

25. John 14:15-31

Getting started

Without reference to this passage, what is the best promise for you in the Bible? *[Don't think that to mention one as 'the best' devalues the others. Just, which one most warms your heart?]*

Observation

This is a very dense section. Try to work up a list of Jesus' promises. *[Jesus will ask for his Father to send the Holy Spirit. The disciples will know the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will live in them. They will not be left as orphans. Jesus will come to them again. They will see him. They will live because Jesus lives. They will have a new revelation of the relation between Jesus and his Father. He who loves Jesus will be loved by the Father. The Father will come to dwell with believers. The Holy Spirit will teach them. Jesus promises 'peace', and assurance that there is nothing to fear. They will believe. The prince of darkness has no hold on Jesus.]*

Note:

We need to be careful to work out which promises were specifically for the immediate audience of the disciples, and which apply to all believers.

Interpretation

1. How should we read Jesus saying that a lack of obedience shows a lack of love? Are these words of judgement, or encouragement or words to explain the role of the Holy Spirit? *[Note that this issue is not only in verse 15 but also in verses 21 and 24.]*
2. In what way does Jesus not leave us as orphans? *[You may also like to link this with Paul's talk of adoption in Galatians 4:5.]*
3. What does Jesus command? *[See 13:34-35, but do you think Jesus had other things in mind?]*
4. What will the Holy Spirit do?
5. Why will the disciples 'see' Jesus?
6. How and when will the Father make his home with us?

7. What are the dimensions of the peace that Jesus gives?

8. Why can Jesus say that our hearts should not be troubled and we should not be afraid?

Note:

There are passages about not being afraid in all four gospels. I think this is often poorly explained. Jesus knows we are sentient beings. We understand cause and effect. He himself was afraid when he prayed to his Father in the garden of Gethsemane. Crucifixion is not a nice way to die. To die for the sins of the world is unimaginable. So, in my view, Jesus is not saying 'you must never be afraid' or 'you fail me and do not have sufficient faith if you are ever afraid'. He is saying, 'do not let your fear get the better of you. Do not let your fear stop you from living out your faith'. And, just as his Father helped him, God will help us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

9. What is the connection between the prince of the world coming and Jesus going?

Implications

1. When have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit by what he does in you or in other people?
2. Can you think of a greater promise than to be loved by Jesus' Father? [*I can't!*]
3. How do all these promises help you in your daily walk with Jesus?

Prayer Suggestions

1. Thanks for the breadth and number Jesus' promises.
2. Ask that we remember these promises when times get dark.
3. Thanks that Jesus has always been in such firm control of his own destiny and the destiny of the world.