

# The Word

*one to one*

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*A guided read through  
John's Gospel  
Chapters 15-17*

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# Episode 31

JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
JOHN 12	Death (Jesus predicts His death)
JOHN 13 – 17	Life for His disciples (in the time between Jesus' departure and His return)
JOHN 18 – 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

## The true vine

JOHN 15:1-17

*In the previous episode:  
How the world will  
come to see God.*

*In this episode:  
Real purpose.*

We start with some background by looking back to Psalm 80

→ Psalm 80:8-11

<sup>8</sup> You transplanted a vine from Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.

<sup>9</sup> You cleared the ground for it,  
and it took root and filled the land.

<sup>10</sup> The mountains were covered with its shade,  
the mighty cedars with its branches.

<sup>11</sup> Its branches reached as far as the Sea,  
its shoots as far as the River.

## The story of the vine

God brought His people (pictured as a vine) out of Egypt and into a promised land. This happened in around 1500 BC, after more than 400 years of slavery.

God's vine, Israel, was so fabulously fruitful it covered the entire land, from the mountains to the sea.

In other words, God's people, under His blessing, grew from small beginnings into a great nation.

<sup>14</sup> Return to us, God Almighty!  
Look down from heaven and see!  
Watch over this vine,

<sup>15</sup> the root your right hand  
has planted,  
the son you have raised  
up for yourself.

<sup>16</sup> Your vine is cut down,  
it is burned with fire;  
at your rebuke your  
people perish.

<sup>17</sup> Let your hand rest on the  
man at your right hand,  
the son of man you have  
raised up for yourself.

<sup>18</sup> Then we will not turn away  
from you;  
revive us, and we will call  
on your name.

<sup>19</sup> Restore us, LORD God Almighty;  
make your face shine on us,  
that we may be saved.

Tragically, the people walked away from their relationship with God. The fruitful vine was cut down, as God's people were defeated by their enemies and sent into exile.

But what is prophesied here?

- The Son of Man (Jesus) is to be sent... (v. 17)
- ...so that they might be saved by God. (v. 19)

What will being saved look like?

- They will be brought back into a permanent relationship with Him. (v. 18)
- He will bring them back to life (revive them).
- They will pray to him (call on His name).
- His face will be turned towards them in blessing. (v. 19)

*The Son of Man will bring  
this complete salvation.*

Let's also look  
back to Isaiah

Isaiah 5:7

<sup>7</sup> 'The vineyard of the  
LORD Almighty  
is the nation of Israel,  
and the people of Judah  
are the vines he delighted in.  
And he looked for justice,  
but saw bloodshed;  
for righteousness, but  
heard cries of distress.'

Isaiah 27:6b

<sup>6</sup> 'Israel will bud and blossom  
and fill all the world with fruit.'

The vine and its fruitfulness is  
a theme that continues in Old  
Testament prophecies.

Around 700 BC, Isaiah prophesied  
against Israel for turning away from  
God and producing bad 'fruit'.

But he also promised a time when the  
true vine's beautiful fruit (His saved  
people) would fill the whole earth.

In the next few episodes we will see  
Jesus explain how that worldwide  
fruitfulness will come about.

With that  
background,  
back to John

<sup>1</sup> 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

<sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

<sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

**Bear fruit:** the life of Christ flowing through His people. The coming chapters will show that this means joyful obedience to Jesus' commands, lived out in love for others and a witness to the world empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## Joined to the vine

What is Jesus claiming here?

- He is the key to all the Old Testament promises of God having a fruitful people who glorify Him. (v. 1)
- This means that Jesus fulfils all the things that Israel never managed to be.

What is the severe warning in verse 2?

- If a person says that they believe in Jesus but bears no fruit, they will be 'cut off'.

What is the promise for God's people who are joined to Him?

- Pruning for growth! Just as a gardener prunes a bush to strengthen it, so God prunes His 'vine' so that it brings more fruit. (v. 2)

In verse 3, the word 'clean' in the original Greek is the same as the word 'prune' in verse 2. You could translate it as: 'You are already pruned through the word I have spoken to you.'

<sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup> 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

<sup>6</sup> If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

<sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

<sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

## The fruit of the vine

What is Jesus' instruction here?

- People who follow Him need to remain in Him, stay connected to Him. **(v. 4)**

Can we be fruitful on our own?

- No! We can't be separate from Jesus and remain fruitful for God. It would be like expecting a branch cut off from a tree to grow leaves and produce fruit! **(v. 4)**

If we ignore Jesus' words, what is the warning?

- We face God's judgement because we are not His true followers. **(v. 6)**

Now see this huge promise! It doesn't mean that Christians can have whatever they pray for. But if Christians pray in line with Jesus' word, the Father will always answer. **(v. 7)**

Why does God do this?

- Because it glorifies Him for His followers to be fruitful. **(v. 8)**

Notice that this fulfils Psalm 80, the vine growing tall and spreading wide. As people respond to God's word, there is new life and growth, and God is honoured.



<sup>9</sup> ‘As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

<sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

<sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Look how often love is mentioned.

Love pours down from the Father, to the Son, then to the Christian and out to others.

How does Jesus love those who follow Him?

- As the Father loved Him. **(v. 9)**

But how exactly does the Father love the Son?

- John 5:20, ‘...the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.’

How then has Jesus (God the Son) loved His followers?

- By showing them the love of the Father.
- By showing Himself to them.
- By showing them the way to the Father.

Why does Jesus tell them this?

- For their joy. Living at peace with God is the answer to a full and meaningful life now and for an eternity with Him. **(v. 11)**

<sup>12</sup> My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

<sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

<sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command.

<sup>15</sup> I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Jesus' command is very clear: love each other.

But how should Christians actually love?

- Selflessly, sacrificially. **(v. 13)**

Jesus will show us His love when He lays down His life for us at the cross. Selfless love is what He commands His followers to show each other.

What happens when we respond like this?

- He calls us His friends. **(v. 14)**
- He shows us His plan for the world and involves us in it. **(v. 15)**
- We make Jesus known.
- We bear much fruit through Him.

<sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

<sup>17</sup> This is my command: love each other.

What does Jesus say about the Christian's job as part of God's people?

- Every Christian is chosen and appointed to bear fruit - loving each other and bringing others into the vine by making Jesus known. **(v. 16)**
- This is joyful, eternal work: fruit that lasts.
- All of the Father's resources are available as we pray (ask) in Jesus' name.

Jesus repeats His command: love one another. **(v. 17)**

*No one can 'do' God on their own. Being part of the vine means becoming part of God's people. It means linking up with other Christians.*

*It might be a good time to stop and talk about how you can find a church that will help teach you more about what Jesus says in the Bible.*

## Summary

Jesus, the true vine.

- Jesus is the true vine, the source of life for a fruitful people who glorify God. (v. 1)
- Those that say they follow Him but bear no fruit, will be cut off. (v. 2)
- Jesus' followers will be pruned to grow even more fruitful. (v. 2)
- It is impossible to bear fruit unless we are joined to Jesus. (v. 4)
- Those who remain in Him will see prayers answered and live fruitful lives, glorifying God. (v. 7)
- Jesus teaches His followers to love: selflessly and sacrificially. (v. 12)
- The benefits are huge: Jesus' followers are His friends and involved in God's plan for the world. (v. 15)
- Christians are God's means of sharing the good news about Jesus. As more and more people become believers, this is the fruit that lasts for ever. (v. 16)

<sup>1</sup> 'I am the true vine...'

<sup>2</sup> 'He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit...'

<sup>2</sup> '...while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes...'

<sup>4</sup> 'No branch can bear fruit by itself...'

<sup>7</sup> 'If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish...'

<sup>12</sup> '...love each other as I have loved you.'

<sup>15</sup> '... I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.'

<sup>16</sup> '...I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit - fruit that will last...'

Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 15:1-17

<sup>1</sup> 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup> 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

<sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

<sup>9</sup> 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

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<sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command. <sup>15</sup> I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. <sup>17</sup> This is my command: love each other.

