

## John 16

- So we continue with Part IV of the Upper Room discourse, as Jesus continues to prepare the disciples for His departure and for their roles as leaders in the church
  - So far, Jesus has revealed that His disciples can expect the following:
    - They will see Jesus depart but then return for them in the future
    - In His absence, they will do greater works than He did, in the sense of quantity and reach
    - Their prayers will be heard and answered as they make requests in Jesus' name
    - They will receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to equip them for representing Christ on earth
    - And the Spirit will teach them and remind them of Christ's words
  - Furthermore, all His disciples will enjoy a special relationship with God made possible by the propitiation of Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit
    - We will be beloved by both the Son and Father
    - We will be friends of Christ, not merely servants
      - We can know Christ's plans
      - And we can participate in bringing His plans to fruition
    - Christ will give us His peace, and calls us to abide in Him
- These lessons comprise merely the first half of the Upper Room discourse
  - We still have a couple of chapters to go, including Jesus's High Priestly Prayer, as some call chapter 17
    - We rejoin the discourse near the end of chapter, as Jesus gives yet more promises and instructions to the disciples
    - And a warning to the disciples that their mission won't be easy
    - In fact, it will bring dangers including the likelihood of martyrdom

[John 15:16](#) “ You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

[John 15:17](#) “This I command you, that you love one another.

- Jesus reminds the disciples that they have been enlisted, drafted in a sense
  - Jesus chose each of them to be His disciples and to be counted among the apostles
    - This designation is specific to these eleven men and the other select apostles that accompanied them
    - Jesus chooses and appoints apostles, and no man may assign this title to himself
    - These men carried special powers, and those powers extended to bearing fruit in unique ways
  - Therefore, these men had no choice but to respond to the Lord’s instructions
    - As Paul teaches in 2Tim

[2Tim. 2:1](#) You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

[2Tim. 2:2](#) The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

[2Tim. 2:3](#) Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

[2Tim. 2:4](#) No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

- Jesus’ mission for His apostles isn’t for the faint of heart
- So they will need to commit themselves to seeing it through
- Since the success of any military squad depends on cohesiveness, Jesus commands them to love one another
  - Every man has to watch another’s back
  - If the body of Christ won’t love itself, no one else will
  - They are about to enter battle with the enemy

- The enemy knows who his enemy is: anyone with the Spirit of God
- So let's show love to one another so that no one is pull down or left behind in the battle
- And what a battle it will be at times

[John 15:18](#) "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

[John 15:19](#) "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

[John 15:20](#) "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

[John 15:21](#) "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

[John 15:22](#) "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

[John 15:23](#) "He who hates Me hates My Father also.

[John 15:24](#) "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.

[John 15:25](#) "But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.'

[John 15:26](#) "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

[John 15:27](#) and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

- In v.18, Jesus presents an important and timeless principle that holds true for all servants of the Living God
  - The enemy hates God and those who love God, so he uses all the power at his disposal to attack God's people
  - Unbelievers are the "world" which Jesus says will persecute Christians, just as Cain persecuted Abel
  - He works in a variety of ways, including enlisting the hearts and minds of *unbelievers* against believers everywhere, whether family, friend or stranger
- Jesus' statement in v.18 may sound like a conditional relationship, as if the world's hate for God's people is in doubt
  - But the relationship is not conditional; it is always the status quo

- But notice Jesus adds in vs.19-20 that His disciples will be hated because of their association with Jesus
- So Jesus is using this Greek pronoun translated “if” to mean “as often as” the world hates you...
- So, even when a disciple is experiencing good times, relatively speaking, we should understand it won’t last
  - For example, Jesus Himself probably enjoyed many good days during His earthly ministry
  - But those days eventually gave way to times of mistreatment
  - Eventually Jesus faced crucifixion
  - So did most of His apostles
  - And we will be persecuted at some level as well
- Why does this principle exist?
  - Jesus explains why in vs. 20-21
    - Jesus says our mistreatment is a result of our association with Christ
    - We have nothing in us that the devil finds inherently worth his time to attack
    - Though He would prefer to attack God directly, Satan attacks us because we represent Jesus, and Jesus lies outside Satan’s reach
    - He attacks us as a means of preventing God from working through us
    - Because if Satan or his agents can dissuade us from following the Lord’s word and His Spirit, then he has obtained some measure of success
  - Furthermore, apart from demonic involvement, the world of unbelievers will respond in hatred to Christ’s disciples and the message of the Gospel
    - First, Jesus says in v.21 that they lack the knowledge of the Father

