

The Ultimate LOVE STORY

John 13-17

“The Final Hours Before the Cross”

Study Number Seven – Love in Separation – John 16:16-33

We have called this series, “The Love Story.” It is relevant because the Spirit of God wants to produce this kind of love in our life. That makes it relevant. That makes it important.

This love is of an eternal character and it is unchangeable. For this love to exist, it does not have to have a response. It loves without a response. It loves even with no response. And in fact, a negative response. It will continue to have one’s best interest at stake.

We have seen this demonstrated, “The Love Story,” in six studies now.

In study number one we saw it SERVING, as Christ came into the Upper Room to wash their feet.

We saw it HURT in study 2 in that Judas, breaking bread, lifted up his heel against Him. And Christ said, “Whatever you have to do, do quickly. Hurry, it hurts. You’re not going to

respond so go and do your thing. You've made your decision.”

Study number three we said that where love is present, conversation flows freely—LOVE COMMUNICATING. And Christ is involved in answering four questions:

1. For Peter, “Where are you going?”
2. For Thomas, “We don't know where you're going, how do we know the way?”
3. To Philip, “Show us the Father.”
4. To Judas Thaddeus Lebbaeus, “When are you going to reveal yourself to us and not to the rest of the world?”

In study number four we saw LOVE IN UNION, the Father is glorified by much fruit. We are branches in the vine.

In study number five we saw LOVE IN CONFLICT. The world always hates that which does not conform to it. Agape love does not conform to it so it's persecuted. It suffers needlessly.

In episode number six we saw LOVE MEETING NEEDS. It is the sheer ecstasy of agape love to give of itself in the best way it can, and of its resources to the one that it loves the most.

Christ taught us that the Holy Spirit had a two-fold function:

He had a function to the person who is NOT a believer. He

convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment.

Of SIN—because they would not believe in Him.

Of RIGHTEOUSNESS—because Christ is now at the right hand of the Father, vindicated that the righteousness that He has purchased is acceptable in the Father’s sight.

And of JUDGMENT—which are the consequences of rejecting Jesus Christ.

For the believer, the Spirit of God never calls attention to Himself. He always glorifies the Lord Jesus. He will guide us into truth and call to remembrance all that the Lord said. And if the Spirit has taught us, we’ll have a deeper and greater appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ and He’ll be glorified.

Now coming to study number 7 in the love story, we have called this, LOVE IN SEPARATION.

We’re just a few steps from the gates to the Garden of Gethsemane. We are at the end of His discourse with His men. When we start our last study, He lifts His eyes toward heaven and begins to pray.

We’re going to truly study the LORD’S PRAYER in our final study. What a gorgeous passage of scripture we have before us.

We’ve called this study “LOVE IN SEPARATION.”

Love, when it's apart, hurts. There's pain in parting. There's suffering in separation. Love separated and love sorrowing goes together.

So there's a lot of hurt in this passage as well. These men are deeply touched emotionally, by the fact that someone—they always thought who would be with them—is getting ready to leave.

Beth Jameson in her book *Hold Me Tight* says:

(Hold Me Tight by Beth Jameson)

Grief is a non-sharing emotion. We carry it alone, in our own way and thus it will ever be.

(source unknown)

Ginilou tells the story of Joe Morrison, a football coach dying of multiple sclerosis. Joe comes to see Ginilou and as he comes, Ginilou is praying:

(Loving Again by Ginilou)

O Lord of caring, what do I say to someone who has been told that the game is going to end at the beginning of the third quarter?

Cheer up! Tomorrow will be better!

Hey! Your old team won last night!
Guess what, I know somebody who's on the Rams!
O Lord of caring, I'd be angry too!
O God of empathy, keep me touchable!
(source unknown)

There are a lot of things that we don't understand in our lives. And the disciples don't really understand why the Lord has to do what He's getting ready to do.

In fact, they're resisting it emotionally. They love Him so much. It's almost like tears can flow uncontrollably at this point because they just can't stand the thought that He's going to be leaving.

Now with that thought in mind, as we look at the verses it'll become plain what we're talking about when we speak of LOVE IN SEPARATION.

v. 16 "A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while, and you will see me."

"A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while, and you will see me."