*What comes next?  
Opposition from  
the world.*

# Episode 32

JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
JOHN 12	Death (Jesus predicts His death)
JOHN 13 – 17	Life for His disciples (in the time between Jesus' departure and His return)
JOHN 18 – 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

# What to expect

JOHN 15:18 – 16:4

*In the previous episode:  
The true vine and fruit  
that lasts.*

*In this episode:  
The hatred of the world.*

<sup>18</sup> ‘If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.

<sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

<sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you: “A servant is not greater than his master.” If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

<sup>21</sup> They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.

## The world hates Jesus' disciples

What seems surprising in these verses?

- The world will hate those who follow Jesus. **(v. 18)**

Why is this in fact not a surprise?

- Because the world hated Jesus first! **(vv. 18, 20)**

Why does the world hate Christians?

- They don't belong to the world any more. **(v. 19)**

What does this tell us about the world?

- As Jesus has already shown us, the world stands in opposition to God and His people.
- It's not possible to be neutral: we're either with Jesus or with a world that hates Him. **(v. 20)**

We can see this in the way that Christians have been persecuted across the world, throughout history.

<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.

<sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father as well.

<sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.

<sup>25</sup> But this is to fulfil what is written in their Law: “They hated me without reason.”

## The world is guilty

How does this section expose the world's guilt?

- Jesus has spoken to them but they will not listen. (v. 22)
- Jesus has done incredible miracles, the work of God on earth, but they will not respond. (v. 24)

Where does this leave them?

- They have no excuse. (v. 22b)
- They hate the Son of God. (v. 23)
- In hating Jesus, the world shows that it also hates God the Father.

Jesus here fulfils another prophecy from 1,000 years before. ‘Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head.’ (Psalm 69:4a)

*The world is guilty for rejecting both what Jesus has said and what He has done, hating Him without reason.*

*Turning our backs on Jesus is not something to be done lightly. It is very serious.*



<sup>26</sup> ‘When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me.

<sup>27</sup> And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

## Unstoppable truth

Amazingly, Jesus says that God’s truth will still be told to the world that hates Him.

How will that happen?

- Despite opposition, the Advocate (Holy Spirit) will be at work. **(v. 26)**
- He is sent by Jesus from the Father. **(v. 26)**
- He is the Spirit of truth, witnessing to Jesus. **(v. 26)**

These men, the apostles, will testify to what they had seen and heard.

**You have been with me from the beginning:** notice that Jesus is talking to these specific disciples, who had been with Him as eyewitnesses right from the start of His public life. These key men came to be known as the apostles.

<sup>1</sup> ‘All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.

<sup>2</sup> They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God.

<sup>3</sup> They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

<sup>4</sup> I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you...’

## Be prepared

Why has Jesus said all this?

- So that His followers won't be taken by surprise and stop following Him. **(v. 1)**

What is the surprise in verses 2 and 3?

- The strongest opposition will often come from very religious people. They will even try to kill Christians. **(vv. 2, 3)**

Why is Jesus telling the apostles this?

- Jesus had been the focus of opposition. **(v. 4)**
- But now He is leaving, that opposition will turn to them.
- So He is preparing them.

This happened just as Jesus said. All of the apostles except John were killed for their faith. Despite the world's hatred they all had spoken boldly about Jesus.

If we follow Jesus we may experience the same opposition. It's not easy. But it shows we are on the path Jesus set out for His followers.

It may be open persecution or it may be more subtle. For example, a new Christian might find that their nearest 'church' does not really love Jesus and want to teach and obey His word.

## Summary

The expectation of opposition.

- Jesus tells the apostles that the world will hate them, just as it hated Him. (v. 18)
- This is because His followers no longer belong to the world. (v. 19)
- Belonging instead to Jesus means suffering, as He did. (v. 20)
- The reason? The world does not know God. (v. 21)
- In fact, the world is guilty of rejecting Jesus' words... (v. 22)
- ...and His actions. (v. 24)
- In the face of this opposition, the Holy Spirit will help the apostles as they witness to Jesus. (vv. 26, 27)
- And He's saying this not to scare but to warn them, so that they keep going when He is no longer there. (v. 1)

<sup>18</sup> 'If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.'

