

Peace in a Troubled World

John 16:25-33

Part One

We need to feel loved. It is a basic human need. But where are we going to find love? Will we find it among our friends? Will we find it with our husband or wife? Will we find it with our parents or with our children? Perhaps or perhaps not! But I do know one place where we can find it! And where is that? A true disciple of Christ can find the love they are looking for in the arms of Christ's Father.

And how can we experience this love, the love of Christ's Father? We can experience His love if we make it our practice to continually come into His presence and make our requests known to Him in the name of His Son. And if we would do this we will be providing Him the opportunity to pour out His love upon us in very tangible ways through the answers He supplies us. And of course if these tangible expressions of love our continually being poured out upon us in response to our prayers how will it make us feel? It will make us feel loved

This brings us back to the Gospel of John and more specifically to our study of the upper room discourse, which goes from the end of **John 13** to the end of **John 16**. In this discourse Jesus was seeking to prepare His disciples for His death and subsequent departure back to His Father.

We are presently in the latter part of **John 16**. Last week we were examining **John 16:23-24** and in order to move further into our text we will need to briefly review these two verses.

So let me read these verses for you one more time. **“And in that day you will ask Me no question. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in My name. (24) Until now you have asked for nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.”**

I do not have time this morning to go back and explain to you all of what we talked about last week. But in light of the message that I will be bringing to you this morning we need to review these two verses.

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First of all, though this promise is in fact a blank check that we can at any time cash at the bank of Christ's heavenly Father, it is a check that can only be cashed when it is presented to His Father in the name of His Son. In other words, this blank check that is extended to us in **John 16:23-24** can only be cashed when we pray in Jesus' name. This should not only be clear to us from what we learned last week from **John 16:23-24** but also earlier from **John 14:13-14** as well as **John 15:16**. So what does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus?

Praying in Jesus' name means that our prayers are based on all that Christ is, has done, is doing and will do. And of course if we pray in this way our prayers will not be about what we want but rather about what He wants.

And what will happen if we pray in this way based on **John 16:23-24**? Our prayers will be answered by Christ's Father! Not just some of them but all of them. And each time that our prayer is answered it should remind us of Christ's victory that He won for us at the cross, which opened the door to heaven and gave us access to Christ's Father and to the throne of grace. And this constant reminder of Christ's victory and the benefit of that victory through answered prayer will make our joy full, not just any joy but the joy of the cross. But this is not the only benefit that Christ wants to highlight for us in praying prayers and receiving answers in Jesus' name.

Now having said this we are now ready to move forward into the final section of the upper room discourse that is recorded for us in **John 16:25-33** that actually, as we will see, flows from **John 16:23-24**.

So what is the significance of these verses? John 16:25-33 is a summary of everything that Jesus had said to His disciples throughout the upper room discourse and was designed to leave His disciples with hope in the midst of the trouble that would be coming upon them shortly. So what is the first thing this summary statement of the upper room discourse highlights for us?

The summary statement of John 16:25-33 first of all highlights the love of the Father for Christ's disciples (John 16:25-27). Jesus highlights His Father's love for His disciples in **John 16:25-27**.

My hope for us as we examine these few verses is that we might understand what Christ is saying about His Father's love for His disciples and how that

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love can come alive for us each and every day as we receive answers to prayers prayed in Jesus' name. Perhaps we might not experience the love of friends, or the love of a husband or wife, or the love of a parent or a child but we can experience the love of Christ's Father daily as He pours out His love upon us through answered prayer.

So let us begin examination of these verses by looking first of all at the very first phrase of **John 16:25**. And what was that phrase? It was this: **“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language.”**

What were “these things” that Jesus was referring to when He said He had spoken to them in figurative language? The “things” Jesus was referring to when He said that He had spoken to His disciples in figurative language were things pertaining to His Father (John 16:25).

Jesus made this clear at the end of **John 16:25**. So let us go back to the verse and see if this is not so. **“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will speak no more to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.”** So we now know specifically what “these things” were that Jesus told His disciples that He had spoken to them. They were things He had spoken to them about His Father.