He starts out with the word "A little while." And He says:

"For a little while, you're going to see Me and then you're not going to see Me. But then you're going to see Me again."

Now this triggers TWO THINGS in the minds of the guys in the next verses:

1. How long is “a little while?”
2. Why does He have to go to the Father?

Now the last time we went through some traumatic circumstances in our life, were those the things we would have said? How long is this going to go on? And why do I have to go through it?

Isn't that amazing? They're just like us. And they're getting ready to say the very same things.

How long? and

Why?

The Lord has never yet answered those two questions for anybody. The Lord is not going to answer them in the study. He is not obligated to tell us.

1. He's not going to tell us how long because He's ETERNAL. He's beyond time and time is inconsequential, as far as God is concerned. So we'll never know how long it's going to last.
2. He is never obligated, as the sovereign of the universe, to tell us why He's allowed something to come into our life. He'll

make that all clear later when we check in with Him up there.

We have to trust Him now that He knows what's best and He loves us. And He would never allow anything in our life but what was for our ultimate good so we don't need to know why.

The two things that the Lord wants to know, when we're in the crucible and when we're going through unexplainable circumstances—LOVE IN SEPARATION—are:

1. How are we going to respond to this?

That's very important to the Lord.

2. What are we going to learn from it?

So His is a HOW and a WHAT.

But it's:

How are we going to respond? Because that reveals our will—either resistant or responsive, and

What are we going to learn from this thing?

Hebrews 10:37

Yet a little while, and He shall come; He will come and will not tarry.

A little while and we shall be
Where sin may never dwell.
A little while and we shall live
Where songs of triumph swell.

A little while and we shall hear
Our Saviour's whisper, "Come."
And we shall ever dwell with Him
In our eternal home.

A little while and we shall see
Our Saviour face to face.
And we shall sing the endless days
The wonders of His grace.
(source unknown)

Now what does He mean?

There are **THREE POSSIBILITIES** for "a little while." He could be saying:

1. "in a little while,"—"In just a few hours, I'm going to die on the cross and you're not going to see Me anymore. I'm going to be put in the grave. But then three days later, you're going to see me again on the Day of Resurrection."
2. "in a little while"—"At the day of Ascension, I'm going to ascend into glory and you're not going to see Me. But when you die, you're going to be absent from the body and present with Me, right? So the little while is the rest of your life until

you die and you come to be with Me.”

3. “in a little while”—“On the day of Ascension I’m going back to glory and then in a little while you’re going to see Me on the day of the rapture of the church. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. He descends from heaven with a shout. The dead in Christ arise first, then we who are alive that remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

So it’s any one of those three possibilities when it comes to the definition and interpretation of “a little while.”

v. 17 Therefore, some of His disciples said to one another, “What is this thing He is saying to us, ‘A little while and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father’?”

“Therefore, some of His disciples said to one another, “What is this thing He is saying to us, “A little while and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see me,” and “Because I am going to the Father”?”

Their reaction’s just the same. They’re in a quandary. They just don’t have it together. They don’t understand what’s going on here. The guys who are asking all this are probably Peter, Thomas, Philip and Judas Thaddeus Lebbaeus. They’re the guys that have been the most vocal in the whole address.

And surely the four of them are right in the big middle of all this questioning. What is this “little while?” And then again, what is this “little while?” And what is it that He’s “going to the Father?”

v. 18 Therefore, they were saying: “What is this that He is saying, ‘A little while’? We are not knowing what He is saying.”

“Therefore, they were saying: ‘What is this that He is saying, “A little while”? We are not knowing what He is saying.’”

Now verse 19 is so beautiful so don’t jump over it.

v. 19 Jesus knew that they were desiring to be asking Him, and He said to them: “Concerning this are you deliberating with one another that I said, ‘A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see Me’?”

“Jesus knew that they were desiring to be asking Him, and He said to them: ‘Concerning this are you deliberating with one another that I said, “A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see Me”?’”

“Jesus knew they were desiring to ask Him.”

One thing about love that is so beautiful is it is super sensitive to the needs of the one loved. And He is knowing their desires.

Psalm 37:4

Delight yourself in the Lord
and He will grant to you the desires of your heart.

The Lord knows our heart's desire. And it delights Him to do that in accordance with His will.