- And in vs.23-24, Christ says that since they are they are without a relationship with the Father, then they will hate Jesus and all Who come in His name
- Therefore, having rejected Christ, they remain in their sin and act as sin requires, which is to oppose God in all things
- Secondly, in v.22 Jesus highlights that unbelievers will experience conviction when they encounter the righteousness of God at work in the saints by the Spirit
  - Had God never brought this righteousness to earth, then the unbeliever could live in blissful ignorance of righteousness
  - And therefore, they would have had no source for conviction
- But as grace from God, the world can now know they are not right with God as they rub elbows with believers
  - When we live according to the word of God, we will naturally become a source of conviction in the world
  - Perhaps the Lord will use this force to bring repentance
  - But if their conviction doesn't lead them to repentance, it will lead to persecute those who bring conviction
  - Just as David wrote concerning himself in the Psalms, that they hated him without cause
- And just in case we think this principle has exceptions, Jesus reminds us that we are not "greater" than Christ
  - He means that we are not more important to the Father
    - Nor are we worthy of greater privilege than our Lord
    - Therefore, if the Father didn't spare His Son persecution, He will not spare us necessarily
  - We can't say that God loves us so therefore, He won't let bad things happen to us
    - Many prosperity and feel-good preachers repeat this lie
    - But Jesus is teaching an opposite principle
    - Bad things happen to good people for good reasons

- First, let's remember that what's "bad" from our point of view isn't necessarily bad at all
  - Persecution and various trials are tools of good purpose in the hands of a loving God
  - As James taught

[James 1:2](#) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

[James 1:3](#) knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

[James 1:4](#) And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- So we are told to expect the world to respond with hatred and persecution whenever we serve the Lord
  - Jesus has put His disciples and all of us on notice, so we have no excuse for not pressing forward in the mission
    - We can't use persecution or rejection as reason to abandon the work
    - We know it's coming because it's part of the deal
  - Furthermore, this principle implies that the degree of persecution we face is loosely dependent on the extent we reflect Christ
    - Standing firm in your faith and living it outwardly is a recipe to gain the enemy's negative attention
    - Consequently, the only way to avoid persecution is to shrink back from our witness as believers
    - In doing so, we voluntarily remove ourselves from the battlefield, so the enemy need not bother doing it himself
  - At the end of v.20, the Lord gives us a corollary truth, that those who "kept" His word will keep the disciples' word as well
    - Simply put, the world responds to us as it would to Jesus were He standing on the earth making the appeal personally
    - When they persecute us, they would have done the same to Jesus in our place

- And when a person repents and accepts the Gospel in response to our testimony, they would have done the same in the presence of Jesus
- In that sense, we operate in Jesus' absence with the same power and authority He has and by that authority we will see the same results
  - If your efforts to convert new believers or even to gain an audience for the Gospel seems fruitless, then remember Jesus' words
  - All believers are "found" in the same way: by the call of the Father and the movement of the Spirit to believe in the name of Jesus
  - Therefore, we can go out boldly knowing that whatever response we receive is a response to Jesus Himself
- Lastly, Jesus reiterates His promise to send the Spirit, the Helper
  - He's called the Helper here because Jesus is speaking about the disciples' work in the face of great opposition
    - They will need supernatural power if they expect to change hearts and lead the church in Christ's absence
    - And we know the Spirit is the One to make that possible
  - Notice Jesus speaks of the Spirit as an independent Actor in the Godhead
    - We've already seen Jesus declaring Himself One with the Father
    - And now He refers to the Spirit of truth as a third, independent Person
    - No book of scripture more clearly presents the truth of the Trinity than does John's Gospel in these chapters
  - Jesus says the Helper will allow the apostles to testify to the truth of the Gospel
    - He's referring to the unique and power displays of supernatural power that the Spirit assigned to the apostles
    - The book of Acts documents the power these men could demonstrate on occasion when moved by the Spirit
    - Miraculous healings

