

An Exegesis of John 16:17-33

[Presented to The Manitowoc Pastoral Conference, Our Savior
Ev. Lutheran Church, Two Rivers, WI, November 14, 1994]

By Pastor Rodney H. Rixe

Introduction

Chapters 13-17 of the Gospel of John record Jesus' farewell addresses to his disciples. In these final hours of his earthly ministry Jesus still had many things that he wished to teach his disciples. He washed his disciples feet. He warned them that they would all turn away from him this very night. He told Peter that he would deny him three times. He told them once again that it was only a little while now and he would be going to his Father. He warned them of the world's hatred for them and persecution of them. He had warned them that in a little while they would no longer see Jesus and then in a little while they would see him.

These addresses of Jesus had spanned the time from the beginning of the Passover meal up until the time they crossed the Kidron Valley and went up the Mount of Olives where Jesus would be betrayed. Many of the things which Jesus had told them were things that they did not understand. Perhaps to us, who view this entire address in view of Calvary and Easter morning, the disciples' slowness to understand seems hard to comprehend. However, we by the grace of God have the opportunity to see the entire picture whereas the disciples had only bits of information about the picture.

The disciples do not comprehend exactly what Jesus is saying. Since they do not yet comprehend the purpose for which he came into the world they cannot think of his leaving the world as anything but a cause for sorrow. They do not want Jesus to leave because they do not understand why he is there. They just know that they want him to stay. Jesus' purpose is to give them the comfort. They would indeed be filled with sorrow at his going. The world would rejoice that he would be gone. Yet Jesus wants to offer them the comfort that their sorrow would be turned to joy.

Commentary

Verse 17

εἶπαν οὖν τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἀλλήλους, Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο ὃ λέγει ἡμῖν, Μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με; καί, Ὅτι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα;

εἶπαν - 3rd plural, aorist active indicative "they said"

ἐστὶν - 3rd sg, present active indicative "is"

τοῦτο - nominative neut. sg., demonstrative

ὃ - accusative Neut. Sg., Relative

λέγει - 3rd sg., present active indicative

Μικρὸν - accusative Neut. Sg.

θεωρεῖτέ - 2nd pl. present active Indicative "to see" θεωρεω

με - 1st sg. accusative

ὄψεσθε - 2nd pl. fut. indicative – οραω "to see"

ὑπάγω - 1st sg pres active indicative – υπαγω "I am returning"

τὸν πατέρα - accusative masc. sg.

Translation: Then some of his disciples said to each other, “What is this which he is saying to us, ‘A little while and you will not see me and again a little while and you will see me’ and ‘Because I am returning to the Father.’”

Verse 18

ἔλεγον οὖν, τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο [ὃ λέγει] τὸ μικρόν; οὐκ οἶδαμεν τί λαλεῖ

ἔλεγον - 3rd pl. Imperfect Indicative – λεγω - “they were saying”

τί - nom. neut. sg., interrogative, “what”

ἐστὶν - 3rd sg., pres. active indicative, εἰμι

τοῦτο - nom. neut. sg., demonstrative

ὃ - accusative neut. sg., relative

λέγει - 3rd sg present active, indicative, λεγω “he is saying”

οἶδαμεν - 1st plural, perfect, active, indicative

τί - accusative neut. sg., interrogative

λαλεῖ - 3rd sg. pres. active, indicative, “he is saying”

Translation: Therefore they were saying, “What is this that he is saying, ‘A little while?’ We do not know what he is saying.”

Verse 17 & 18

In the verse just preceding our text, Jesus said, “in a little while you will see me no more and then after a little while you will see me.” However, Jesus’ disciples had not understood what Jesus had said. Some of them, thinking that others had understood Jesus’ message better than they had began asking what Jesus meant. They quote Jesus exactly with the exception of οὐ in the place of οὐκέτι. In addition they also refer back to the statement which Jesus had made which is recorded for us in verse 10 of chapter 16, “...because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer.” The disciples could not understand how Jesus could say “in a little while they would see him no more” and “in a little while they would see him” and at the same time tell them that he was going to the Father.

οὐκέτι means, “no more,” “no longer,” “no further,” note how the disciples when they quote Jesus simply substitute οὐ meaning “not” for οὐκέτι. So how could they then see him again when Jesus had just finished telling them that they would see him no longer?