Ginilou wrote a little poem because she was not sensitive to the needs around her that were so incredible:

(Loving Again by Ginilou)

O Father God,
How can You put up
with such a stupid child
as I?
You give me eyes, but
I refuse to see;
You give me ears, but
I refuse to hear;
You give me a brain
And I fill it with peanut butter recipes.
O Father God, how do You put up
with such a child as I?
(source unknown)

We've got eyes to see and we have ears to hear the voices that are crying. But do we love them? Do we know their desires? Do we know their needs? Do we delight to meet those needs?

Do we approach a situation wanting to meet somebody else's needs? Or to have our own needs met?

Actually, we want love—we want our needs met. But are we ready to meet somebody else's needs? She's saying, "Oh God, how can You put up with such a stupid child as I?"

The Lord is not like that. He is super sensitive to our needs. He knows our desires. And He delights to meet these men where they are.

So in verse 20 it's normal for Him to say:

v. 20 Truly, truly, I am saying to you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall become joy.

"Truly, truly, I am saying to you, you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will become joy."

Now the "Truly, truly," is always an authoritative statement in light of some dialogue. He's got to make some definite statement. And so with these men, He confronts them head-on.

He said, "Yes, you are going to weep and lament. You're going to be crying—in just a few hours in fact. But not the world. They're going to rejoice."

Imagine that. What a condemnation of the world over a dead Christ. The world is going to be rejoicing because Christ is dead.

“you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall become joy.”

Something good is going to happen.

The one thing we can always count on is that when we’re going through trauma and sorrow in our life, it’s “a little while.” And it will turn to joy.

Always sorrow in the life of the believer has boundaries. It has limitations. To the world—uh-uh. Their joy is only for a moment and their sorrow will increase and end up being an eternal sorrow.

“As your days, so shall your strength be.” (ref. Deuteronomy 33:25)

The Lord has engineered our lives to be lived one day at a time. And as we live them one day at a time, He gives the grace, the sufficiency, and all that we need to live it.

Burton Hillis told a story of how oftentimes he went walking with his father on Sunday and he’d get so tired and didn’t know how far it was back. And he’d say, “Daddy, how far?” And his father would always say, “It’s only a little further.” And finally Burton said, “One day I said, ‘Daddy, how far is a

little further?’ and daddy said, “It’s farther than you can see, but not as far as you can go.”

(source unknown)

And that can take us through an awful lot, when we know the little while might be a little further than we can see but it’s certainly not as far as we can go with the sustaining grace of God in those circumstances.

Our lives are like a vapor. They appear for a little time then they pass away. And our sorrow is going to be turned to joy. That’s why we can be at peace, that’s why we can even be joyful in the midst of our sorrow with the anticipation and the expectation that things are going to get better.

There might be some things that are really bothering us and we don’t want to share them with anybody, but we need some ministry from the Word. So let’s look at a few verses.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He makes all things beautiful in His time.

It’s “His time,” not ours. And that “little while” is “His time.” We can claim it.

Lamentations 3:24-26

My soul claims the Lord as an inheritance, therefore I will hope in Him. The Lord is wonderfully good to those who wait

for Him, to those who seek for Him. It is good both to hope and to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Psalm 27:14

Wait, don't be impatient,
wait for the Lord
and He will come and save you.
Be brave, stout-hearted and courageous,
yes, wait and He will help you.

Ever heard the story of Habakkuk? Habakkuk opens his book by being ticked at God, that God isn't doing anything. And God says, "Yes, I am! I'm doing a great work in your day! You just won't believe it! This is what I'm going to do!" Habakkuk says, "I don't like what You're going to do." Finally the Lord says, "Okay Habakkuk...":

Habakkuk 2:3

These things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass, just be patient. They will not be overdue a single day.

The liberation from what we're learning—the trauma, the trial, the sorrow—will not be overdue a single day. The time will come when the Lord will vindicate us.

Romans 8:18

I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us later.

Romans 8:28

God is working it together for good...

In a little time, okay? Trust Him.

2 Corinthians 4:16, 17

[He says] ... the momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.

Thank You Lord! He starts sharing it with his brothers and his family. The next thing he's been put into a pit, his dad thinks he's dead, and he's been sold into the land of Egypt.

“Thank You Lord, what happened to the dreams?”