But this raises an interesting question. Why would Jesus have spoken to His disciples about His Father in figurative language in contrast to something more clear? This all seems so very puzzling in light of the fact that we know that Jesus loved His father and according to **John 13** came into this world to glorify His Father. If Jesus did in fact want to glorify His father wouldn't He have wanted to speak about His Father to His disciples more clearly? So on the surface this initial statement by Christ in **John 16:25** seems rather puzzling.

So how can we explain this? I believe we can explain this if we have a better handle on what Christ meant when He used the term “figurative language.”

The word “figurative” (PAROIMIAS) does not necessarily mean “in a figure,” or “in a metaphor,” or “in a parable” but had to do with the obscurity of His utterance. Therefore the reference to figurative language is not necessarily restricted to the illustration of the woman in childbirth in

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verse 21, which was a metaphor, but it embraces nearly everything that He had said to His disciples about His Father, even literal statements.

So let us now go back and address the question that we had asked earlier. If Christ in fact loved His father, and wanted to glorify His Father why had He spoken to them in figurative language or in language that was obscure? The answer is quite simple.

Christ's figurative or obscure language was obscure not because Christ was trying to make it obscure. It was obscure simply because Christ's disciples did not have the resources to understand it. But fortunately Christ wanted to make clear to His disciples this present situation would not continue.

Let us once again go back to **John 16:25** but this time we will go a little bit further. What does the verse say? It says this: **“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language, an hour is coming when I will speak no more to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.”** So Jesus clearly in this verse is alluding to a future time when things would be very different than they presently were. And how did He refer to this future time? He referred to it as an hour that was coming. So what was this future time, this future “hour” that was coming?

When Christ spoke to His disciples about “an hour” that was coming He was speaking of the same time period He referred to as “in that day” in John 16:23,26 or to the dispensation of the Spirit. So what can we conclude from this? This is what we can conclude:

The disciples prior to the coming of the Spirit were poorly equipped to understand all the things that He was sharing with them about His Father but after the Spirit came that would no longer be the case. So did Christ speak to His disciples in figurative language or obscure language? Yes, He did! But this was not the fault of Christ. The disciples were just ill equipped to understand what He was saying, but this would not continue. There was a time coming after the Spirit of truth came that they would understand. And what had been obscure would then be plain?

And why is Jesus sharing this thought with His disciple here about this future period of better understanding in **John 16:25**? Christ was sharing about this future period of better understanding in order to form a bridge

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between what He had said about praying in His name in John 16:23-24 and what He was about to say in John 16:26-27.

Jesus had said certain things about praying to His Father in **John 16:23-24** but based upon the bridge of **John 16:25** we can be quite confident that the disciples did not fully understand the implications of what Christ had just said, particularly the implications of what Jesus had just said about them praying in His name to His Father and what this should have meant to them personally, especially in respect to how they viewed Christ's Father and their relationship to Him. So Jesus, undaunted by their present ill-equipped condition, went on to try and spell out all of this beginning in **John 16:26**.

So how does the verse begin? It begins with these words, **"In that day** [or in other words after the Holy Spirit comes] **you will ask in My name** [which again is the very thing that Jesus spoke of in John 16:23-24 and then it says] **and I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf."** This is clearly a clarification of what He said earlier in **John 16:23-24**. So what was this clarification all about?

When Jesus told His disciples what He had not said in John 16:26 He was making sure that His disciples understood that when they prayed in His name they were praying directly to His Father.

In other words, Jesus was making sure that His disciples understood that when they in the future would pray in Jesus' name they were not just delivering notes to Jesus at the right hand of His Father's throne so that Jesus might read them to His Father. He was telling them that when they in the future would pray in His name they would in fact be coming to the very foot of His Father's throne and would in fact be praying those prayers directly to His Father who would then according to the promise given to them in **John 16:23-24** would then answer them. This clarification is no small potatoes. This clarification was important. It was not only important for the disciples of Christ then but it is also important for Christ's disciples now to understand.

