked questions or admitted to ignorance. But, I asked questions anyway, and if I could not 'get it' I would continue to ask. Then I discovered why the other pupils stayed quiet – I was always clouted on the head! Hardly conducive to a learning environment! But, Jesus was not nasty or about to laugh at them. They may as well have admitted to their queries, because Jesus knew what they were thinking anyway...

He explained that while the world (unrepentant sinners) would laugh and clap at His demise, the disciples would grieve and be woeful. But, they should not be deceived by their own emotions or the reaction of the world, for their grief would soon turn to immense joy. A woman giving birth might shout with pain and suffer, but when the baby comes she will forget all about the pain and only have eyes for her child. In the same way the disciples were full of sorrow because Jesus said He would be taken from them soon. But, when He returned and they saw Him again, they would rejoice.

The joy they would experience would be permanent, for no man could take it from them. This is true of every child of God who believes and has experienced genuine repentance and faith. They know a heavenly joy that cannot be had or understood by those who are unsaved. This joy

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is not of this world and once a saved person has it, it will remain all their life, no matter what comes along to hurt them.

Verses 23-28

1.

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.

2.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

3.

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.

4.

At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

5.

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

6.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

When the time for Jesus' departure came, the disciples would not ask Him anything. They would not need to, for the Comforter would give them everything they asked for. Indeed, they could ask the Father for anything they required, in Jesus' Name, and the Father would give it. These words were primarily for the disciples, but they are repeated elsewhere, so they are

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words that apply to all followers of Jesus Christ. To that point the disciples had asked for nothing, so Jesus assures them that they can now ask, and they would receive, which would enormously enhance their joy.

Jesus tells them that so far He has spoken in proverbs/parables, hidden language, because they did not understand. But, in a few days (after His resurrection), Jesus would speak to them in direct fashion and they would understand. When this happened, the disciples would be able to approach the Father themselves – because He loved them just as they loved Jesus, believing He was the Messiah.

Jesus repeated His earlier claims to have come from Heaven from the Father, and He entered the world as a man. Now, He would have to leave the world to return to the Father... and had already said He would replace His presence with the Comforter.

Verses 29-33

1.

His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

2.

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.

3.

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

4.

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.

5.

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.

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At last, the disciples said NOW they understood, because He did not speak in mysteries/parables. Because they understood, they realised that Jesus knew all things and gave them the ability to understand (which is why they would not need to ask Him questions later). Do you realise that any understanding you might have is from God? That it is a divine gift to be used? (Oh how some in churches vaunt their supposed intellectual prowess before 'ordinary' Christians, as if their abilities were their own property, and as if it gave them superiority! Everything we have comes from God, so none of us can boast).

Jesus then asked them "Do you now believe?" The time was coming - in fact, was already here - He said, when they would be scattered, leaving Jesus on His own. But, He would NOT really be alone, for His Father would be with Him. In the space of a few hours all the disciples ran away for fear of their lives, and Peter would deny Christ three times. How many modern Christians do the same thing by capitulating to wicked men and ideas! Capitulation is just another kind of running away.

The reason Jesus told them these things was that they might have peace within, an enduring divine peace that would cause them to rise up from the earth in their spirits, to spread the Gospel. Christ would Himself give them this peace and joy, because they believed. (If you do not have peace and joy – what does this say about your claim to salvation and discipleship?).

Jesus warned them that they WOULD experience tribulation, thlipsis... immense pressure from God-haters, distress, oppression. This has happened in a variety of locales throughout the ages since the days of Christ on earth. Today, we see this happening on a worldwide scale, with great persecution and murders, a deliberate harming of believers in genocidal force. We also see it coming from governments everywhere, except in a few isolated African countries that have not yet fallen to the wickedness of socialism.

Yet, Jesus said to them in 'upbeat' manner: "be of good cheer"! Have deep courage! How can this happen when we are being oppressed, persecuted and harmed? We can do it, He says, because "I have overcome the world"! He died, and in dying He destroyed the hold of Satan, who held the world in his grip. Those who belonged to Christ would no longer be in Satan's grip... but those unsaved souls still in his grasp would go on to hate us in increasing fervour. Even so, we can remain peaceful and joyful. It is Christ's promise. And when we are resolved and peaceful, it thwarts the evil desires of Satan's best laid plans, and those who act on his

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