He's a servant in Potiphar's house. From 17 until 24—seven years—falsely accused of eliciting sexual favors. He is put into prison for six years. He's now 30!

“Lord, this is the way You do it huh? You talk about a little while. That's thirteen years.”

And then after the thirteen years are over, the Lord all of a sudden works the circumstances in his life to where he is

elevated to second in command in the kingdom. He's head of the Food and Drug Administration, the Food Stamp Program and everything—grain distribution in Egypt.

He finds a sweet lady, married, has two beautiful children by the name of Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph can say when the brothers come down to see him finally, “You sold me but God sent me. You thought it for evil against me, but God meant it for good.”

God's going to write the finale to this thing. And it ain't over yet. And a little while is a little while. And when the little while's over, God's not going to tell us the boundaries of it. He's only just going to say, “I'm going to be the one that does exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think. And when I put it together, you're going to recognize it. And I'll tell you another thing, you're going to say exactly what they said at the wedding in Cana of Galilee when they tasted that wine that Christ made. “You've saved the best till now.”

And we're going to keep on saying that until we die and we walk into the Lord's presence in glory. We're going to say the very first thing to Him, “You've saved the best till now. This is even more wonderful than I could have ever dreamed or anticipated.”

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy is going to come in the morning.” (ref. Psalm 30:5)

Now what happens though? Days and hours pass slowly, don't

they, when love is separated? Who can measure the joy and the tears of gratitude when love is finally reunited?

So we say, “Even so, come Lord Jesus. Soon we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is!” Our sorrow is going to become joy.

Now how can it be joy right now? It can be joy right now because God the Father is at work and the sorrow’s only temporary and it’s going to be turned to joy. And He’s working all things together for good. When we put that all together, we don’t have anything to be sorry about and sad. God is at work.

If we’re sorrowful and sad it’s just because we don’t believe that God’s at work, huh?

Now when the Lord does something like that, He always gives us an illustration. Isn’t it neat, the illustration He uses? Look at verse 21.

v. 21 Whenever a woman is about to give birth, she is having sorrow, because her hour has come; but whenever she bears the child, no longer is she remembering her anguish, because of her joy that a man has been born into the world.

“Whenever a woman is about to give birth, she is having sorrow, because her hour has come; but whenever she bears the child, no longer is she remembering her anguish, because of her joy that a man has been born into the world.”

She's going to go through the valley of the shadow of death with these birth pains. But through the process of this, a child is going to be born and then she's going to forget the birth pains because of the joy of what has been given birth to.

Isn't it neat that the Lord's going to do that? He's dying on the cross so that we can be born again!

John 1:12, 13

As many received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor the will of man, but of God.

He's getting ready to produce that and so He uses an illustration. A woman suffers temporarily, but it's replaced with the joy of the result—the fruit of the womb.

And all the Lord is saying is, we can do the same thing. This suffering and the separation of love now is just for a little while and then it'll be over. It will be “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

“And this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while if necessary you've been distressed by various trials.”
(ref. 1 Peter 1:6)

**v. 22 And therefore you, too, now are having sorrow;
but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice,**

and your joy no one is taking away from you.

“And therefore you, too, now are having sorrow;”

He’s applying the illustration from the woman.

“but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one is taking away from you.”

As He applies the illustration, what does He say? Three things—and love separated loves to hear these three things:

1. “I will see you again,”
2. “your heart will rejoice,” and
3. “your joy nobody’s taking away from you.”

Now love separated loves to hear that. We don’t keep real love separated for very long. That’s why when we sing that third verse of “How Great Thou Art,” it just blows us away.

When Christ shall come
With shout of acclamation and take me home
What joy shall thrill my heart.
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim,
My God, how great Thou art!
(source unknown)

Why is it a joy that won't be taken away from us? Because we're not going to be separated ever again.

When we get back together with the Lord again, it's an eternal thing. And we'll never have to go through the sorrow of separation ever again. It's all over.

He's saying to these guys, "See look, you're going to see Me, your heart's going to rejoice, and your joy nobody's taking away from you."

John 15:11

These things I have spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be made full.

v. 23 And in that day you shall ask me no question.

Truly, truly I am saying to you, whatever you shall ask of the Father, He will give it to you in my name.