In addition the disciples could not grasp the idea that in a little while Jesus would be gone. It was beyond their imagination at this time that Jesus who had been freely teaching in the temple during this week would in less than 24 hours be arrested, tried, convicted and executed. These events did not seem possible. In addition, if Jesus returned to His father—a separation that would have seemed to be more than “a little while”—how was it that they would see him again? Would Jesus indeed return to them from the Father after only a little while. It was this confusion which prompted the disciples to ask each other what Jesus had meant. They were hoping that someone else had a better understanding of Jesus’ statement. The imperfect plural in verse 18 (ἔλεγον) shows that this was not just one question by one of the disciples but a question that was being discussed among many of them. At this time the disciples did not know, (οἶδα) in sense of understanding, what Jesus was speaking about. However, on Pentecost they would know (γιγνώσκω) in the sense of having personally experienced what it was that Jesus was speaking about.

While it would be convenient if the answer to the disciple's questions were expressed in the verbs, the answer is not to be found there. John seems to use these two verbs ὁράω and ρεωράω interchangeably. In John 6:62 he is speaking about physically observing the glorified Savior ascend into heaven and writes "What if you see (θεωρέω) the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!" In John 14:19 He is making a parallel statement to the one that we have here in verse 17 and uses the verb θεωρέω instead of ὁράω as he does here, "Only a little while longer and the world will not see me (θεωρέω) anymore, but you will see (θεωρέω) me." There does not seem to be any significance to the way in which John interchanges these verbs. One is not a seeing of faith and the other a physical seeing. One is not a seeing of Christ in his humiliation and the other of seeing Christ in His exaltation.

However, the Lord's statement is not a contradiction. In a little while the disciples would no longer see him in his state of humiliation. The first μικρόν is the time between the moment Jesus was speaking and the time when he would be taken from the cross and buried. After that time they would no longer see him as they knew him in his state of humiliation. However, the second μικρόν is a reminder that after a short time they would see him. This short time is the time which the Lord spent in the grave. When Jesus appeared to the disciples on Easter it was in his state of exaltation. He was no longer in his state of humiliation.

Verse 19

ἔγνω ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤθελον αὐτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Περὶ τούτου ζηεῖ μετ' ἀλλήλων ὅτι εἶπον, Μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτε με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με;

ἔγνω ὁ Ἰησοῦς - 3rd sg, aorist, active, indicative, historical aorist, γινώσκω - "Jesus knew

ἤθελον - 3rd plural, imperfect, active, indicative, ἐθέλω, "they were desiring"

αὐτὸν - 3rd ., sg., masc., accusative

ἐρωτᾶν - present, active, infinitive, "to ask"

εἶπεν - 3rd, sg. aorist, active, indicative

τούτου - genitive, neut., sg., demonstrative

ζηεῖτε - 2nd plural, present, active, indicative, to ask

Translation: Jesus knew that they were desiring to ask him and he said to them, "Are you asking one another about this that I said, 'A little while and you will not see me and again a little while and you will see me.'"

Jesus, the Son of God, even in his state of humiliation made limited use of his omniscience so that even before His disciples approached him with their question he knew their question. John is here reporting what had happened so he uses the aorist (historical aorist) form of γινώσκω. The imperfect form of θέλω, expressing continued action, is used to show that during the time the disciples were discussing this they desired to ask Jesus. Here Jesus shows himself to be the ever loving Savior who is more than willing to help. The disciples desired to ask the question of Jesus but before they did Jesus reached out to them by asking the question himself.

At this time Jesus does not deal with the second half of their question "and I am going to the Father." Instead he focuses just on the first half of their question. Our Lord is more than willing to help us just as he was willing to help his disciples. Let us always to turn not just to our brothers for help and advice but also to turn to our ever willing Lord in prayer.

Verse 20

λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι κλαύσετε καὶ θρησῆσετε ὑμεῖς, ὁ δὲ κόσμος χαρήσεται ὑμεῖς λυπηθήσεσθε, ἀλλ' ἡ λύπη ὑμῶν.

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν - “used to stress the truth and validity of the sayings by his own acknowledgment of them.” (Kittel)

λέγω ὑμῖν - 1st sg., present, active, indicative “I say to you”

κλαύσετε - 2nd pl, future, active, indicative, κλαίω, “You will weep”

θρησῆσετε - 2nd pl, future, active, indicative, θρηνεω, “You will lament”

ὁ δὲ κόσμος χαρήσεται - 3rd sg., future, indicative, “but the world will rejoice

ὑμεῖς λυπηθήσεσθε - 2nd plural, future, passive, indicative, λυπάω - “you will be saddened

ἡ λύπη ὑμῶν - “your sadness”

εἰς χαρὰν γενήσεται - 3rd sg, future indicative “will become joy”

Translation: Truly, truly, I say to you that you will weep and you will mourn but the world will rejoice. You will become sad but your sadness will turn to joy.