When we pray in Jesus' name it does not mean that Christ will take our prayers and pray them to His Father for us, No! When we pray prayers in Jesus' name we are praying those prayers directly to Christ's Father who

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will then answer them according to the promise given to His disciples in **John 16:23-24** if we have in fact prayed these prayers in Jesus' name.

And why will Christ's Father do this? The reason why Christ's Father is willing to receive us into His presence and answer the prayers that we pray directly to Him in the name of His Son is because He loves us (John 16:27). This is clear as we continue to read. So let us go back and pick up our passage in **John 16:26** and continue on reading into **John 16:27**.

“In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf; (27) for the Father Himself loves you.” The word that Christ used to describe the His Father's love for us in John 16:27 is the word PHILEO, which is a word that communicates the presence of deep affection. God not only loves you with an overall love, but He also likes you a whole lot too! God is crazy about you!

But you might think to yourself, what is there to like about me? Why is the Father so crazy about me? We do not have to guess. Let us continue to read the verse. **“For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved Me.”** Why does the Father love us? Christ's Father loves us because we have loved Christ (John 16:27). Doesn't this make sense?

Do you have a deep affection for your children? I would like to think you do. So let me ask you this question. Do you have a deep affection for those who have loved your children? I would think your answer would be yes.

Lynn and I have three children. Our firstborn is Erin and She married Tom Barnes. And our second born is Kristin and she married Edmond Bessette. And our third born is Nathan who married Sonia Martinez. And this morning I can honestly say that I have a great affection for each of these individuals. Why? I have great affection for each of these individuals because I have seen and continue to see their love for my children as faithful and devoted spouses. And because of this if they were to come to Lynn and I and were to personally ask us for something it certainly would be extremely difficult not to give them what they asked for if it were in our power to give it to them. Why? We would do this because we love them for having loved our children.

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And the same thing is true when we come into the presence of Christ's Father and ask Him for some particular thing in the name of Jesus. He will be inclined to give us what we ask for because He is crazy about us. And why is He is crazy about us? He is crazy about us because we have loved His Son.

But how have we loved God's Son? We do not have to guess. Let us continue to read **John 16:27**. **"For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I have come forth from the Father."** Jesus throughout His public ministry had made it clear to the multitude and to the Jewish leaders that He had come forth from the Father, from His heavenly father. This declaration was not something that the multitude or the Jewish leaders readily received. In fact, we have repeatedly seen throughout of study of the Gospel of John that this very point was challenged. But this was not true of Christ's disciples. They by the grace of God did not challenge this teaching. They had received it and believed that Christ in fact had come forth from His Father.

Another way of saying this would be this: Our love for Christ is demonstrated when we choose to believe what He has said about Himself and what He has done (John 16:27).

Are you presently demonstrating your love for Christ by choosing to believe what He has said about Himself and what He has done (John 16:27)?

Be careful before you answer. If we truly believe what Jesus has said about Himself and what He has done then we will find ourselves seeking to obey Him (Luke 6:46-48). Let me read for you **Luke 6:46-47**. **"And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? (47) Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like: (48) he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood rose, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it has been well built."**

When we seek to obey Christ, which is fruit of believing in the person and work of Christ, we are building are lives upon a sure foundation. We are building our lives on a sure foundation because in demonstrating our love for Christ through active obedience as an expression of our faith in the

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person and work of Christ, Christ's Father will love us with great affection. He will be crazy about us. And He will be eager to pour out His love upon us each and every time we approach Him in prayer if we in fact approach Him in the name of His Son.

We need to feel loved. It is a basic human need. But where are we going to find love? Will we find it among our friends? Will we find it with our husband or wife? Will we find it with our parents or with our children? Perhaps or perhaps not! But I do know one place where we can find it! And where is that? A true disciple of Christ can find the love they are looking for in the arms of Christ's Father.

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May God give us the grace as Christ's faithful disciples to believe that Christ's Father loves us and is eager to demonstrate His love for us when we personally approach Him in the name of Jesus.