"And in that day you shall ask me no question. Truly, truly I am saying to you, whatever you shall ask of the Father, He will give it to you in my name."

Now what is "in that day"?

That's the day when we're with the Lord. He's saying, "in that day you aren't going to ask any more questions."

Did that get to Peter and to Thomas and to Philip and Judas

Thaddeus Lebbaeus?

Why aren't we going to ask any more questions? Well the Corinthian epistle tells us that "we see through a glass darkly but then face to face we know in part, but even as we are known." (1 Corinthians 13:12)

The Lord, first of all, is going to clear up everything! Every single event in our life is going to be made clear when we see. He's just going to lay it right out there for us. And it would be the very things that we would choose and it's consistent with His love—everything He's allowed. And He's got a lot of things to clear up in some of our lives, right? But the first thing He's going to do is clear it all up so there's no more need for questions. No restrictions.

"Whatever you'll ask of the Father in My name, that I'll give you."

v. 24 Up till now you requested not even one thing in my name; be constantly making request, and you shall receive, in order that your joy may be made full.

"Up till now you asked not even one thing in my name; be constantly making request, and you shall receive, in order that your joy may be made full."

Now John 16:24 is a PRAYER PROMISE.

“Hitherto if you ask nothing in My name, ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full.”

Put that into context. Why do they need to request anything from the Father? Because they don’t understand the “little while” and they don’t understand why He’s going to the Father, right?

Their questions are:

HOW LONG? and

WHY?

And the Lord’s not obligated to answer those questions so they haven’t made a request that’s valid yet. The only prayer the Lord will answer in the midst of the sorrow is, “What am I supposed to learn?”

He’ll begin to make it clear or if we lack wisdom to relate to it, He’ll reveal it. But the other—just forget it. He’s not going to tell us how long. He’s not going to tell us why. And if we’ve asked those things and we’re not getting any answers. We aren’t going to get any, because He’s not obligated to do that.

But when we come and ask the question, “What am I supposed to learn?” The Lord’s going to be ready. The Lord will give us wisdom so that we can respond properly to this trial.

Now what do we need to request when we're in it?

1. We need WISDOM,
2. We need GRACE to endure it,
3. We need PATIENCE with the process that the Lord's working and pruning our life for fruitfulness, and
4. We need SILENT SENSITIVITY

And that means be still and know that He's God and let Him speak so that we can be really sensitive to what He's saying. And through His Word and through our prayer time and through Christian friends and counsel, we are hearing what the Lord is saying.

But when our heart is full of sorrow and our questions are WHY, we're not going to get any answers.

1. There are a lot of QUESTIONS,
2. There are a lot of HEARTBREAKS,
3. There's lots of SORROW,
4. There's lots of HURT, and
5. There's lots of PAIN.

And the Lord says, “Up to now you haven’t come to ask; ask and you shall receive, then your joy is going to be full.”

v. 25 These things I have spoken to you in figures of speech; an hour is coming, when I will speak no longer to you in figures of speech, but I will tell you plainly concerning the Father.

“These things I have spoken to you in figures of speech; an hour is coming, when I will speak no longer to you in figures of speech, but I will tell you plainly concerning the Father.”

v. 26 In that day you will ask in my name; and I am not saying to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;

“In that day you will ask in my name; and I am not saying to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;”

v. 27 for the Father himself is loving you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

“for the Father himself is loving you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.”

v. 28 I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; again I am leaving the world, and I am going to the Father.”

“I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; again I am leaving the world, and I am going to the Father.”

There’s nothing clearer, is there?

He says, “I came down here from the Father, on this very express mission. I finished the work and I’m getting ready to go back to the Father.”

So He has told them, without any kind of parabolic example or fashion or clouded speech, clearly exactly what He’s going to do.

v. 29 His disciples are saying to him: “Behold, now you are speaking in plainness of words, and are not using a figure of speech.”

“His disciples are saying to him: ‘Behold, now you are speaking in plainness of words, and are not using figures of speech.’”

v. 30 Now we are knowing that you know all things and that you are not having need that anyone be questioning you. By this we are believing that you came from God.”

“Now we are knowing that you know all things and that you are not having need that anyone be questioning you.”

In other words, “Peter, Thomas, Philip, Judas Thaddeus

Lebbaeus, shut up.”