- Laying on hands accompanied by great displays of the Spirit
- Condemning the living to instant death while raising dead bodies
- These miracles were testimonies of the Spirit to the truth of the Gospel
  - But they were unique and purposeful displays reserved for the apostles
  - No other believer will possess such powers routinely
  - And in fact, Paul alludes to the unique quality of his apostolic powers when challenging imposters in Corinth

[1Cor. 4:18](#) Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you.

[1Cor. 4:19](#) But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power.

[1Cor. 4:20](#) For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.

[1Cor. 4:21](#) What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?

- Paul challenges those claiming to be apostles to show their apostolic power
- Paul means that if they are truly apostles, then the Spirit will testify to that effect
- Later in 2Cor Paul called these false apostles out

[2Cor. 11:12](#) But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting.

[2Cor. 11:13](#) For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

- So the apostolic gift was unique and limited in the history of the church
  - It was important to authenticating the early leaders of the church
  - And it helped the church fathers determine apostolic authority in assembling the canon of scripture

- Now that scripture is available, we have no need for apostles
- So the gift has disappeared
- Moving on, in v.27 Jesus says that the apostles themselves would also testify of Jesus
  - Jesus is referring to the apostles mission to preach the Gospel
    - As they communicated the message, they testified to it
    - And the Spirit worked in them to back up this message
  - Today, we perform a similar function, though without the need for apostolic authority
    - We communicate the same message the apostles did
    - And we possess the same Spirit they did
    - So in a sense, we still have the apostles with us testifying as well
    - Because they are doing so through the written testimony they left behind in the scriptures
    - And that testimony takes the place of signs and wonders today
- As we move into chapter 16, the conversation will become increasingly dire, as Jesus reveals more and more of what will come after He is gone

**[John 16:1](#)** "These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling.

**[John 16:2](#)** " They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.

**[John 16:3](#)** "These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.

**[John 16:4](#)** "But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

**[John 16:5](#)** "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'

**[John 16:6](#)** "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

- As chapter 16 opens Jesus informs the disciples that their future as disciples of Jesus holds some unpleasant things
  - Jesus is sharing this news now in the hope that they will be better prepared to face the trials without stumbling when the time comes

- First, Jesus says they will be kicked out of synagogues
- He's referring to the way these Jewish men will be rejected by their own people
- Ironically, they will be rejected by the Jewish people because they accepted the Jewish Messiah
- This news must have taken the disciples by surprise
  - It took many decades after Christ before the Jewish church fully realized they were no longer a part of Judaism
  - But it wasn't because the church rejected Israel or Jewish people
  - The separate came about because the Jewish people Christ, and with Him all who follow Him
- Secondly, religious people will gladly kill the apostles thinking they are doing God's bidding in the process
  - That process of killing began with the stoning of Stephen at the approving of Saul
    - Reminding us that the apostle Paul was once a zealous murderer of Christians
  - Once again, this thought must have shocked and terrified these men
  - They have seen Jesus doing nothing but good works
  - And they have been expecting Jesus to ascend to the throne of David
  - How could His followers suffer anything, much less death?
- They did these things thinking they served God by doing so, and in a very real sense, they were serving a god by their persecution
  - They serve a false god, Satan, who deceives them into thinking that these acts of hatred are right and proper
    - The unbelieving world can be very zealous in their false beliefs
    - They can be very sincere in what they hold to be true
    - But their conviction isn't a substitutes for truth

