

John: The Gospel of Light and Life
Adam Hamilton
Chapter 4 Discussion
The Farewell Discourse (pgs. 89-106)

Before We Begin

Chapters 13-17 in the Gospel of John is the Last upper that Jesus shared with his disciples. These chapters are often referred to as “The Farewell Discourse.” In these chapters John records, the words of instruction and encouragement that Jesus wanted to leave with his disciples before his death, resurrection, and ascension.

Our discussion will focus on Chapters 13-15. In these chapters we sense a great love, compassion, and concern for the disciples as he prepared the, for the challenges that they would face as they fulfilled the call to be witnesses for Christ.

Ponder This.....

- *What words of wisdom have been passed along to you by a family member of special friend?*
- *How have these words influenced your life?*

Opening Prayer

Holy God of light and life, thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit that remains with us always. As we study your Holy Word, let us be receptive to what you want to teach us. Grant us courage to live as you call us to live and to share the love of Christ with the world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Bible and Book Study and Discussion

Farewell Discourse: John 13 (pg. 111) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1838-1841)

- *The setting is the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples.*
- *John’s account differs from the account found in the three Synoptic Gospels.*
- *Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe in detail Jesus’ breaking bread and giving the cup. The Apostle Paul was familiar with the tradition in the Synoptic Gospels and wrote about it in his letter to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 2005-2006).*

- In contrast, John barely mentions the bread and cup (John 13:2, 26) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1838-1839).

Read John 13:1-20 (pg. 111) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1838-1839)

<https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog/jesus-washing-the-disciples-feet/>

- What do we learn through these two stories about the meaning of greatness and servanthood in the kingdom of God?
 - This is the most straight forward point of this story in John 13:1-20. Jesus is giving his disciples a high calling as representatives (verse 20: “whosoever receives the one I send receives me”), and to be fit for this high calling one must be the kind of person who gladly goes low in service.
 - Essentially “Treat others as you would want to be treated.”
 - We as humans find it more fulfilling to serve (or to do nice things or help) others.
 - o “Serving others, is the most deeply joyful, satisfying life.”
- How is the disciples’ attitude toward greatness, as revealed in Luke 22:24-26 (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1794)
 - The disciples argued who would be revered as the greatest, with no regard as to what Jesus was doing or demonstrating.
- Why did Peter at first refuse to let Jesus wash his feet? Why did Peter change his mind?
 - Because Jesus the Savior of the world was not supposed to be washing feet, this person of ultimate greatness should not be doing the work of a house servant.
 - Jesus responded however, “Unless I wash you, you have no place with me.”
 - He did not want to lose discipleship to Jesus.
- Have you ever washed the feet of another person? If yes, how did you feel about the experience?
 - Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.
- Have you ever had your feet washed by someone else? If yes, how did you feel about the experience?
 - Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.

- What acts of service in our culture today might be equated with washing feet in Jesus' day?
 - Working in a soup kitchen
 - Helping at a food pantry
 - Volunteering at a nursing home or assisted living
 - Working at a homeless shelter
 - Volunteering of any work
 - Cleaning bathrooms
 - There are many more possibilities

- How and why do acts of service make us happy? (John 13:17) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1839).
 - Through doing things for others, we receive a feeling of joy, happiness, a sense of belonging, and fulfillment.
 - "We are made to serve." (pg. 95)

Farewell Discourse: John 14 (pg. 113-115) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1841-1843)

- Verse 1 centers on the theme of trust.
- Verse 6 is one of the "I AM" sayings.
- In these verses, Jesus begins to prepare his disciples for the fact that his time on earth is coming to an end.
- Jesus assures his disciples that he will not leave them alone. He promises the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- In verse 16 Jesus promises that God "will send another Companion, who will be with you forever."
- In verse 18 Jesus promises, "I won't leave you as orphans."

Holy Spirit Discussion:

- What word is used for *Companion* in **your** Bible?
 - CEB: Companion
 - RSV: Counselor
 - **NIV and NRSV: Advocate**
 - KJV: Comforter

- Who does Jesus say the Companion is?
- **The Sprit of Truth**

- What is the Greek word for spirit?
- **Pneuma**

- What is the Hebrew word for Spirit?
- **Ruach**

- How are these words translated?
- **Breath**
- **Wind**
- **Air**

- What word for spirit is only found in John's Gospel?
- **Paraclete**

- How does Hamilton define *paraclete* in relation to the Holy Spirit?
- **Someone who comes alongside you, and advocate of sort. (pg. 99)**

Read Genesis 2:4b-7 (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 8)

Read John 20:22 (pg. 163) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1855)

- How did God give life to humankind?