“By this we are believing that you came from God.”

The Lord’s answer is incredible, isn’t it?

v. 31 Jesus answered them: “Are you just now believing?”

“Jesus answered them: ‘Are you just now believing?’”

That is a legitimate question in light of the intensity of their exposure over the last three years. They’ve had a million opportunities and He’s saying, “Are you just now believing?”

Remember when Philip said back in 14, “Show us the Father and it satisfies us”? What did the Lord say? “Have I been so long a time with you Philip and you have not come to know Me?”

There is hurt in His voice. “Are you just now believing? After three years of intense training, after all of this exposure and experience, you are just now believing?”

There was probably a sigh of relief. If He’d been like us, He would have said, “Well thank goodness you made it. You waited till the last minute to pull it together, but praise God you did. You slow of heart to believe.”

Are these guys believers in relationships? Yes.

What is the belief involved then? It involves the little while that the Lord permits in our life and it also involves the “what are you going to learn?”

The sooner we’re willing to really believe that the Lord can handle our life and control all of its circumstances and He does. And he only allows that which is Father-filtered to bring glory and honor to His name and fruit through us so that He can be glorified, are we really believing?

So the question is, as a believer, are we just now finally pulling it together and really believing that God is working everything in our life together for good? That is a traumatic moment for the Lord when that happens to us.

The Lord probably finally said, “Ah! They got it together! There’s no telling what we’re going to do now that they’re cooperating so fully and really believing Me.”

v. 32 Behold, an hour is coming and has already come, that you shall be scattered each to his own home, and me you will leave alone. And yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.

“Behold, an hour is coming and has already come, that you shall be scattered each to his own home, and me you will leave alone.”

This is love in separation. He just told us that.

“And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.”

Where are we standing right now? We’re just getting ready to reach out and open the gate to go in for prayer. The sermon is over.

He’s saying, “Guys, are you just now believing? Right here in the home stretch, the goal is in view and you’re just now believing? I want to tell you guys, an hour is coming. In fact it’s already here. You’re going to be scattered each to your own home. Camp’s over guys. You’re going to leave your counselor. You’re going to leave your mates and you each are going back home again. And you’re going to leave Me alone.”

And then that next statement just blows us away:

“And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.”

Sometimes when people forsake us and they turn their back on us and they don’t like us anymore and they leave us, we can still say, “But so-and-so still stands with me.” So we seek out and reach some comfort in that.

That’s what the Lord Jesus is doing here. He’s saying, “You know you guys are all leaving. I love you! This is love separating. This is hurting. But I’m not alone. The Father’s with Me.”

Alright, get this. How can we enter into the loneliness, the

isolation and the intense pain of the words, “Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?” in just a few short hours?

Are we alone? Do we think nobody cares for us?

Jesus has been there. He knows with the greatest of intensity, when even as He tells His men, “You’re all going to the house and I’m going to be left alone, but I’m not alone. The Father’s with Me.” That in just a few short hours, the Father is going to forsake His Son and turn His back on Him.

You know, that statement makes me know that Christ really knows what agape love is all about. You think about it for a minute.

First of all, He had to wash dirty feet. Then somebody who’s supposed to love Him, lifts up his heel against Him. And then He’s denied by one of His leaders. And then on top of all of this, the world hates Him without a reason. And now His close followers are scattering to the four winds!

Smite the shepherd and the sheep scatter! And now, the Father turns His back on the Son.

Lonely, bitter, resentful, forsaken.

Paul had the same experience in 2 Timothy 4:16-18. He says, “Everybody left me, but the Lord stood by me and strengthened me.”

The neat thing about it is, when the Father turned His back on His Son, when that happened it just tells us that it'll never happen to us. Agape love will never forsake us.

Hebrews 13:5

I will never leave you nor forsake you....

Psalms 23:4

Even though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you need fear no evil, for he is with you.

Isaiah 33:14

“Moses, My presence shall go with thee and I will give you rest.”

Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God.

Isaiah 43:2

When you pass through the rivers I shall be with thee, and through the floods they shall not overflow thee.

We'll never have to be alone. Jesus Christ encountered that

once.