Jesus begins his statement with the familiar combination ἀμὴν ἀμὴν which occurs 25 times in John and is used to introduce statements of greatest weight. Κλαίω is loud weeping and θρηνεω, lament, is the type of lament given at a funeral. Jesus is here speaking in very unmistakable terms about his death. In a short time his disciples would indeed be weeping and lamenting over his death. We are told little about the actions of the disciples during the passion and death of our Lord. We can understand how this was a very hard time for them. They had spend too much time with Jesus and had put too much hope and trust in Jesus for them not to be effected by all that happened to Jesus.

We need think only of the words of the Emmaus disciples “but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel” (Luke 24:21). All of the Apostles’ hopes were tied up in Jesus. They had left jobs. They had placed their hopes in Jesus and now He was dead. In addition to losing their friend with whom they had spent a great deal of time with during the last three years their hopes had also been shattered. It is to this grief and sorrow that Jesus is referring in verse 20.

In contrast to the disciples, for whom the death of the Lord would be a source of pain, the world would find joy in Jesus’ death. The world is all of those who did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah. We have an abundance of information regarding the world’s glee at the Savior’s expense. We think of the Sanhedrin mocking Jesus during his “trial.” We remember the mockery of the soldiers. We are reminded of the purple robe and the crown of thorns. We think of King Herod hoping to be entertained by a few miracles while Jesus’ life hung in the balance. We think of the people gathered around the cross mocking Jesus and hurling insults at him. The world did rejoice at the death of the Lord. They wanted to see Jesus dead. Even the two men who were being crucified with Jesus could not resist the chance to mock him. Nor, do we need to think that this mockery stopped the moment Jesus died. We can also imagine that this mockery of the Savior only served to increase the pain of the disciples. This is the thought expressed in the passive (λυπηθήσεσθε). The disciples would be made sad by Jesus’ death and the world’s rejoicing over Jesus’ death.

Jesus is not going to leave his disciples thinking that only sorrow lie ahead of them. Many of the things which Jesus had told them, this evening, had brought them a great deal of sorrow. He was not going to leave them thinking that this was the only thing that awaited them. Their sadness would turn to joy.

Verse 21

ἡ γυνή ὅταν τίκῃ λύπην ἔχει, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς ὅταν δὲ γεννήσῃ τὸ παιδίον, οὐκέτι μνημονεύει τῆς θλίψεως διὰ τὴν χαρὰν ὅτι ἐγεννήθη ἄνθρωπος εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

ἡ γυνή - nominative, fem., sg., the article is generic “a woman”

ὅταν – οτε + αν + subj = present general condition

τίκῃ - 3rd sg., present, active, subjunctive – τικτω - to give birth

λύπην - pain

ἔχει - 3rd sg, pres. act. ind. “she has

ὅτι - causal

ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς - 3rd sg., aorist, active, indicative, ερχομαι, “her time has come”

ὅταν - when

δὲ γεννήσῃ - 3rd sg., aorist, active, subjunctive – γεννω - “she bears”

τὸ παιδίον - accusative, neut., sg. direct object - “the child

οὐκέτι μνημονεύει - 3rd sg. present, active, indicative, “she no longer remembers

τῆς θλίψεως - genitive fem. sg. - her affliction

ὅτι - causal

ἐγεννήθη - 3rd sg., aorist, passive, Indicative

εἰς τὸν κόσμον - “into the world.”

Translation: When a woman gives birth she has pain because her hour has come, but when she bears the child she no longer remembers her affliction on account of the joy because a human being has been born into the world.

In this verse Jesus makes a comparison of how the same event is able to produce both sorrow and joy. The article of γυνή is generic referring to all woman giving birth. The particle σταν is also used with the subjunctive to form a present general condition, whenever a woman gives birth she has pain. The ὅτι clause is causal expressing that the reason for her pain is that it is time for her child to be born.

The next clause is also a present general condition. When the child is born a woman no longer remembers her pain because of the joy that a human being has been born into the world. The joy of the birth of a child supersedes the pain that was experienced during the birth.

