

Dr. David L. Turner, John, Session 16,

John 13:31-14:31

6-Min. Video Overview

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Alright, let's just jump right in. I want you to picture the scene. It's the last night before the crucifixion.

Jesus is gathered in a room with his inner circle, his absolute closest friends. Judas, the betrayer, has just slipped out into the night. And the gospel of John tells us pointedly: it was night.

And it's into this literal and spiritual darkness that Jesus starts maybe the most important conversation of his entire ministry. And then he just drops this on them. Can you even imagine hearing that from your leader, the person you've literally given up everything to follow? He's leaving.

And you can't go with him. That one sentence just ignites a firestorm of confusion, and frankly, terror. You can almost feel the air get sucked out of the room.

I mean, these guys aren't just sitting in a classroom. Their whole world has just been turned completely upside down. For three years, he's been their constant.

And now he's saying goodbye. So naturally, the panicked questions start to fly. So what does Jesus do in this moment of pure crisis? What is his final lesson? He doesn't just pack up and leave them hanging.

No, he gives them this incredibly profound teaching that's designed to see them through not just the next few days, but the rest of their lives. We call it the farewell discourse. And it's all built around answering their desperate questions.

But here's the thing. Before he answers a single question, he gives them an anchor. He knows the storm is about to hit, and they're going to feel lost and terrified.

So he gives them one single core idea to hold on to, a command that will define who they are when he's not physically right there beside them. And what's so fascinating here is the shift. Now, the command to love your neighbor, that wasn't new.

That's straight out of the Old Testament law. The standard was, you know, love your neighbor as you love yourself. But Jesus just raises the stakes entirely.

The new standard isn't about you anymore. It's love one another as I have loved you. And that right there is the whole point.

The new part isn't the act of loving. It's the model for that love. It's a sacrificial, all-in kind of love, the kind of love that had him washing their dirty feet just a few hours before, and the kind of love that was about to take him to the cross.

That is the revolutionary new standard. So with that foundation in place, the rest of this teaching isn't a lecture. It unfolds as this really raw and honest Q&A.

His disciples just start firing questions at him, and each question shows you a different angle of their fear and their confusion. But his answers start to build a road map for what's next. The first step, of course, is Peter, always impulsive, always passionate.

He just doesn't get it. He's ready to die for Jesus right then and there. His question is packed with bravado.

But underneath all that, you can hear the real fear, the fear of being left behind. He just doesn't grasp what's really happening. Now, Jesus' response is amazing.

He doesn't scold Peter for being shortsighted. Instead, he goes straight for the emotion behind the words, the fear. And he responds with comfort.

Don't let your hearts be troubled. He tries to shift Peter's focus away from his own strength and back onto trusting God and trusting him. Okay, next is Thomas, the practical one.

He's thinking like an engineer. Hold on. If we don't know the destination, how in the world are we supposed to figure out the route? It's such a real, relatable question, right? He just needs a road map.

And Jesus' answer is, well, it's one of the most famous things he ever said. He completely pivots. He shifts their thinking from a physical where to a personal who.

The way isn't a map. It's a person. He says, I am the path.

He's not just a signpost pointing the way. He is the way. Then Philip chimes in.

And you can almost hear the frustration in his voice. He's kind of done with the metaphors and the abstract ideas. He's like, look, just show us the Father.

Give us one direct look at God, and we'll be good. That'll be enough. It's a demand for hard proof.

Jesus' reply here is just a staggering claim about his own identity. He basically says, Philip, have you been with me all this time and you still don't get it? To see me, to see how I act, what I teach, how I love, is to see the Father. He's saying, I am the perfect image of God in human skin.

And finally, another disciple named Judas. It's important to note that this is not Judas Iscariot. He asks a question that comes from a place of political confusion.

He's still thinking Jesus is a Messiah who's going to reveal himself in a big public way and overthrow Rome. So he's wondering, why the secrecy? Why only reveal yourself to this small group? So Jesus has to explain that his big reveal isn't going to be some global press conference. It's personal.

It's intimate. He and the Father make their home, he says, with people who enter into this relationship of love and obedience with him. It's not about public spectacle.

It's about a deep spiritual connection. So after fielding all these individual questions, Jesus brings it all together. He gives them the ultimate answer to their biggest unspoken fear.

How are we possibly going to do this without you? And the solution isn't a new plan or a book of rules. The solution is a person, the Holy Spirit. The Greek word he uses is and it's such a rich word.

It literally means someone who is called to stand alongside you. That's why it gets translated in so many different ways. Advocate, comforter, counselor, helper, because the Spirit does all of those things.

This helper is going to be their constant guide. And here's a crucial little detail. Jesus says he will send another helper.

Think about what that implies. It means Jesus himself was their first helper, their first paracletos. So the Spirit isn't some kind of downgrade or a lesser replacement.

No, the Spirit is the one who will continue Jesus' exact same work and presence in their lives. And the helper's mission is super clear. And it's all about Jesus.

First, the Spirit will make Jesus' presence real to them. Second, he'll teach them by constantly reminding them of everything Jesus said. And third, he will empower them to tell the world about Jesus.

He's making a promise. I won't leave you as orphans. I will come to you through the Spirit.

And this all leads to one final idea, and it's a bit of a mind bender. When Jesus talks about coming back, he's not just talking about one single event way, way off in the future. The gospel of John has this much richer, more complex idea of what his return actually means.

Okay, so theologians have a big fancy term for this. It's called inaugurated eschatology. I know it sounds super academic, but the idea is pretty simple.

You can just think of it as already, but not yet. It means that the future kingdom of God, the end times, didn't just start at the end of history. It actually broke into our present time with Jesus, and it continues right now through the work of the Spirit.

So it's this both-and thing. It's a future hope and a present reality at the same time. Yes, there's a belief that Jesus will return one day to make everything right.

But, and this is the key, the power of that future world is already active now, changing lives and communities from the inside out. So when you boil this whole long emotional conversation down, this is the main takeaway. Jesus isn't just talking about leaving and coming back.

He is fundamentally changing the game. He's redefining what it means for God to be present with his people, from a physical presence in one place to a spiritual presence

everywhere, in every believer through the Holy Spirit. And that really leaves us with a question for ourselves, doesn't it? If this whole already-but-not-yet idea is true, it should change how we see the world.

It asks us, even when things feel broken and dark, to look for the evidence, to find those little signs of love and justice and healing that prove the future is breaking into our present. So where do you see it today?