

JESUS' LAST WORDS

His hands were tied. A blindfold was taken out that would be wrapped around his eyes. The man stood there in front of the firing squad, ready to be executed.

That's when the captain of the guard, a huge man - tall and heavy - a man with a real wide girth, spoke up and asked, "Do you have a final request?" The convict thought for a few seconds, looked at the wide-bodied captain, and answered, "Yes I do. Would you please stand in front of me?"

John 13-17 are Jesus' last words - His final instructions to His disciples.

Jesus is facing the Jewish firing squad, and He knows He'll face it alone. In the end, none of His disciples will be strong enough to stand in front of Him.

Jesus is the one with His back against the wall - but instead of His disciples comforting Him... He comforts them. He promises them *hope, help, and heaven.*

FOOT WASHING

John 13:3 should be accompanied with a drum roll. It's quite an introduction, "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God..." He has all things in His hands. The power that hung the heavens and created the universe is now coursing through His veins. Miracle muscle and divine know-how are at Jesus' disposal...

Think of it this way, the infinite resources of God, have become His toolbox. Jesus' goal is to fix a broken world... what *tool will He choose? What will He do?* What does Jesus do with His incredible power? *He pulls out a towel and a bowl, and washes His disciples' feet.*

In the Middle East, open toe shoes were in fashion. It was a common courtesy for the servant of the house to wash the feet of the guests when they arrived. Of the disciples, no one wanted to be a servant - they were all concerned with being greatest - so it was left to Jesus to do the dirty work. The Master stoops to serve. He humbles Himself to build up, and refresh, and cleanse His disciples.

When Jesus approaches Peter, a prideful Peter balks. In verse 8 he responds, "You shall never wash my feet!" Foot-washing assaults the pride of the person with the rag, and mocks the pride of the person with the feet. Foot-washing in anyone's culture is humbling and humiliating business. Peter wants nothing to do with it...

But Jesus answers him in verse 8, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." In that case, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" Peter's immediate brokenness is admirable, but he still doesn't get it...

Jesus answers him in verse 10, "He who is

bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean..." Whenever a man was visited to an important event he first took a bath, but en route to the function his feet got dirty. When he arrived he didn't need another bath, just his feet cleaned.

Come to Jesus, and you'll get a bath in the blood. We're cleansed spiritually, in the inner man - but we still interface with a dirty world, and pick up dust. We don't need to be saved again - just a simple refreshing and cleansing of our attitude.

In verses 14-15, Jesus tell us foot-washing is an example not a ritual. You can wash a million feet and miss the point. Jesus is after an attitude, not an action. Jesus is demonstrating how to treat people... Approach them humbly - bathe them with kind words and healing deeds. Pour out encouragement, and cleansing conversation, and healing tones - do all you can to make them feel welcome.

If washing feet is not your primary business, you're not following the Master!

And notice verse 17, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." The word "blessed" means "happy." Here's a shocking thought... if you want to be happy, then, be a foot washer. *Com'on Sandy, you gotta be kid'n!* Hey, that's what Jesus said. And I ask you, has He ever lied to you before?

What have you got to lose? You're miserable most of the time anyway. Why not forget about yourself, take a bowl and towel, and wash a few feet? You might be surprised with the results!

Devotion Box - The Love Of Jesus

John 13:1 says this of Jesus' attitude toward His disciples, "having loved His own who were in the world, *He loved them to the end.*" Even though they failed Him, forsook Him, denied Him - and one even betrayed Him - it did not thwart Jesus' love for them. *He loved them to the end.* Guys, never forget, when you stop loving Jesus... it doesn't mean He stops loving you!

Devotion Box - A New Commandment

In 13:34 Jesus gives His disciples a new commandment, "that you love one another; as I have loved you..." Loving one another was nothing new, but to love as Jesus loved - that had never been done! Jesus' love was supernatural. It was love with no strings attached. To love like Jesus was to love with God's love.