The same will be true for the disciples. On one hand they will be filled with sorrow on the other hand their sorrow will be turned to joy. How true this must have been for the disciples as Jesus appeared among his disciples on the Easter Sunday. Jesus’ death which had been such a source of pain to them was now a source of joy because they now knew that he had risen from the dead. How much greater their joy must have been as they learned what Jesus’ resurrection really meant for them.

Verse 22

καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν νῦν λύπην ἔχετε πάλιν δὲ ὀψομαι ὑμᾶς, καὶ χαρήσεται ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία, καὶ τὴν χαρὰν ὑμῶν οὐδεὶς αἴρει ἀφ’ ὑμῶν.

ὁμοῖς λύπην ἔχετε - 2nd pl, present active, indicative, “you have sadness”

ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς - 1st sg. future, indicative, ὁραω, “I will see you”

χαρήσεται - 3rd sg., future, passive, indicative, χαιρω, “your heart will rejoice”

ὑμῶν - 2nd pl. genitive

ἡ καρδία - nominative, fem. sg.

καὶ τὴν χαρὰν ὑμῶν - “and your joy

αἴρει - 3rd sg. present, active, indicative, αἰρω, to remove

Translation: And you also have pain but I will see you again and your heart will be made glad and no one will take your joy from you.

The disciples had pain at what Jesus told them but their pain would even increase as they saw the events of which Jesus spoke unfold before their eyes. Jesus gives them hope by telling them once again that he will see them. ὄψομαι is a future indicative. The indicative is the mood that affirms actuality and certainty. No matter how great their pain is and no matter what happens Jesus wants them to remember that He will see them again. This was to be their hope even when Jesus would be crucified and buried. It would be the resurrection that would turn their sorrow to joy. In the resurrection they would rejoice with a joy that no one could take away from them. This joy is not dependent so much on the resurrection appearances during the forty days after the resurrection as it is on seeing through eyes of faith that Jesus is the Savior. Certainly Jesus’ resurrection appearances strengthened the disciples faith but it wasn’t really until after the day of Pentecost that they saw Jesus in His glory as Savior and Redeemer. It was only after seeing Jesus as their Savior that their hearts would rejoice with a joy that no one could take away from them.

Verse 23

καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐμέ οὐκ ἐρωτήσετε οὐδέν. ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἂν τι αἰτήσητε τὸν πατέρα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δώσει ὑμῖν

καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ - “and in that day

ἐμέ οὐκ ἐρωτήσετε οὐδέν - 2nd pl. fut. indicative, ἐρωτάω, “you will not ask me anything”

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν- “I tell you the truth”

αἰτήσητε - 2nd plural, aorist, active, subjunctive, αἰτέω, to ask

τὸν πατέρα - accusative, masc., sg.

δώσει - 3rd sg., future, active, indicative-“the Father will give”

Translation: In that day you will not ask me anything. I tell you the truth, if you ask the Father anything in my name he will give it to you.

The day Jesus is referring to is the day in which they would plainly see the Lord’s work, particularly the day of Pentecost. This verse provides further evidence for taking ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ to refer to Pentecost because in the 40 days following the resurrection the disciples did ask Jesus for information. The meaning of ἐρωτάω is “to ask, seek information.” In Acts 1:6 the disciples asked Jesus “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” and in John 21:21 Peter asked Jesus for information about what would happen to John. In the 40 days that followed the resurrection the disciples still did not understand Jesus’ real work as the

Messiah. Their question in Acts 1:6 shows that they were still looking for a Messiah who would give an earthly political freedom. It wasn't until the Spirit of Truth came on Pentecost that the disciples no longer had any need of asking Jesus for information. It was then that they beheld with eyes of faith the scope and breadth of the Lord's work. It was then that the Spirit of Truth guided them in all truth. Jesus had said in John 14:26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

The question that comes to mind is: "Why does Jesus say that in that day you will no longer ask me anything while in John 14:14 He encouraged them to ask him for anything?" Rev. Martin Wenzel in his commentary, "The Harmony of the Gospels," page 696 makes this statement "Αἰτώ,...is the submissive suppliant tone of the mendicant for alms (Acts 3:20) of the inferior to the superior (Acts 12:20), of the child to the parent (Matt. 7:7; Jas. 1:5; 1 John 3:22). Our Lord, however never uses αἰτέω in His own petitions for His disciples. He is not the mendicant beggar before God, but the equal of the Father. He uses the other verb ἔρωτάω, a word which is never used of man's prayer to God." Kittel in his "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament - abridged in one volume" does not make the same distinction between the two words. However, the distinction made by Wenzel does explain how on one hand Jesus says in verse 23a "and in that day you will not ask (ἔρωτάω) anything," while in John 14:14 He said "You may ask (αἰτέω) me for anything in my name, and I will do it." The distinction between the asking that Jesus' disciples had done up to this point and the asking that they would do after Pentecost would then reflect the change in Lord from his state of exaltation to his state of complete exaltation after ascending into heaven.

