

Love, Obedience, and the Spirit

John 14.15-24

Jesus told His disciples He was going away, but promised to come again and take them to be with Him. While He's gone, they'll do greater works than He has done! How? They can ask for His help, and more important, the Father will give them the *Paraclete* – the Holy Spirit!

Did you notice...

Theology: The Trinity is clearly affirmed in these verses!

Contrast: From believing (6x in vv1-14) to loving (8x in vv15-24)

- Those who love Jesus keep His commandments (15, 21a, 23a, 24)
Jesus is calling us to a spiritually intimate relationship

Jesus' commandments/word = a way of life → fellowship (15.10)

- Jesus and the Father love those who love Him (18-20, 21b, 23b)
God's saving love is for all; God's intimate love is for His own

This love = presence, revelation, and residence

- The Father will give a Paraclete (Helper), the Spirit (16-17)
We have two Advocates – Jesus in heaven, the Spirit here

The Spirit was with them – and would be in them (and us!)

1. John's account of Jesus and the disciples in the upper room on the night He was betrayed is a fast-moving narrative. To grasp the quick succession of events and how Jesus used the disciples' questions and fears to guide His instruction to them, start with Jesus washing their feet, and give a title to each successive scene. Now 'put yourself in the room with Jesus,' and ask yourself: How do I feel? What are my 'felt needs'? What questions do you have? Do Jesus' words minister to you? In what way?
2. One of the features of John 14.15-24 (and for that matter, the entire Upper Room Discourse) is how it affirms the Trinity – God is One in essence, eternally existing in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What interaction does Jesus reveal between the three Persons of the Trinity in these verses? Jesus has already declared His union with the Father (14.9-11; cf. 10.30); how does Jesus reflect the unity of Himself and the Father with the Spirit in these verses? Who will be "in" the disciples in vv15-17? In vv18-21? In v23?
3. There is a clear connection between loving Jesus and keeping His commandments in these verses (15, 21a, 23a, 24). Note: Jesus didn't say, "If you *believe* in Me, you will keep My commandments." Why not? What difference is there between *believing* in Jesus and *loving* Jesus? As you reflect on your own spiritual life, are there times you *believed* in Jesus, but didn't *love* Him? Jesus didn't give us a list of commandments; what does 'keeping His commandments' (15, 21), or 'keeping His words' (23a, 24) refer to?
4. God's love shows itself in different ways. How would you describe God's love for every person who ever lived? How was that love for the world demonstrated? What verses prove this? How is God's love for those who love Him different? How is that love demonstrated?
5. Verses 16-17 are the first reference to the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room Discourse – but not the last! Check out 14.26, 15.26-27, and 16.7-15. Obviously, the Holy Spirit is going to be critical in the lives of the disciples (and us!). In what ways?

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
John 14:15