The total separation, the loneliness and the isolation, so that we never have to experience it, He did. Love in separation.

v. 33 **These things I have spoken to you, in order that in me you may be having peace; in the world you are having tribulation, but be having courage; I have conquered the world.”**

“These things I have spoken to you,”

Then He talks about the whole address that He’s given to them.

“in order that in me you may be having peace; in the world you are having tribulation, but be having courage; I have conquered the world.”

“in me you are having peace”

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world give thy unto you, but not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid.

Why in the world are we going to have tribulation? Because the world hates that which does not conform to it.

Notice He says, “but be having courage.”

That’s the word *hupomenō*. It means “endurance,” “hang in there.”

This is the same word that is in Hebrews 12: “You have need of patience (or endurance) to run the race that’s set before you.” (ref. Hebrews 12:1)

Hebrews 10:36

For you have need of endurance that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.

We look at that statement, “I have conquered the world,” and wonder, “When?!”

Realize this is an eternal being speaking. And He’s so sure of what’s going to happen tomorrow that He can count it as already past!

“I have conquered the world.”

“I have conquered your old nature. I have conquered Satan. The world, the flesh and the devil fall before Calvary’s Cross!”

His kingdom, his people who submit to him, the world system, and the old nature within us are all conquered in just a few short hours when He bleeds on Calvary.

The neat thing about that is, that's exactly the way God looks on us.

Romans 8:29 says: "Whom He justified, then He also glorified."

When God starts something, He never leaves it undone and He already treats it as being done. He doesn't look at us like we are now. He looks at us as if we're going to be with Him when we're in His presence. From God's perspective, the work's already done. We're like Jesus.

The fact that He started it, it's already done. We can rejoice in that! Positionally we are perfectly righteous in Christ! And that's all the Father sees. We have been declared righteous.

That's why Philippians 1:6 says, "You can be confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will continue to perform it till the day of Jesus Christ." The outcome is already assured!

That's 2 Corinthians 2:14, "Now thanks be unto God who is always leading us in a constant pageant of triumph."

That's going to be in the prayer in our next study. We're going to feel the same vibrant dynamic victory. Isn't it neat that He ends like this? With the talk?

He could have said, "Look guys, I'm getting scared. Look guys, it's time to fold our tents and head to the house. I've been

playing games.”

“Be of good cheer, I have conquered the world!” Only the eternal Son of God could speak that and He could say to them, “You will overcome too and I will grant you to sit with Me on My throne as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

When we believe in a sovereign God that’s working everything together for good, even in the hour of our greatest trauma and trial, we can thank God for the victory, because our sorrow is going to be turned to joy. And what is borne of God overcomes the world and this is the victory that overcomes the world. Even our faith is trusting God for what we can’t see! But we know with certainty, on the basis of His promises, our sorrow is going to be turned to joy! And love, which is separated, is going to be reunited because soon we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.

Mrs. Horacio Spafford and her four daughters were sailing to Europe. Mr. Spafford was a lawyer in Chicago. He had to stay behind because of some pressing problems with his practice while the four girls and mother journeyed ahead. The ship had an accident and the four girls and the mother knelt down and asked the Lord to deliver them if it was His will. And as the wreck continued and the ship sunk, all four girls were drowned.

Mrs. Spafford was found unconscious ten days later by a fisherman, still alive but unconscious. When she got to Cardiff

she wired her husband two words: “Saved alone.”

Overwhelmed with grief, but not bitterness, as he sailed over the spot where the ship had gone down he wrote these words:

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll.
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, tho’ trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control.
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate
And has shed His own blood for my soul.
(source unknown)

What are the lessons we learn from this particular section?

Lesson #1: The Lord is always aware of our heart’s desire.

He knew they wanted to ask those questions.

Lesson #2: Our sorrow is going to be turned to joy.

Lesson #3: Our joy is going to be eternal.

Nobody’s going to take it away.

Lesson #4: There will be no need for questions because all will be plain.

Lesson #5: Consider well the question of our Lord, “Are you just now believing?”

Romans 4:20, 21

Abraham staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God that what He had promised He was able also to perform.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not yet seen.

Lesson #6: We will never be alone, because the Father is always with us.

Lesson #7: You can have peace in the storm because the Lord is in control.

Lesson #8: Christ conquered the world, the flesh and the devil by His death.