<sup>19</sup> '...you do not belong to the world...'

<sup>20</sup> 'If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.'

<sup>21</sup> '...they do not know the one who sent me.'

<sup>22</sup> '...now they have no excuse for their sin'.

<sup>24</sup> 'As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.'

<sup>26</sup> 'When the Advocate comes... he will testify about me.'

<sup>27</sup> 'And you also must testify...'

<sup>1</sup> 'All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.'

Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 15:18 – 16:4

<sup>18</sup> 'If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.  
<sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you: "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. <sup>21</sup> They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. <sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father as well. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin.

As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> But this is to fulfil what is written in their Law: "They hated me without reason."

<sup>26</sup> 'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup> And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

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<sup>2</sup> They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. <sup>3</sup> They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. <sup>4</sup> I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you...'

*What comes next?  
 A huge encouragement:  
 the work of the Holy Spirit.*

# Episode 33

JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
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JOHN 18 – 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
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# The Holy Spirit's work

JOHN 16:5-15

*In the previous episode:  
Opposition from  
the world.*

*In this episode:  
What the Holy Spirit  
is doing - in the world  
and in the apostles.*

<sup>5</sup> ...but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, “Where are you going?”

<sup>6</sup> Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things.

<sup>7</sup> But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

<sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:

## The Holy Spirit: proving the world wrong

Why is it good for the apostles that Jesus goes?

- The Holy Spirit will only come when Jesus has gone. (v. 7)

What will the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, do?

- He will prove the world to be in the wrong...
- ...about sin, righteousness and judgement. (v. 8)

*‘Proving the world to be in the wrong’* means the Holy Spirit will show how wrong the world is about God the Father and Jesus.

This will shame the world, convincing it of its guilt and calling everyone to turn to God.

**The Advocate:** this literally means ‘one who comes alongside to help’ and refers to the Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of truth.

But how exactly is the world guilty?

<sup>9</sup> about sin,  
because people do  
not believe in me;



## In the wrong about sin

How is the world in the wrong about sin?

- Sin is not merely the sins we commit.
- Jesus has shown us that sin is not believing and honouring Him. **(v. 9)**

That means sin is:

- Refusing to recognise that Jesus is God.
- Rejecting Jesus as our King and therefore being in charge of our lives.

We've seen this before: *'...Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.'* (John 5:23)

When Jesus was on earth, His words convicted people of their sin and many turned to Him.

When Jesus has gone to the Father, the Spirit continues this work.

- It is the Spirit who makes us realise that we are sinners.
- How? Because we do not believe in Jesus as we should. **(v. 9)**

<sup>10</sup> about righteousness,  
because I am going to  
the Father, where you  
can see me no longer;

## In the wrong about righteousness

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How is the world in the wrong  
about righteousness?

- Jesus has already told us that all of us are guilty of evil, the opposite of righteousness: *'...light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light, because their deeds were evil.'* (John 3:19)
- And Jesus has said plainly that only He can bring light into our darkness, *'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'* (John 8:12)

When Jesus has gone, the Spirit will convict the world of a lack of righteousness – and drive people to seek forgiveness.

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**Righteousness:** being in the right before God; pure; clean.



<sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

*As we have read John's Gospel, have you experienced the work of God the Holy Spirit showing up your sin? It may be uncomfortable but it's needed to bring us to Jesus.*

## In the wrong about judgement

How is the world in the wrong about judgment?

- Satan, the prince of this world, is about to be exposed through Jesus' death on the cross, as Jesus takes on Himself all of God's just judgement and anger at our sin.
- Jesus' resurrection will show that death has been defeated and that Satan is a beaten enemy. The price of our sin has been paid in full.
- But this means that all those who reject Jesus still face God's judgement.

Jesus has already challenged people who misjudged Him to change their minds, 'Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.' (John 7:24)

What is the Spirit's role?

- The Spirit will come and convict the world of the coming final judgement.

*If God's greatest enemy has been defeated, then there is no hope for any who stand against Jesus. Judgement will definitely come.*

<sup>12</sup> 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

<sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

<sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

<sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.'