Jesus introduces the second half of this verse with ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν which is a sign of Jesus testifying to the truth and importance of the statement. What follows is a future more vivid condition signifying the condition as possible but whenever the condition occurs the conclusion is positively certain. Whenever the disciples would ask in Jesus' name God would give it to them.

Jesus reminds his disciples that whatever they ask the Father for in his name he will give it to them. To ask ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου is to ask trusting in that which Jesus has revealed to us about himself. The believer who asks in Jesus name will not ask for things that conflict with his own faith nor for things that conflict with the will and purpose of his exalted Lord. In John 14:13 Jesus had told his disciples that "I will do whatever you ask in my name," in this verse he tells us that "the Father will give whatever you ask in my name." Here Jesus is reaffirming the close connection between the Father and Himself. Our prayers are answered by both of them in view of the redemption won for us by our Savior. The promise of Jesus stands. Whatever we ask in his name he will give to us.

Verse 24

ἕως ἄρτι οὐκ ἠτήσατε οὐδὲν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου αἰτεῖτε καὶ λήμψεσθε, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ὑμῶν ᾗ πεπληρωμένη.

ἠτήσατε - 2nd plural, aorist, active, indicative, αἰτέω, "to ask"

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου - in my name"

αἰτεῖτε - present active imperative

λήμψεσθε - 2nd plural, future indicative, λαμβάνω, "you will receive"

ᾗ- 3rd sg. present, active, subjunctive of ἐμί

πεπληρωμένη - perfect passive participle, nominative feminine sg., πληρόω, to fill up, to complete

Translation: Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive in order that your joy may be complete.

Up until this time there had been no reason to ask in Jesus name as he had not yet completed His work of redemption. The disciples had certainly prayed before this. In Luke 11:1 they had asked Jesus to teach them to pray. However, praying in Jesus name presupposes an understanding of not only the who Jesus was but also an understanding of His work. The disciples would not have this until the Holy Spirit would come and guide them in all truth. Also since the disciples were able to speak to Jesus in person a prayer in his name was not necessary.

αἰτεῖτε - the present imperative communicates the idea of continual or habitually asking. It is the same thing that is expressed in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 “pray continually”. Here God is giving us the invitation to pray. Along with the invitation, the gospel directive to pray, we are promised that our prayers will indeed be answered. The result of our prayers being answered will be that our joy may be made complete. Jesus promised them that their sorrow would turn to joy. Now he promises them that their joy would be made complete. The perfect expresses the idea that their joy would be made complete and the results of that would continue.

It is a great joy for a sinner to have his prayers answered by the Almighty God. The sinner knows full well that he deserves no favors or special treatment from the Holy God. Yet, for the sake of Jesus his request is not only heard but granted. Contrast this joy to the fleeting joy of this world. Instead of chasing after new things and new experiences in which to find pleasure and joy, the Christian’s joy is in that of knowing that he has a Savior who has redeemed him and for the sake of that Savior the heavenly Father stands ready and willing to not only listen to his requests but to grant them as well. Our joy and the disciples’ joy is in the Savior who has redeemed us. As a result of that redemption we have been given the blessing of having the Almighty God grant the prayers we pray in the Savior’s name.

Verse 25

Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἔρχεται ὅτε οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίας λαλήσω ὑμῖν, ἀλλὰ παρρησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπαγγελῶ ὑμῖν.

Ταῦτα - accusative neut. pl.

παροιμίαις - dative, feminine, pl. “obscure speech”, “figure of speech”

λελάληκα - 1st sg. perfect active indicative, λεγω, “I have spoken”

ἔρχεται - present, indicative

ᾧρα - nominative feminine sg.

παροιμίας -dative feminine pl.

λαλήσω - 1st sg. future, active, indicative

παρρησία - dative feminine sg.

ἀπαγγελῶ - 1st sg., future, active, indicative, “to tell”, “to inform”

Translation: I have spoken these things to you in figurative language. The time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language but I will plainly tell you about the Father.

