

1034 Last supper (7) - Holy Spirit, peace, true vine, union to brotherly love (Verses refer to those in NASB unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)

This is our last time talking about what happened in the Last Supper. We know that God emphasizes more on what we are than what we do. It is in vain if the work of a Christian has no involvement of the Holy Spirit. In the Last Supper, Lord Jesus Christ promised the coming of the Holy Spirit, we see also His abiding in us through the Holy Spirit. Indeed, no one can deprive us of the joy and the peace given by Christ. God sends Jesus, so He says the words of God. Jesus Himself said that He was from the Father. He is the true vine, and we cannot do anything without Him. We know that we need to be united in love and have brotherly love. Finally, through an example, we illustrate to be conformed to the image of Jesus is a reality. We also see that a servant cannot be bigger than his master, and we see His prediction about the hate for Christians from the world.

1. Promise of the coming of Holy Spirit and His work

The promise is stated clearly in John 14:15-18, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." Therefore, the Helper is the Spirit of truth. After the resurrection of Jesus, He arises in Heaven. Through the abiding Holy Spirit, He is with us. Indeed, He doesn't leave us as orphans like promised.

Regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, it is said in John 16:13-15, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you." Yes, there is action to guide you into. In other words, you should behave as said in James 1:22, "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." We also see how Holy Spirit glorifies Him.

In John 14:26, it says, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." They didn't understand before, even though Jesus said things directly. After the Pentecost, everything became different. In Bible, there are records of this such as in Acts 11:16, "And I (Peter) remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'" In an adequate time, Peter remembered what Jesus had said.

We can see that the Holy Spirit came not to glorify Himself but Jesus. We are not saying that the Holy Spirit is not a person, He is indeed one of Holy Trinity and has His own thinking and will but instead chooses to be humble and obedient, just like how Jesus

emptied Himself. When Word became flesh, there is indeed an order. The Father sends the Son, and Holy Spirit will not come if the Son doesn't go first.

2. Jesus through the abiding Holy Spirit living in us

We as Christians can see Lord Jesus Christ in our heart that He is a true and living God. Just like what we have shared, we cannot prove the fact to you by pure logic. The hypothesis of logic in faith is very different. Let us take a look at how the Bible says in John 14:19-21, "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." Indeed, He is living in us through the abiding Holy Spirit. We also see the importance of being united as one. As shared before, being a doer is over merely being a hearer. We need to keep His commandments. And it is clearly said that He will disclose Himself to those who love Him.

Then it is followed in John 16:16-18, "'A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me.'" Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" So they were saying, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is talking about."'

"Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, "Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me (through Holy Spirit)'? Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy."(John 16:19-20) Jesus said clearly at that time, but they didn't understand. When seeing His resurrection, they are apparently joyful. And the people of the world who believes will rejoice, because the salvation is completed.

Regarding the abiding Holy Spirit, it is said directly in 1 Corinthians 6:19, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" Bible says all facts, not only in faith, but it needs faith to believe. We need to know that sometimes we cannot see a fact because modern science has not reached that point yet as we discussed before about the case of Copernicus (1473-1543). At that time, people couldn't accept that the Earth rotates around the Sun.

Talking about facts, we may want to see what Paul would say. In 2 Corinthians 12:6, it says, "For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me." "The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying."(2 Corinthians 11:31) The Holy Spirit often through environments wants us to face the real us, since "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"(Jeremiah 17:9) We can even cheat ourselves without knowing! In

fact, there are examples in the Old Testament such as "Hezekiah listened to them, and showed them all his treasure house, the silver and the gold and the spices and the precious oil and the house of his armor and all that was found in his treasuries. There was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them."(2 Kings 20:13) And he foreknew that he would get penalty as stated in 2 Kings 20:17-18, "'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day will be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord. 'Some of your sons who shall issue from you, whom you will beget, will be taken away; and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

3. The joy and the peace given by Christ

No one can deprive the joy and the peace given by Christ. "Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you."(John 16:22) "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."(John 14:27)

In John 16:33, it says, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." Yes, Christians have tribulations just like unbelievers. But it is just like He promised, "I have overcome the world." "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."(1 Corinthians 10:13) If God doesn't permit, nothing can happen to you just like what said in the beginning of the Book Job.