## The Holy Spirit: at work in the apostles

Again, Jesus highlights His approaching departure. Remember, Jesus is speaking here specifically to His eleven chosen apostles.

What does it mean for the Spirit to guide the apostles into all the truth?

- The Spirit will receive all truth from Jesus - full disclosure of all the Father has given Him. (v. 13)
- This includes truth about things that haven't even happened yet.
- The truth the Spirit brings will point to and glorify Jesus. (v. 14)

Why is this so important?

- Because the truth belongs to God and Jesus has been given it all. (v. 15)
- And now the Spirit will lead the apostles into all that truth.

*The Spirit will take what Jesus has revealed and enable the apostles to 'get it' so that they are in a position to be faithful witnesses.*

## Let's stop and think

The eyewitness testimony and teaching of the apostles is what is recorded in the New Testament, the second half of the Bible.

So what does this passage say about the accuracy, completeness and authority of what the apostles taught?

It is:

- From Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.
- True. We can trust them!
- Complete. We do not need to add to them.
- From God. All truth: past, present and future.

What confidence does this give us as we read the New Testament?

- We can trust and believe it!

Where would you go if you want to know what God has to say to you today?

- Simply to His Word, the Bible.

Now that Jesus has gone, how should we expect the relationship with Him to continue?

- By the Holy Spirit...
- Through the apostles words... in the Bible.

Beware! Many false religions have arisen as people have claimed to receive new truth from God. Others say the Bible is no longer relevant for our time.

This is wrong.

- God has given all He has to say to Jesus.
- Jesus has led His apostles into all His truth by the work of His Spirit.

*We still have all God wants us to know in His Word – the Bible. The truth does not change.*

## Summary

The Holy Spirit's work in the world.

- It is better for the apostles that Jesus goes, so that the Holy Spirit can come. (v. 7)
- The Holy Spirit's job is to show that the world is wrong... (v. 8)
- ...about sin: it doesn't believe in Jesus.
- ...about righteousness: its deeds are evil.
- ...about judgement: because Satan has been defeated at the cross.
- The Holy Spirit also has the key role of teaching the apostles all the truth, so that they can record it and pass it on. (v. 13)

<sup>7</sup> '... it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you...'

<sup>8</sup> 'When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment...'

<sup>13</sup> 'But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.'

Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 16:5-15

<sup>5</sup> ...but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, "Where are you going?" <sup>6</sup> Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. <sup>7</sup> But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

<sup>12</sup> 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.'

*What comes next?  
Sorrow will  
be followed  
by great joy!*

# Episode 34

JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
JOHN 12	Death (Jesus predicts His death)
JOHN 13 – 17	Life for His disciples (in the time between Jesus' departure and His return)
JOHN 18 – 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

## Deep joy, lasting peace

JOHN 16:16–33

*In the previous episode:  
The Holy Spirit's work  
convicting the world  
and revealing truth  
to the apostles.*

*In this episode:  
What Jesus' death will  
bring for those who  
follow Him.*

<sup>16</sup> Jesus went on to say, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.’

<sup>17</sup> At this, some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean by saying, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,” and “Because I am going to the Father”?’

<sup>18</sup> They kept asking, ‘What does he mean by “a little while”?’ We don’t understand what he is saying.’

<sup>19</sup> Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, ‘Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me”?’

## In a little while

Now Jesus begins to spell out the details of what our relationship with Him will look like once He is gone.

In these verses John appears to record Jesus and His apostles saying the same thing over and over again!

Did you spot the repeated phrase?

- In a few short verses we see ‘a little while’ said seven times!

Why is there so much repetition?

- The apostles are still very confused, and Jesus’ death and resurrection are just hours away... so Jesus spells it out yet again.
- Jesus will be gone – out of sight (He will die on the cross). **(v. 16)**
- And then He’ll be seen again (He will rise again).

But what will happen when Jesus goes?

<sup>20</sup> Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

<sup>21</sup> A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.

<sup>22</sup> So with you: now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

## Tears will turn to joy

What will the disciples experience in just a few hours?