Here Jesus is making his final remarks to his disciples before his death. Ταῦτα - these things can refer narrowly to all of the things that Jesus had been discussing with his disciples on this night but in a wider sense it can refer to his entire public ministry. No matter how much Jesus wished to be completely open with them it was not possible because of the nature of what lay ahead. Even if Jesus had been completely open with them it would have still remained obscure because of their own lack of understanding.

Jesus is contrasting the present time, the time of their sorrow, with a future time when their sorrow would be turned to joy. Jesus at that time would tell them plainly about the Father. Not that Jesus would himself personally teach them, but that the Holy Spirit would guide them in all truth. When Jesus promises to speak plainly to them about the Father he is also promising to speak plainly to them about himself because the Father and the Son are one and the Son reveals the Father.

Verse 26

ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου αἰτήσεσθε, καὶ οὐ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐρωτήσω τὸν πατέρα περὶ ὑμῶν

ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ - “in that day”

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου - “in my name”

αἰτήσεσθε - 2nd plural, future, middle, indicative – αιτεω, “you will ask”

λέγω - 1st sg, present, active, indicative,

ὑμῖν - 2nd plural, dative

ἐγὼ - 1st sg. nominative

ἐρωτήσω - 1st sg. future active indicative

τὸν πατέρα - accusative masc. sg.

Translation: In that day you will ask in my name and I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

Verse 27

αὐτός γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ φιλεῖ ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς ἐμέ πεφιλήκατε καὶ πεπιστεύκατε ὅτι ἐγὼ παρά [του] θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον.

αὐτός - 3rd sg. nominative, masculine

ὁ πατὴρ - nominative, masc., sg.

φιλεῖ - 3rd sg. pres., active, indicative, “love, have affection”

ὑμᾶς - 2nd plural accusative.

πεφιλήκατε - 2nd plural, perfect, active, indicative, φιλεω, “you have loved”

πεπιστεύκατε - 2nd plural perfect, active, indicative, πιστευω “you have believed”

[τοῦ] θεοῦ - genitive, masc. sg.

ἐξῆλθον - 1st sg., aorist, active, indicative, ερχομαι, to go out.

Translation: For the Father Himself loves you because you have loved me and you have believed that I came from God.

In that day refers again to the time of Pentecost when his disciples would comprehend not only who Jesus was but what Jesus had done for them. The days when Jesus would speak to them in figurative language would be over. Jesus would now speak plainly with them and they would clearly understand what Jesus was teaching them. We think of the clarity of the sermon preached by the Apostle Peter on Pentecost in contrast to the disciples’ understanding of the Lord’s work up until that time.

The disciples’ clear understanding of what God had done for them in sending Jesus into the world to redeem them from sin would lead them to go to God in prayer. It is the nature of faith to respond to the

knowledge of God's love and grace with the desire to exercise the fellowship that we have with God. Jesus assures them that their relationship with God will be one which will allow them to bring their requests directly to God.

Jesus is making a distinction. He is not telling them that they will pray to Jesus and then Jesus will pray to the Father on their behalf but that they would pray to the Father. If Jesus did not suffer, die, rise, ascend into heaven and intercede on the behalf of sinners no one would be able to pray to God believing that their prayers would be welcomed and answered. It is because of Christ's intercession on behalf of the disciples and all people that we now have the ability to bring our requests to God. If Christ had not suffered and died, there would have been no prayer brought to the Father with any hope of it being answered. Nor would it now be necessary for his disciples to have someone pray for them or on their behalf. The work of Christ would be such that they would have peace with God. So that they could bring their requests to God. There was no longer a need for anyone to make special intercession for them. This is not to say that Jesus was not going to make intercession for them because that is exactly what happens in chapter 17.

Verse 27 gives the reason why Jesus did not have to pray for His disciples and why they may pray in His name. *αὐτός γὰρ ὁ πατήρ φιλεῖ ὑμᾶς*. This is one of the rare instances where the verb *φιλέω* is used of God toward men. The expected verb would be *ἀγαπάω* —the love with which God has determined to love us. Instead here we have the love of friendly affection. So certain was the completion of the Savior's work of redemption that even before Jesus died God is spoken of as loving the disciples with a *φιλέω* love. In view of what the Savior would do God can love them with a *φιλέω* love. The fact that God is able to love the disciples with a *φιλέω* love in spite of their sinful, rebellious human natures is proof of the absolute, and complete payment for sin that the Savior would make.

Because the disciples had loved Jesus with the love of affection and because they had believed Jesus and they continued both to love and believe that he had come out from the father God then on the basis of their faith in Jesus forgave their sins. And loved them with the love of affection.