His banner over us is love,
Our sword the word of God;
We tread the road the saints above
With shouts of triumph trod.
By faith, they like a whirlwind’s breath,
Swept on o’er every field;

The faith by which they conquered death
Is still our shining shield.

On every hand the foe we find
Drawn up in dread array;
Let tents of ease be left behind,
And onward to the fray.
Salvation's helmet on each head,
With truth all girt about,
The earth shall tremble 'neath our tread
And echo with a shout.

To him that overcomes the foe,
White raiment shall be giv'n;
Before the angels he shall know
His name confessed in heav'n.
Then onward from the hills of light,
Our hearts with love aflame;
We'll vanquish all the hosts of night,
In Jesus' conquering name.

CHORUS:

Faith is the victory!
Faith is the victory!
Oh, glorious victory,
That overcomes the world.
(source unknown)

Father, we come to You and we thank You for the victory that
is ours in Jesus Christ. Father, it hurts that we're separated

from You it seems. Love which is separated, these men could not see beyond that separation to the fact that You were still in control and that You were promising to reunite them. And that their sorrow was only temporary and that joy was going to come. We would pray now that Your Holy Spirit would apply to our lives the lessons we've learned. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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The Ultimate LOVE STORY

John 13-17

“The Final Hours Before the Cross”

Study Number Seven – Love in Separation – John 16:16-33

NOTES

v. 16 “A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while, and you will see me.”

v. 17 Therefore, some of His disciples said to one another, “What is this thing He is saying to us, ‘A little while and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father?’”

v. 18 Therefore, they were saying: “What is this that He is saying, ‘A little while’? We are not knowing what He is saying.”

v. 19 Jesus knew that they were desiring to be asking Him, and He said to them: “Concerning this are you deliberating with one another that I said, ‘A little while, and no longer are you beholding me; and again a little while and you will see Me’?”

v. 20 Truly, truly, I am saying to you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall become joy.

v. 21 Whenever a woman is about to give birth, she is having sorrow, because her hour has come; but whenever she bears the child, no longer is she remembering her anguish, because of her joy that a man has been born into the world.

v. 22 And therefore you, too, now are having sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one is taking away from you.

v. 23 And in that day you shall ask me no question. Truly, truly I am saying to you, whatever you shall ask of the Father, He will give it to you in my name.

NOTES

v. 24 Up till now you requested not even one thing in my name; be constantly making request, and you shall receive, in order that your joy may be made full.

v. 25 These things I have spoken to you in figures of speech; an hour is coming, when I will speak no longer to you in figures of speech, but I will tell you plainly concerning the Father.

v. 26 In that day you will ask in my name; and I am not saying to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;

v. 27 for the Father himself is loving you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

v. 28 I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; again I am leaving the world, and I am going to the Father.”

v. 29 His disciples are saying to him: “Behold, now you are speaking in plainness of words, and are not using a figure of speech.

v. 30 Now we are knowing that you know all things and that you are not having need that anyone be questioning you. By this we are believing that you came from God.”

v. 31 Jesus answered them: “Are you just now believing?”

v. 32 Behold, an hour is coming and has already come, that you shall be scattered each to his own home, and me you will leave alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

v. 33 These things I have spoken to you, in order that in me you may be having peace; in the world you are having tribulation, but be having courage; I have conquered the world.”

QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 16:16-33 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What does Jesus mean by His announcement in verse 16?

3. Explain the response of the disciples and of the world, according to verse 20.

4. What illustration does Jesus use, according to verse 21?

5. What promise is given to us in verses 23 and 24?

6. What is the Father's attitude toward them, according to verse 27?

7. What is the disciples' response to Jesus' plainness of words, according to verse 30?

8. Why has Jesus spoken these words, according to verse 33?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The Lord is always aware of our heart's desire.

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LESSON #2: Our sorrow is going to be turned to joy.

LESSON #3: Our joy is going to be eternal.

LESSON #4: There will be no need for questions because all will be made plain.

LESSON #5: Consider well the question of our Lord, “Are you just now believing?”

LESSON #6: We are never alone, because the Father is always with us.

LESSON #7: We can have peace in the storm because the Lord is in control.

LESSON #8: Christ has secured the victory over the world by His death on the cross.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