- They are sincerely wrong
- Jesus tells His disciples all these things to prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead, and He picked His timing carefully for obvious reasons
  - Notice Jesus' somewhat comical statement that no one is asking where Jesus is going now, are they?
    - Now that they have heard that being His disciple will lead to their martyrdom, they aren't so eager to follow
    - Instead, the mood has become somber, as Jesus noted
    - It's no surprise that Jesus's words would have this effect, of course
    - But His point is that their willingness to follow and serve is still dependent on what's in it for them
    - They need to move beyond serving Christ for earthly gain and begin to understand the true mission of the church
  - So Jesus then moves to explaining the true perspective on the benefits of serving Christ under this arrangement

**[John 16:7](#)** "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

**[John 16:8](#)** "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;

**[John 16:9](#)** concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;

**[John 16:10](#)** and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me;

**[John 16:11](#)** and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

- Jesus is describing the importance of valuing eternal gain over earthly gain, a principle we find reinforced all over the New Testament
  - Because Jesus departs the earth, it becomes necessary for His disciples to take His place, which is a good thing for us
    - Because we take His place, we will receive the Helper to allow us perform the supernatural work of ministry in His place
    - Where before the disciples were on the outside watching Jesus work alone, now they can take part in ministry by means of His Spirit while experiencing the joy of that work

- Remember earlier in Jesus' ministry when He gave the disciples a preview of what it's like to serve Him with God's power?

[Luke 9:1](#) And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases.

[Luke 9:2](#) And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.

...

[Luke 10:17](#) The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

[Luke 10:18](#) And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

[Luke 10:19](#) "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

[Luke 10:20](#) "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

- These disciples rejoiced at the miraculous powers the Lord gave them to minister on His behalf
- Now these apostles will experience this kind of opportunity daily
- And to a degree, this will be the experience for all Christ's disciples, because He leaves us here on His behalf
- Of course, with that joy comes all the same challenges and threats Jesus faced
  - If He was persecuted, so will we be
  - But we must understand that the principle benefits and rewards of working with Christ are spiritual, notwithstanding some earthly benefits along the way
  - And we must understand that if we operate in His place, we will receive the scorn He received
- By that same token, we must appreciate that there is eternal value in receiving persecution in Jesus' place
  - Just as Jesus was unfairly condemned, we will be unfairly mistreated
  - Similarly, just as He received a great inheritance for His obedience to the Father in the face of persecution, so may we share in a reward through obedience for facing persecution

- Then, Jesus says that having the Spirit working in us gives opportunity for three types of spiritual work to be accomplished through us
  - First, the Spirit will convict the world of its sin of unbelief
    - Jesus is describing the work of bringing salvation to the world through us
    - When the Spirit convicts a person of their unbelief, it leads to their repentance and salvation
    - As when the Spirit worked through Paul to bring conviction in Corinth

[2Cor. 7:9](#) I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.

[2Cor. 7:10](#) For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- To be useful to God in bringing another person to saving faith is a singularly precious experience and perhaps the most important moment for any believer
- Secondly, Jesus says the Spirit will convict the world regarding righteousness
  - The Spirit working in us will show the world what righteousness looks like
  - He accomplishes this work by sanctifying the saints by His indwelling of us
  - BY conviction of sin and training in righteousness, the Spirit yields the fruit of righteousness in each believer
  - And the sanctified lives of the saints on earth will be a source of conviction for the world
- Finally, the Spirit will convict the world and its ruler at the last judgment
  - All believers participate in judging the world, the Bible says
  - And even now, we stand as witnesses against those who persecute us
  - We will even judge the fallen angels, Paul says in 1Cor 9

- So across all three areas, the believer plays an important role that is only possible because Christ has left us here to do this on His behalf
- Now, Jesus begins to wind down His instructions
  - First, he alludes to more information will be forthcoming in the future
    - Specifically, Jesus says the Spirit will be the One to fill in the gaps for the church after Jesus departs