The fact that love in this verse precedes faith does not cause a difficulty. If *ἀγαπάω* had been used there would have been a difficulty because *ἀγαπάω* is the love that springs from faith and without faith it does not exist. However since *φιλέω* is used here it does not cause a problem that it is indeed listed first. *ὅτι ἐγὼ παρά τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον* describes the faith of the disciples. No they may not have understood every aspect of Jesus' work. They simply believed that He was the Son of God who had come out from the Father.

Verse 28

ἐξῆλθον παρά τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον πάλιν τὸν κόσμον καὶ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα

ἐξῆλθον - 1st sg., aorist, active, indicative of *ἔρχομαι* "to go out"

τοῦ πατρὸς - gen.

ἐλήλυθα - 1st sg. perfect, active, indicative of *ἔρχομαι*, "I have gone out"

ἀφίημι - 1st sg. present, active indicative, "I am leaving"

πορεύομαι - 1st sg. present indicative, "I am going"

Translation: I came out from the father and have gone out into the world again I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father.

In this verse Jesus sums up his entire message to them. The first verb ἐξῆλθον is a historical aorist emphasizing the fact that it happened. Jesus truly did go out from the Father. Next comes a perfect tense that emphasizes the certainty of the fact. Jesus did indeed come into the world, the disciples were witnesses to that fact. The next two verbs are both present. Jesus is now already having begun the act of leaving the world and by leaving the world he is also returning to the Father. Jesus act of leaving has already been put into motion. Judas had already put a plan into motion to betray him. Jesus had almost finished his final message in his state of humiliation to his disciples. He was now heading for the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane where He would be betrayed.

These four statements are made in the simplest way and yet they carry such an important message. It was this that the disciples believed and it was for this—Jesus calling Himself the Son of God—for which the Jews hated Jesus.

Verse 29

Λέγουσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, Ἴδε νῦν ἐν παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖς καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις.

Λέγουσιν - 3rd pl., present, active, indicative,

οἱ μαθηταὶ - nominative masc. pl.

αὐτοῦ - gen. masc. 3rd sg.

Ἴδε - imperative of εἶδον “Look!”, “See!”

παρρησίᾳ - dative, feminine, sg.

λαλεῖς - 2nd sg. pres. act. indicative.

παροιμίαν - accusative fem. sg., “figure of speech”, “figurative language”

οὐδεμίαν - “in no respect”

λέγεις - 2nd sg. pres. act. indicative, λεγω

Translation: His disciples said, “See! now you are speaking plainly and you are in no way speaking in figurative language. “

To the disciples it now seemed that Jesus was finally speaking plainly. His last statement was one which they felt they could understand. Jesus had come into the world from the Father and was now going to leave this world and return to his Father. This much they understood. But they did not grasp the details of how this would be done. Jesus betrayal, mock trial, unjust conviction and crucifixion were all a complete and confusing surprise to the disciples. Even when these events had transpired and Jesus had risen from the dead the disciples still struggled to grasp why it was necessary that Jesus had to die.

They are implying that they did not need to await a time when Jesus would speak plainly to them of the Father but that already now they understood completely what Jesus said to them.

Verse 30

νῦν οἶδαμεν ὅτι οἶδας πάντα καὶ οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχεις ἵνα τίς σε ἐρωτᾷ ἐν τούτῳ πιστεύομεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθες.

οἶδαμεν - 1st pl., perfect act., indicative., οἶδα - “now we know”

ὅτι οἶδας πάντα - 2nd sg. perfect indicative-οἶδα- “that you know all things”

χρεῖαν - acc. fem. sg.-“need”, “necessity”

ἔχεις - 2nd sg. pres. act. ind.

ἵνα - + the subjunctive is a purpose clause

ἔρωτᾷ - 3rd sg. present, active, subjunctive

ἐν τούτῳ πιστεύομεν - 1st pl. pres. active, indicative, “in this we believe”

ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθες - 2nd sg., aorist, active, indicative. - “that you came from God.

Translation: Now we know that you know all things and you do not need to have anyone ask you anything, by this we believe, that you came from God.

On the basis of this incident the disciples now confess that Jesus does indeed know all things. The disciples had desired to ask Jesus but before they were able to ask him Jesus told them what their question was and then proceeds to answer it even before they had asked it. Many times Jesus had shown his omniscience to them. Yet it is this incident that leads them to confess that Jesus truly does know all things. They then conclude their remark by saying “in this we believe that you came from God.” Jesus’ omniscience was one of the reasons that they believed that he came from God. It wasn’t the only reason. The core of the disciples’ faith was that they believed that He was the Son of God. It was also this point that lead many of the Jews and the Jewish leaders to despise Jesus.