- How did Jesus give the Holy Spirit to his disciples? (pg. 99)
- **Jesus breathed on his disciples just as God breathed on Adam and Eve.**

- How is this significant to you?
- **Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.**

- Where else in John's Gospel has John drawn a comparison between the creation stories and the life of Jesus?
 - **In most translations, Genesis 1:1, and John 1:1 begin with the same three words, "In the Beginning...."**
 - **God formed the human person from the ground. Jesus healed the blind beggar with mud made from the ground.**

- God breath the Holy Spirit into Adam and Eve, by breathing over them. Jesus gave his disciples the Holy Spirit by breathing over them.
- In our book, how does Hamilton describe the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives?
 - By leading to us to unexpected events, things, or people in our lives, or ministry as God's people.
 - "Jesus promised his disciples that, after his death, he would send the Spirit who would continue to guide, encourage, and comfort them.
- Are you paying attention to ways the Holy Spirit is present and at work in your life?
- *Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.*
- How do you invite the Holy Spirit into your life? How have you experience the Holy Spirit?
- *Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.*

Farewell Discourse: John 15 (pg. 114-115) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1843-1844)

Read John 15:1-8 (pg. 114) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1843)

- How does this "I AM" saying enhance your understanding of the Holy Spirit?
 - *By staying rooted in Jesus and God's word we will continue to grow and experience the love of Christ in our daily lives. (Allusion to that branch that is connected to the vine will remain fruitful.)*
 - *Without Jesus promise and God's word we cannot continue to grow. (Allusion of the branch that is separated will not bear fruit.)*
- How does the Holy Spirit keep you connected to the vine, which is Christ?
 - *Talking with him*
 - *Praying*
 - *Reading scripture*
 - *Doing his work*

- *Inviting the Spirit to remain with us*
- *Meet with others to study and encourage one another*
- *As the Spirit remains in us, we remain in Christ.*

- What does verse 15:5 mean in your life?

John 15:5

“I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me, and I in you, then you will produce much fruit; Without me, you can’t do anything.”

- *Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.*

Read John 15:9-17 (pg. 114-115) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1843)

Read Matthew 22: 35-40 (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1657)

- What is the greatest commandment Jesus calls us to obey?

- *Love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:17)*

- What is the relationship between bearing fruit and obeying the call to love?

- *In order to bear fruit, one must love the Lord their God with all heart, soul, and mind and love your neighbor as yourself.*

- *In other words what is the most unselfish and loving thing that one can do?*

- *If we continue to do what Jesus tells us to do, we are bearing fruit.*

- What is the relationship between Jesus’ promise of continuing presence through the Holy Spirit and the commandment to love?

- *This act is essentially Jesus showing us unconditional love and giving us everything that we need even when he is given up to death on the cross.*

- *The Holy Spirit is guiding us to Love one other, as that is our daily mission.*

- What is the relationship between Jesus’ example of washing the feet of the disciples and the call to share Christ’s love with the world?

- *This relationship demonstrates that simple acts of kindness and love what makes a person great. If you wish to be great or held in high regard you must do the work of the lowest servant and serve your peers, friends, and others. After all we are made to serve.*

- *Serving is to Love, as Loving it to bear fruit!*

- How do you remain in Christ’s love? (John 15:9-10)

- *Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.*

- How do you obey the command to love?
- Answers to this question may be personal to the participants.

Hymn Study and Discussion

Breathe on Me, Breath of God *Edwin Hatch*

Verse 1

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Verse 2

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.

Verse 3

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with Thy fire divine.

Verse 4

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

This passage in John correlates with Genesis 2:7 where “the LORD God formed a man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

- *What do you think that the author of this hymn was trying to invoke?*

To summarize the message of the hymn, it is suggested that the breath of God “brings new life and love, purity, and obedience, surrender and inspiration, and eternal life.”

Wrapping Up

Closing Prayer

Gracious and Holy God, thank you for the Holy Spirit, the gift of your continuing presence that remains with us always. Fill us with the Holy Spirit that leads, guides, and empowers us. Open our eyes to the ways you call us to use our talents and abilities to serve others and bear fruit for your kingdom. Let us remain in your love. Let love for you guide our actions and our speech. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.