In verse 35 Jesus says we are identified as His followers - *not by our sound doctrine, moral lives, or the miracles we perform* - but by our love for one another. Sometimes it's easier to love a sinner than it is a saint. We expect more from those within the family than from those without. How do we treat our brothers and sisters in Christ?

The world will know who my Father is by how I treat my brother!

WHAT TO EXPECT IN HEAVEN

He opens on a cheerful note, 14:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Jesus didn't split to never return. He'll be back!

Jesus left His disciples to develop a complex of heavenly condos... if you know Him you've got one of those condos in your name - and it's rent free for eternity.

The English word "*mansions*" is the Greek word "*monai*", which means "*rooms*". The root word means "*to stay*." *Monai* could be translated "*staying places*."

When I think of a mansion I picture the house Jed Clampett moved into when his family arrived in Beverly Hills - 40 rooms, a cement pond, a fancy, felt-covered dinner table. But that's not what Jesus promises. In essence, he's promising us a room - a place to stay - under the Father's roof... in the Father's house.

Robert Frost defined home "*as the place where they have to take you in*". It's the place where you're known best, and loved most - where you can be yourself and feel accepted - where you can let your hair down, relax, and unwind.

If heaven were a huge, cavernous castle or mansion - I'd be disappointed. Jesus' idea of heaven is not some castle fortress, or a lonely old mansion, but a place of intimacy and fellowship - a staying place in the Father's house.

Devotion Box - God's Peace

Jesus closes chapter 14 with a promise of peace. Verse 27, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The world's peace is the absence of conflict. It's been said, "Peace is the short interval of time when everyone stops to reload."

God's peace is contentment in the midst of the world's madness. It's inner clarity, inexplicable rest, harmony with God. Jesus doesn't tell us to ask for His peace. He's left it with us. It's within the grasp of faith for every Christian. Stretch out and take possession of His peace.

HOW TO GET TO HEAVEN

Thomas asks Jesus in verses 5-6, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" He's looking for an actual roadmap to heaven.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" Here's a foundational Christian premise. Christianity is not a set of precepts or a philosophy, but a person. *Jesus* is the way to God.

Notice Jesus doesn't say, "*I am a way, a truth, and a life*." No, He's "*the way, the truth, and the life*." Jesus is saying the way to God is very narrow and specific.

Of course, this narrow-mindedness is offensive in an age of pluralism and relativism. But think it through... there are issues in life that are not open to interpretation, or negotiation, or debate. There are right and wrongs.

This year, when I do my income tax, suppose I decide to estimate my income... just round off my dependants to the nearest 10. Why look at the tax tables in the back...? I'll just do what seems fair. Hey, it'll all work out, as long as I'm sincere.

If I take that approach with my income tax I'll end up in *jail* - and if you take that approach with God you'll end up in *hell*. The way is very narrow.

In John 6:38, Jesus said, "I have come down from heaven." All kinds of people claim to know the way to heaven, but only Jesus came from heaven. Heaven is His hometown. Since He hails from heaven, He knows how to get us there.

Devotion Box - Friends

Jesus says in 15:15, "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you." Servants work out of obligation, or duty, or for a paycheck, or to avoid punishment - but a friend has a relationship.

Are you a hired-hand - merely a servant - or are you a friend of Jesus? Your answer will determine your motive, and color every aspect of your Christian life.

GOSPEL GRAPES

In John 15 Jesus introduces *the Gospel Grapes*.

Jesus and His disciples have probably left the upper room, and they're headed to the Garden of Gethsemane, but along the way they stop by a vineyard.

Jesus draws an illustration, and compares His followers to branches on a vine. He says in verse 1, "I am the true vine, and My Father the vinedresser."

We learn quickly from His illustration that what Jesus is after in the branches is fruit. Which reminds me of a riddle: "What did the branch say to the vinedresser?" The answer: "This bud's for you." Likewise, we ought to bear fruit to God. The fruits of the Spirit, labors of love, an effective witness - are all *juicy fruits*.