[John 16:12](#) "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

[John 16:13](#) "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

[John 16:14](#) "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

[John 16:15](#) " All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

- The Spirit repeats what He hears from Jesus
- Then the Spirit guides us to the truth
- He doesn't override us but seeks to work with us (or we can quench or disobey the Spirit)
- He teaches, He guides and He discloses
- Notice how Jesus emphasizes the respective roles of the Godhead working independently and yet as One
  - The Spirit's mission is to bring glory to Jesus, while the Son desires to obey and glorify the Father
    - The Father sends the Son into the world
    - Once Jesus returns from the world, the Son sends the Spirit in His place to the Church
    - And the Spirit works in the Church to glorify the Son
  - Yet the Spirit doesn't speak of His own initiative, meaning He doesn't decide what the Church should do
    - The Spirit communicates to the Church only what He learns or hears from the Son

- And the Son only does what the Father is doing, Jesus says
- So all play a role but toward a common purpose
- In all these details, a hierarchy emerges within the Trinity even as the Three remain One without beginning
  - The Father is above all
  - The Son is second under the Father
  - And the Spirit is third in line
  - This hierarchy is reflected throughout the New Testament, including in the declaration that accompanies water baptism
    - i.e., baptize in the name of the Father, Son, Spirit...
- It's been some time since any of the apostles have piped up in response to Jesus' comments
  - But at hearing Jesus talking again about leaving, they can't help but to ponder it out loud

**John 16:16** "A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me."

**John 16:17** Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?"

**John 16:18** So they were saying, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is talking about."

**John 16:19** Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, "Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me'?"

**John 16:20** "Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.

**John 16:21** "Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

**John 16:22** "Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.

- Jesus alludes to both His coming death and His resurrection using terms like going away and a little while, which were guaranteed to confuse the disciples

- It seems Jesus wants them to know He predicted these outcomes in advance while withholding enough to keep them fuzzy on the details for now
  - Perhaps if they had known all the details, they might have tried to intervene to stop it
  - In any case, they're lost in the conversation, so in response Jesus tries to reassure them using an analogy
- Jesus says the coming separation will bring them great pain and sorrow followed by great joy like in childbirth
  - In childbirth, the woman first experiences a period of immense pain and even sorrow, in the sense of discomfort
  - But at the end of it all, she know tremendous joy
  - It's the only reason we don't have more families with only one child
  - So it will be with for the disciples with Christ's death and resurrection
- This comparison between Christ's passion and the process of childbirth gives greater meaning to God's decision to make childbirth painful for women
  - We could say it was a measure of grace to the woman, even as it memorializes her mistake
  - God placed in the womb and birth process a beautiful picture of Christ
  - In this case, when the Lord instituted pain in childbirth, He placed a living symbol of Christ's redemption in every woman's body
  - The woman's mistake contributed to the need for Jesus' death to redeem men from sin
  - And so we see Jesus using that picture here now
- So though a woman dislikes this aspect of childbirth, she is seeing evidence of God's faithfulness to redeem the earth
  - In this case, we are reminded of God's own pain and suffering, the world now knows great joy in salvation

- As we said earlier, earthly discomfort can seem bad to us, yet it can hold great spiritual benefit
- With the hour of His death at hand, Jesus moves to cease speaking in veiled terms, and begins to reveal the depths of what's coming

**John 16:23** "In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you.

**John 16:24** "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.

**John 16:25** "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.

**John 16:26** "In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf;

**John 16:27** for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

**John 16:28** "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father."

- In v.23, Jesus notes that in the day of His departure, there will be no more opportunity to direct questions to Him directly
  - The disciples will have no choice but to rely on their access to the Father through prayer in Jesus' name
    - So though they have not asked anything of Jesus until this time, He encourages them to avail themselves of the privilege in the future
    - This is a command to all believers and it's one of the primary blessings of having peace with God through the blood of Christ
    - Jesus desires that we know His peace and joy and will
    - So He asks us to direct our needs skyward in His name, that is according to His will, so He may inform us freely
  - In this moment, the disciples never thought to question Jesus directly about where He was going...they're just asking each other
    - Jesus points this out to encourage them to begin thinking differently about how to move beyond questions and problems
    - They need to ask the Father directly now