- Desperate grief as Jesus dies (even as the world celebrates). (v. 20)
- But this grief will turn to joy.

Just as the pain of labour is replaced with joy at a new life when a baby arrives, the disciples' pain at Jesus' crucifixion will be short-lived. (v. 21)

Why will this joy never be taken away?

- At the cross, Jesus is about to pay for an eternal relationship with the Father for His disciples.
- He will then rise to live forever, in relationship with His rescued people.

*His death on the cross has a purpose that changes everything.*

Let's look into this joy...



<sup>23</sup> In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

<sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

<sup>25</sup> 'Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father.

## Direct access

What brings joy in these verses?

- It's all about relationship...
- Asking and receiving from God the Father. **(v. 24)**
- Knowing God the Father through Jesus. **(v. 25)**
- With no barriers between us and God. **(v. 26)**

Once Jesus has died and been raised, everything He's said will become clear to the disciples. **(v. 25)**

<sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

<sup>27</sup> No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

<sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.'

Through Jesus dying on the cross and rising in victory we are offered direct access to God the Father.

What is the foundation of this new relationship?

- Love! (v. 27)
- God loves those who put their trust in Jesus.

Despite the pain of Jesus leaving the earth, this does not mean He will no longer be with the apostles.

In fact, through the cross, Jesus' followers will enter a living relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus' disciples said,  
'Now you are speaking clearly  
and without figures of speech.'

<sup>30</sup> Now we can see that you know  
all things and that you do not  
even need to have anyone ask you  
questions. This makes us believe  
that you came from God.'

<sup>31</sup> 'Do you now believe?'  
Jesus replied.

<sup>32</sup> 'A time is coming and in  
fact has come when you will  
be scattered, each to your own  
home. You will leave me all  
alone. Yet I am not alone, for  
my Father is with me.'

<sup>33</sup> 'I have told you these things,  
so that in me you may have  
peace. In this world you will  
have trouble. But take heart!  
I have overcome the world.'

## Trouble and peace

The disciples say that they get it,  
that they believe...

But what are they about to do?

- Jesus knows that they will let Him  
down and abandon Him. (v. 32)

Why has Jesus spent time telling  
them all this?

- He wants them to know that despite their  
failures they will have peace in Him. (v. 33)
- Yet they need to know that they  
are going to face real trouble for  
following Him.
- He wants them to be encouraged,  
because at the cross He overcomes  
the world.

No matter what the world throws at  
them, their relationship with God is  
secure because of the cross.

*The cross is where total  
victory against all opposition  
to Jesus is won.*

**These things:** this probably refers to the whole of Jesus'  
conversation with His disciples from chapter 13 to 16.

## Let's stop and think

Jesus says that the Christian life will bring trouble. Yet the Christian can have lasting peace and joy from God, because Jesus has overcome the world.

What, then, should we say in the following situations?

- Someone says: 'The normal Christian experience is health, wealth and success' No! *'In this world you will have trouble.'* (v. 33)
- Someone says: 'My life has become more difficult since I became a Christian.' This may well be true. However, we are promised peace from Jesus in all situations, and lasting joy because we can come to our heavenly Father knowing that He loves us.

*Through the cross and the presence of the Holy Spirit we can have a living relationship with God.*

## Summary

The grief and joy of following Jesus.

- The disciples still don't understand that Jesus' death is only hours away. (v. 18)
- Jesus tells them that His death will bring deep grief. (v. 20)
- But that this grief will turn to joy that will never fade when He rises from the grave. (v. 22)
- They will have a loving relationship with God the Father because of Jesus' death. (v. 27)
- Jesus knows that they will desert Him. (v. 32)
- But He wants them to know that in what at first looks like defeat, He has won the victory over all opposition to Him. (v. 33)

<sup>18</sup> They kept asking,  
'What does he mean by  
"a little while"?''

<sup>20</sup> '...you will weep and mourn  
while the world rejoices.'

<sup>22</sup> '...but I will see you again  
and you will rejoice, and no  
one will take away your joy.'

<sup>27</sup> '...the Father himself  
loves you because you  
have loved me...'