Our lives should yield grapes. But to produce fruit that pleases God a branch must be attached to the vine. The life-giving sap - the life force that produces the fruit - doesn't come from the branch, but from its connection to the vine.

The person who abides in Christ - and trusts in that connection - is the person who becomes fruitful spiritually. Guys, the branch is not the source. The source is the vine. The only job of the branch is to abide, or stay connected to the vine.

Too many Christians struggle to produce fruit through their own efforts. You'll never see a branch full of fruit struggle. It naturally bears fruit when it's properly connected to the vine. Its only job is to hang out - take in - stay connected.

In golf you don't have to swing hard to hit the ball a long way. There's a golf adage, "Let the club head do the work." If you get the club to the ball in the proper position the ball will fly. And likewise, the key to spiritual success is just as simple. *Meet the Savior with the right attitude, and the connection will do all the work!*

Study this passage, and you'll notice a progression... fruit, more fruit, much fruit. Bearing fruit pleases God, but He wants to maximize the yield.

And so Jesus says in verse 2, "every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." I'm sure you've seen a bush that's been pruned. It looks like you've killed it. The leaves and thickness are gone. The branch gets cut back so the sap will flow to the fruit, not the foliage. This is what's needed in our lives.

God cuts back our foliage. He thins out the greenery to make room for more grapes. He puts the pruning knife to unwholesome habits, unnecessary activities, unhealthy relationships, and unprofitable ambitions. He causes us to refocus.

When God prunes your life you'll be tempted to think He's killing you. It hurts. It's painful. There are times when you'll think God has gone too far - the knife has sunk too deep. He eliminates things you thought you could never live without. But don't worry, you'll bounce back bearing a bigger bounty! *Less can be more*. Surrender to the pruning process... it's the only way to grow.

And note what happens if a branch doesn't bear fruit. Verse 2, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away..." Verse 6 adds it's thrown into the fire.

People ask me, "*Do you believe in eternal security?*" And I answer, "*Sure, as long as you're abiding in the vine.*" But if you're a branch... in Christ... and if you bear no fruit... God will cut you out... even throw you into the fire. It's not enough to put your faith at one point - you have to continue in faith, or abide.

Hey, Jesus is not teaching *once saved always saved* - rather He's teaching *once shaved always shaved*. The pruning process gets repeated over and over.

ANOTHER HELPER

Jesus had tutored His 12 disciples for 3½ years. They'd learned to depend on Jesus for everything - everyday. He'd been a constant help. Now Jesus is leaving - but they won't be left alone. Another Helper will take Messiah's place.

The Holy Spirit took up where Jesus left off. The expression used in verse 16, "another Helper" means "*another of the same kind*." In other words, the Holy Spirit continues the work of Jesus in the spirit of the believer - from inside out.

In sports there are players who specialize in coming off the bench to help the team. In basketball, it's the sixth man. In baseball, it's the pinch hitter. In football, it's the nickel back. These guys make a living being substitutes, or replacements. You might say the Holy Spirit is the super sub. He takes up where Jesus leaves off.

In 14:16 the Holy Spirit is called the "Helper" or "*parakletos*." The word means to come alongside. For me, it conjures up the picture of the President's bodyguard. This special agent assists and guides and protects the President. If we could see into the spiritual realm we'd probably see a guy in a dark suit, wearing sunglasses, with an earpiece in his ear standing next to each of us. He's the special agent, Holy Spirit... rather than Agent 007, He's probably Agent 777.

John 15:26 tells us, "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." Once when Johnny Carson hosted *The Tonight Show*, the camera panned off stage, and focused on Freddy DeCordova, the long time director of the show. This was unusual and unplanned. When DeCordova realized what had happened he was furious. He shouted, "No, no, no, get the camera on Johnny, he's the star." This is the Holy Spirit's job. *He testifies of Jesus*. He focuses the spotlight on Jesus and keeps a low profile.