- They have His ear
- More importantly, there will be no need for Jesus to use figurative language in answering them, Jesus says
  - Answers will come clearly from the Father
    - In His earthly ministry, Jesus began speaking in parables from the point Israel rejected Him as Messiah as recorded in Matthew 12-13
    - Prior to that period, Jesus spoke plainly
    - Now that He's about to be released from His ministry on earth, Jesus says He can dispense with the parables
    - The purpose of obscuring His message from Israel (so that they might continue in their unbelief) has run its course
  - From now on, the Father will give the disciples a clear understanding of what is coming
    - Beyond merely informing the apostles of coming event, Jesus' comment also refers to the apostles' collective gifting to author scripture
    - By their clear understanding, they will write the books of the New Testament so that all believers may benefit from their understanding
    - Remember that everything we understand concern Christ's life and death and its meaning comes from these men by way of the Spirit
    - The key concepts of our faith all came to us through the writing of the apostles
    - And that knowledge was itself the result of this promise to reveal everything clearly to these men for our sake
  - But once again, having received this teaching, we are to rest in it as it was recorded
    - There is no longer any need for someone to present us with "a word from the Lord" or new spiritual knowledge
    - Or for signs and wonders to shows us the way

- These men were gifted to understand the Father clearly in order to sustain the church in the years while Jesus was away
  - Obviously, all believers share in this gift, at least to a lesser extent
    - We can't author scripture, but the same Spirit is the One explaining it to us
    - And we can see spiritual truths that are inaccessible to the unbeliever
- Then Jesus reveals the plain truth of His departure: He goes to the Father
  - But of course, Jesus doesn't say how He will be leaving the world
    - The disciples had heard it already and hadn't believed it
    - And when they see it play out, it will shock them
  - But for now, Jesus has at least told them what they need to know

[John 16:29](#) His disciples said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech.

[John 16:30](#) "Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."

[John 16:31](#) Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"

[John 16:32](#) "Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

[John 16:33](#) "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

- The apostles react to Jesus' sudden transparency with surprise
  - They say "Lo," which is the ancient version of "Whoa!"
    - They're surprised to hear He's going back to Heaven
    - And they seize on this nugget to declare that now they know Jesus came from the Father and knows all
  - After all that they've seen Jesus do and heard Him teach over three years, *now* they are convinced to His claims
    - Jesus Himself responds incredulously with the biblical equivalent of "Really?"

- Their statement sounds forced to me, as if they were trying to demonstrate understanding in return for Jesus' willingness to speak plainly
- Like the person who says they understand you when they don't really understand at all
- Jesus knew they were playing along, because in mere hours they were going to run away at the sight of Him being arrested
  - Jesus says they will scatter
  - They will be so fearful for their earthly lives, that they all abandon the Lord in His time of distress
  - And as plain as these words were, each man still did exactly as Jesus predicted
- Nevertheless, Jesus tells them that He shares this news to give them peace
  - How is it peaceful to know about persecution or that they will abandon Jesus shortly?
    - It will become a source of peace when they reflect on this discourse because they will understand that Jesus knew it was going to happen
    - Since it wasn't a surprise to Jesus, then He won't be disappointed in their behavior
    - At least not to the extent that He holds it against them
  - The Lord in His sovereignty saw it coming and turned it to good
    - Therefore, when they face a trial they know it's part of God's plan so they can rejoice in it and face it with peace
    - Or when the apostles reflected on their abandonment of Jesus, they could understand it too played into God's purposes
    - And they were forgiven for it
  - And all these things are possible, because Jesus has overcome His and their adversary: the world
    - And if God is for us, who can be against us?