<sup>32</sup> 'You will leave me all alone.'

<sup>33</sup> 'In this world you will have  
trouble. But take heart! I have  
overcome the world.'

Why not find a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 16:16-33

<sup>16</sup> Jesus went on to say, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.'

<sup>17</sup> At this, some of his disciples said to one another, 'What does he mean by saying, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me," and "Because I am going to the Father"?' <sup>18</sup> They kept asking, 'What does he mean by "a little while"? We don't understand what he is saying.'

<sup>19</sup> Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, 'Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me"?''

<sup>20</sup> Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. <sup>21</sup> A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. <sup>22</sup> So with you: now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. <sup>23</sup> In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

<sup>25</sup> 'Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. <sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. <sup>27</sup> No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.' <sup>29</sup> Then Jesus' disciples said, 'Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech.

<sup>30</sup> Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.'

<sup>31</sup> 'Do you now believe?' Jesus replied. <sup>32</sup> 'A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

<sup>33</sup> 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.'

# Episode 35

JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
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JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

## Jesus prays

JOHN 17:1–26

*In the previous episode:  
Tears and joy as Jesus  
overcomes all opposition.*

*In this episode:  
Jesus speaks to  
His Father.*

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed:

‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

**The hour has come:** this is the ‘hour’ we’ve been waiting for and which Jesus has been talking about since the wedding at Cana, the hour of His death.

## Mission accomplished

As Jesus finishes His private conversation with His disciples that started in chapter 13, He pours out His heart to His Father.

We are given an extraordinary front row seat for an intimate conversation between the Son and the Father, just minutes before Jesus’ arrest and trial.

What does Jesus ask for?

- To be glorified at the cross, the ‘hour’ everything has been building up to...
- ...so that He might glorify the Father.

To be glorified is for the Son and the Father to be revealed as they really are, full of splendour and awesome power.

*The shock is that this glory will be seen at the most unexpected place: a horrific, humiliating death on a cross.*

So how can this be?



<sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

<sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

<sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

<sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

How can the cross be a place of glory?

- It is where Jesus achieves eternal life for all those who follow Him, bringing sinful people into relationship with a perfect God. (vv. 2, 3)
- It is where Jesus finishes the work that God the Father gave Him to do. (v. 4)

What will come after the glory of the cross?

- Jesus asks for the Father to restore Him to the glory that He had before He came to earth: the splendour of being in the Father's presence. (v. 5)

*We might be surprised that the cross is a place of glory. Perhaps we don't understand the depth and seriousness of our sin... and just what a huge thing it is for Jesus to deal with it.*

<sup>6</sup> 'I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.

<sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

<sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

<sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

<sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

## Jesus prays for His apostles

Jesus says the apostles are the 'real deal' who will be given the job of recording the truth He has revealed.

How do we know this?

- God the Father chose them; as they obey His Word it shows that they have been given to Jesus by His Father. **(v. 6)**
- They know that God has sent Jesus and given Him all truth. **(vv. 7, 8)**
- They have accepted Jesus as the Son of God. **(v. 8)**
- Jesus is made known (glorified) through them. **(v. 10)**

Why is it important for us to know this about the apostles?

- They will have a vital mission. They will go on to establish the church, God's Spirit-filled people.
- Their teaching (the New Testament) gives God's full and final instruction for all Christians over all time.

<sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

<sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> 'I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

Jesus knows He is about to die and then return to His Father.

What does Jesus pray for the apostles?

- Protection. (v. 11)
- Joy. (v. 13)

*Jesus is asking His Father to keep the apostles standing firm and united in all the truth they have received from Him.*

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**Doomed to destruction:** this refers to Judas, who has already gone out to betray Jesus.

<sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

<sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

<sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

<sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

<sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Why is Jesus praying like this for the apostles?

- He knows the world will be against them. (v. 14)
- He knows they need protection from the devil. (v. 15)
- He longs for them to remain right with God, through His word. (v. 17)
- He has given them the mission of taking the truth into the world. (v. 18)

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**Sanctify:** to become holy, or set apart.