This may sound odd, but it's true... "A church preoccupied with the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit is not being led by the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit's job is to glorify and testify of Jesus!

Bible Scan - John 13-17

Calvary Chapel

If you have questions on tonight's study email Pastor Sandy - sandyadams@calvarychapel.org
For back issues of Bible Scan study guides: www.calvarychapelstonemountain.com/biblescan.htm

Calvary Chapel Announcements - Café Calvary (Pastor James/Randy McCracken) & the Spanish Fellowship, Wednesday, Feb. 13th, 7:30 PM
Valentines Banquet for Married Couples, Friday, February 15th at 7:00 PM.
Calvary Chapel Christian School's Open House, Sunday, February 17th at 3:00 PM

Next Bible Scan - February 17, 2002 - John 18-21

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" - John 14:6

Bible Scan Memory Verse

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We refer to Matthew 6 as "*The Lord's Prayer*," but it's not. Jesus never prayed, "forgive us our sins..." He was a sinless Savior. Matthew 6 should be called "*The Disciples' Prayer*." It was composed for us as a model for our praying...

John 17 is the true... "*Lord's Prayer*"... In the shadow of the cross, Jesus pours out His soul to the Father in heaven. John 17 has been called "*the Holy of Holies of the New Testament*." It's holy ground. What a privilege to eavesdrop in on the conversation between Jesus and His Father just before Jesus heads to the cross.

CONVICTING THE WORLD

Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convict the world, and comfort the Christian. Verses 8-11, He convicts the world...

"Of sin, because they do not believe in Me." In Judaism, sins were all picky prohibitions. But real sin is an affront to a person – the failure to believe in Jesus.

"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more." The Pharisees lived an ugly, outward form of self-righteousness. Jesus revealed the beauty of holiness – love, humility, truth. The Spirit keeps the spotlight on Jesus.

"Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." Satan held us hostage to sin, until Jesus foiled his plot. On the cross, Jesus brought judgment on Satan. His tyranny was broken. The Spirit reminds us that there is freedom in Jesus.

Devotion Box - Being The Answer To Jesus' Prayer

In verse 11 Jesus prays for unity among His disciples, "keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are."

Once, a man was visiting a mental hospital where he noticed only 3 guards in charge of hundreds of dangerous patients. He asked one of the guards, "Don't you fear that these people will use their numbers and overpower you?"

The man responded, "No, lunatics never unite."

Holding on to worn-out grudges, and nursing bruised feelings, and not letting go of stubborn prejudices is proof of our insanity. Jesus is praying for our unity.

Jesus prays again for the unity of His future followers (literally, you and me) in verse 21, "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."

Cohesion and harmony within a group are rare. Today, families are crumbling, neighborhoods are in turmoil. Genuine, workable oneness is what our world needs. When the church demonstrates that unity, the world takes notice.

On the eve of the cross, Jesus was concerned for our relationship with each other. Tomorrow He goes to the cross. Tonight He

prays for the folks at Calvary Chapel that we'll drop our petty grievances, and love each other.

Jesus prays that you and I will stay tight. Our unity testifies of His power.

If you walked by and saw a penny on the sidewalk you'd probably ignore it and walk on. But if you saw several pennies you'd be more inclined to pick them up.

I heard of an armored car that turned over and spilled out 4.3 million pennies – that's \$43,000. That might be worth stopping and picking up some pennies.

Guys, we're like pennies – a lone Christian may not capture anyone's attention, but if a person walks into a church, and sees hundreds of believers united and loving each other - they're more likely to be impressed and want to learn more.

Jesus could've prayed for anything – strength, courage, resistance to pain. He's facing the cross, and He doesn't even pray for Himself. His final request is verse 26, "that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

May we put our differences behind us, and be the answer to Jesus' prayer.