Someone may ask what are these things are referred to in John 16:33. Among them is this one. "Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."(John 16:31-32) We see the results in Mark 14:50-52, "And they all left Him and fled. A young man was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they seized him. But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked." From the aspect of man, the situation at that time was indeed very urgent. Who is this young man? The Bible doesn't say, so there is no point to guess since we would never know the correct answer.

4. Where Jesus comes from?

Jesus in John 16:27-28 said, "for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father." Jesus Himself said, "I came forth from the Father." And the disciples saw what He did and believed Him. Along this direction, "His disciples said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly

and are not using a figure of speech. Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."(John 16:29-30) He knew clearly, He was the Word becoming flesh.

In John 3:34, it says, "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure." One may ask, "How come? Isn't He the Word becoming flesh? He should be able to do anything. Not in this period though. He emptied Himself and became a man. He needs the guidance of the Holy Spirit just like us. But He gives the Spirit without measure, and we are limited.

He was nailed to the cross for us, but promised to come again. "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. ..." (John 14:28-31) We are glad to know that Satan has nothing in Him. Regarding what He said about the Father being greater than Him, it is referring to the period that the Word became flesh. At that period of time, there is an order. The Father sends the Son, and Holy Spirit don't come unless the Son goes back first. We can also see that He obeys the leading of Holy Spirit in His whole life as He did exactly as the Father commanded Him.

5. Lord is the true vine

It says directly in John 15:1-4, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me." Here, we can see one spiritual principle. Often in times, tribulations are pretended blessings for the purposes to bear more fruits. It is mentioned again about being united. And apparently if the branches are not connected to the vine, they will die soon or later. Thus, He said, "unless you abide in Me."

We want to particularly emphasize the point that there is only one fruit of the Spirit since the fruit in Galatians 5:22-23 is singular. But such fruit has twelve kinds of characteristics. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

6. Being united by love and having brotherly love

"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy

may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."(John 15:9-15)

So, it comes with actions "If you keep My commandments, ...", and He is our example. We see that we need to be united in love, and love each other. He indeed died for us, died for friends. And "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."(Romans 5:8) We are called His friends. This is such honor! We indeed need to know our place.

7. Foreknowledge of the world hating Christians

"If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also."(John 15:18-20)

Here He emphasized again that He chose the disciples out of the world, not the other way around. Indeed, He was nailed to the cross by the world, and we become slaves of righteousness like what was said in Romans 6:18, "and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." And a servant cannot be bigger than the master. We have to carry our own cross and follow Jesus. A Christian is to be conformed to the image of Jesus. By then, our words are but the same words with Jesus. Thus, "if they kept My word, they will keep yours also." How cannot be?

Originally, I thought that there was no way to be conformed to the image of Jesus in this life, but indeed "... With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."(Matthew 19:26) The Bible records such an example about Stephen. "They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them!' Having said this, he fell asleep."(Acts 7:59-60) Stephen indeed fell sleep since Christians shall resurrect eventually, and live forever. Let us now take a look at what Jesus said when nailed to the cross. "But Jesus was saying, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' ..." (Luke 23:34) Basically, they are the same. At least in this point, Stephen was conformed to the image of Jesus. We also see the glory Stephen received as stated in Acts 7:55-56, "But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'" In the New Testament, Stephen is the first one who was a martyr. There is only this once that Jesus is standing at the right hand of God to receive disciples. Normally, He was seated as mentioned in several places including Colossians 3:1, "Therefore if you have been

raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." The first disciple who is a martyr was James, which is after Stephen timewise.

We shall conclude our sharing with these verses. "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'"(John 15:21-25)