Jesus did not need to have people ask him for information because he already knew all things and could answer their questions even before they were asked.

Verses 31

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς, Ἄρτι πιστεύετε;

ἀπεκρίθη - 3rd sg. aorist passive, indicative-αποκρινω, “Jesus answered them”

Ἄρτι - “now”

πιστεύετε - 2nd pl., present act. ind.

Translation: Jesus answered them “Now you believe.”

The first part of this sentence could be taken either as a declarative “Now you believe” or as an interrogative “Now you believe?” However if it is taken as an interrogative then why would Jesus say in John 17:8 “For I gave them the words you gave to me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.” Why would Jesus here question the faith that he is going to testify to a short time later. This sentence is best taken as a declarative, “Now you believe.” The point Jesus is making is that at this time they did believe but the time is coming when their faith would be put to the test. They had told Jesus that he was speaking in clear language now and they did not need to wait for him to do so because they understood his words just fine at this time. Jesus is warning them that the time is coming when what they believed so firmly at this time would be severely challenged. After Jesus was buried would they still believe that he came from God?

Verse 32

ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν ἵνα σκοισθῆτε εἰς τὰ ἴδια καὶ ἐμὴν μόνον ἀφηγησῆτε καὶ οὐκ εἰμι μόνος, ὅτι ὁ πατὴρ μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἐστίν.

ἰδοὺ - “behold”

έρχεται - 3rd sg., pres. indicative

ώρα - nominative, sg.

ἐλήλυθεν - 3rd sg., perfect, active, indicative-ερχομαι

σκοπισθητε - 2nd pl., aorist, passive, subjunctive, σκορπιζω, to scatter

ἕκαστος - nom sg.

ταῖδιαδία - accusative, pl.

καὶ - και + με

μόνον - accusative, sg.

ἀφήτε - 2nd pl., aorist, active, subjunctive, ἀ-ιρλpt, to leave

ὅτι - causal

ἔστιν - 3rd sg. pres. active, indicative

Translation: Behold the time is coming and has already come when you will be scattered each one to his own way and you will leave me alone but I am not alone because the Father is with me.

Jesus tells his disciples that their faith would be tested very shortly. In spite of their confident claim “Now we believe,” in a short time they would all be scattered to their own ways and would leave Jesus alone. They would leave him in this critical time. Yet, the thought of this did not fill Jesus with terror because the Father would be with Him. Perhaps the disciples were imagining that they already had possession of the joy which no one could take away from them. Jesus is warning them that the time is coming when they would be filled with sorrow and lamenting. The passive is used “you will be scattered.” They would be scattered by their doubts and fears. They would be scattered by their desire to save their own lives. They would be scattered by their fear of their enemies. Each one of the disciples went to a place where they thought that they would be safe while they left Jesus alone. Note the emphasis in the word order on καμῆ. Jesus tells them that even so the Father would be with Him and that would be his comfort. Jesus does not now mention the fact that he himself was aware of, the time was coming when the Father too, would leave him.

Verse 33

τοῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρηνῆν ἔχητε ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον.

τοῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν - “I have said these things to you”

ἐν εἰρηνῆν ἔχητε - εχω is in the subjunctive making this a purpose clause, “in order that you may have peace in me”

ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλίψιν ἐχέτε - “in the world you have tribulation”

θαρσεῖτε - present imperative, θαρεω, “be confident”

νενίκηκα - 1^s sg., perfect, active, indicative, νικαω, to conquer, to overcome.

Translation: I have said these things to you in order that you may have peace in me. In the world you have affliction but be confident, I have overcome the world!

The purpose of Jesus entire address over the last three chapters is that in Christ the disciples might have peace. A time of sorrow was coming. Jesus would die. Their hopes would be smashed. Yet they would find peace in the Savior. Jesus would return and they would see him. They would understand Jesus’ words. Their sorrow would be turned to joy. “Be confident, I have overcome the world.” Jesus passion was just beginning yet

he is so certain of its ending he already speaks about his victory as a past event. A past event whose effects are felt today. When we look at our sorrows here on this earth let us always direct our attention where Jesus directed his disciples. Jesus has overcome the world. By faith that victory is ours just as it would ultimately be the disciples'. Hold fast to Jesus' words, "I have overcome the world."