*As we look back across history we can see how God the Father has answered this prayer.*

*The message Christ gave to the apostles has transformed the world we live in by bringing spiritual life to millions across the globe and across history.*

<sup>20</sup> 'My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

<sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

## Jesus prays for His church

Who is Jesus praying for in verse 20?

- Those who receive the apostles' message.
- That means every Christian believer over all time.

What is His prayer for Christians?

- That they believe the apostles' words and trust in the God they declare. (v. 20)
- That as they believe they become deeply united with God the Father and God the Son... (v. 21)
- ...and so are deeply united to each other... (v. 21)
- ...demonstrating to the world that the Jesus they worship came from God.

*The supernatural unity of Christians will show the world that only Jesus can save.*

## Let's stop and think

Why don't we always see this unity?

- Sadly, many churches do not teach Jesus' Word as given to us in the New Testament.
- Jesus is passionate about Christian unity – and prays for it. But this will only come as we learn from, obey and remain in His Word.

So how does division come about?

- Through religious people following their own ideas or the ideas of the culture around them.
- By church leaders adding to or subtracting from the words of Jesus instead of faithfully teaching them.

What things, other than the words of Jesus and the apostles, do people listen to?

- Religious rituals. ('This seems very spiritual!')
- My own ideas. ('I like to think of God as...')
- Spiritual experiences. ('I want something powerful!')

Why does Jesus want unity among His people?

- *'...so that the world may believe...'* (v. 21)

*As followers of Jesus receive His Word, they will know a deep unity and love for one another.*

<sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one –  
<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity.

Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>24</sup> Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

As Jesus prepares for the cross, He makes amazing statements about His people.

What has God given His church?

- The glory that the Father gave Jesus. **(v. 22)**

Glory means God being seen as He really is. The church is entrusted with the amazing job of making God known, as it shares what Jesus has said and done.

What is this glory?

- Complete unity. **(v. 23)**
- It shows the world something of the amazing love that the Father has for the Son, and that the Son has for His church.

What is Jesus' end goal for His followers?

- He wants them to see it through to the end and to be with Him in heaven. **(v. 24)**
- Then they will see and enjoy His glory for ever.

<sup>25</sup> 'Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.

<sup>26</sup> I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.'

Jesus finishes His prayer by crying out to His Father.

- The world does not know God. (v. 25)
- But His people know that Jesus has been sent by God. (v. 25)
- Jesus will continue to make God known to them... (v. 26)
- ...so that God's love and the presence of Jesus Himself, may be seen in the lives of His followers.

*Christians have a wonderful hope. God's love, made known through Jesus, will unite them here on earth and be with them all the way into eternity.*



## Summary

A front row seat for an extraordinary prayer.

- Jesus' hour, the time of His death, has arrived. (v. 1)
- Jesus asks that His Father might glorify Him so that He might glorify God. Where? At the cross. (v. 1)
- The cross is the last place you would expect to see God's glory but it is where Jesus will achieve His work of bringing eternal life. (v. 2)
- Jesus prays for the apostles... for their protection and unity. (v. 11)
- He commissions them, giving them the job of taking the truth about Jesus out into the world. (v. 18)
- And Jesus prays for His church, all Christians, that they will be united with both Him and the Father... (v. 23)
- ...to be with Him in heaven. (v. 24)
- Until then, Jesus promises to be with them and to continue to make God known. (v. 26)

<sup>1</sup> 'Father, the hour has come.'

<sup>1</sup> 'Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.'

<sup>2</sup> '...that he might give eternal life...'

<sup>11</sup> 'Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name... so that they may be one as we are one.'

<sup>18</sup> '...I have sent them into the world.'

<sup>23</sup> '...I in them and you in me - so that they may be brought to complete unity.'

<sup>24</sup> 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory...'

<sup>26</sup> '...[I] will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.'

Why not take a moment to re-read what we've looked at in this episode?

## John 17:1–26

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed:

‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. <sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

<sup>6</sup> ‘I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world.

They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

<sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

<sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> ‘I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

<sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

<sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

<sup>20</sup> ‘My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>24</sup> Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup> I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.’

*What comes next?  
Betrayal and arrest.*





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