

Congregational handout; outline sermon text on following pages

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Plainly Spoken
John 16:25-33

March 12, 2017

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^C John 14:2, 16:12-13; 1 Corinthians 2:14

^D Hebrews 7:25; John 14:16

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^H Philippians 3:12; Joshua 1:9; John 16:11

A. Introduction

1. Clarity of Speech

- a. It's been said that a lot of speakers are like Christopher Columbus. When he started out he didn't know where he was going. When he got there he didn't know where he was at. When he got back he did not know where he had been. For the speaker, it's important from the outset to know what you want to communicate. —{2}—
- b. Jesus never was in doubt as to the message He was delivering
 - (A) even when He spoke in proverbs and parables, which were not in themselves necessarily clear, it is plain that His purpose was to start His listeners thinking on spiritual matters, even though His words dealt with material objects
 - (B) no wonder that it was said of Him, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks." (John 7:46)
 - (C) never is this any truer than in His discourse to His disciples after the last supper, where He seeks to comfort their anxiety and to prepare them for the events that will shortly come to pass
 - (D) and now, in these last few verses before He begins His High Priestly prayer, He addresses Himself to their deepest needs

2. Their Unspoken Prayer

- a. we discussed last week when they began inquiring among themselves, whatever could Jesus mean by saying in verse 16 of this chapter, "A little while, and you will no longer behold Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me."? What was He meaning by "a little while".
- b. then, verse 19, "Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, ..." and proceed to explain that they would know sorrow on His account, but after that He would see them again and they should know joy.
- c. now Jesus completes His answer to their unspoken prayer for clarity about the things troubling their minds
- d. He shares some plain talk to make them ready for their coming experiences: plain speech about their coming understanding, about the Father; about prayer; about His own Deity; about their faith; about tribulation in this world; and about victory in Christ

B. Plain Talk about Plain Talk 16:25

- 1. "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will speak no more to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father."
 - a. throughout Jesus' teaching ministry

- (A) he had spoken to the crowds in parables: lit., “thrown beside”
- (B) something thrown out to the audience beside the main message
- (C) an illustration of truth or a pertinent story to catch their attention
- (D) but later He explained & applied these parables to the disciples
- b. but the word translated as “proverbs” or “figurative language” and so on is speaking of something else: literally “beside the common way”
 - (A) rather than plain speech it was cryptic speech or dark sayings
 - (B) and frequently, instead of giving specific details of times, places, events, people, Jesus would speak in general terms
 - (1) for example, the heavenly kingdom is not minutely described
 - (2) rather Jesus says, “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; ... I go to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:2)

2. this had been necessary up until this time

- a. Jesus gave two reasons that this was so
 - (A) to a child, explanation of things has to be made at a level and in terms that the immature can absorb
 - (1) the disciples had not yet reach the spiritual maturity & understanding to take in many aspects of the spiritual
 - (2) so He said, “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” (John 16:12)
 - (B) the Illuminator, Holy Spirit was not yet given in His fullness
 - (1) at this point, the Spirit was with the disciples, not in them; and spiritual truths “... are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14 AV)
 - (2) “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.” (John 16:13)
- b. hence we see that Jesus will speak plainly in the coming of the Spirit

C. Plain Talk about Prayer 16:26

- 1. “In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf;”
 - a. nevertheless, in these words that follow two great spiritual truths are stated for the disciples, and these are pretty straightforward

2. truths on prayer

a. the disciples in times to come will pray "in My name"

- (A) that doesn't simply mean tacking on the Name of Jesus at the end of the prayer
- (B) name has a deeper significance in Scripture, particularly when it applies to Deity, to Jesus as the Son of God
- (C) it is praying on the basis of all that the Lord Jesus Christ IS, and all that the Lord Jesus Christ HAS DONE
- (D) Augustine's comment in this respect, is that anything that we ask which is contrary to the objective of our salvation, has not been asked in the Name of our Saviour^{3}.

3. prayer will be directly to the Father

- a. this does not deny Christ's perpetual intercession, as our High Priest and Advocate, such as stated in, "Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7:25)
- b. nor does it contradict what He has just said, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;" (John 14:16)
- c. rather it denies that we pray to Jesus as the Son and He then relays this our prayer on as a request to the Father
- d. this anticipates the truth that will become evident that through the new birth and through adoption believers will be God's children, and will be able to pray to Him boldly as "Abba, Father"!

D. Plain Talk about the Father 16:25b, 27

- 1. "25b ... but will tell you plainly of the Father. ...27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father"

2. two kinds of love

- a. now you have probably heard that there are a number of words in the Greek for love; two principal ones being 'agapao' and 'fileo'
- b. 'agapao' could be characterised as that exercise of the will which causes a person to seek the very best for the object of his love
- c. 'fileo' can be described for that love which exists between friends or within families, the enjoyment the one of the other
- d. the word in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world ..." is 'agapao' – a love that encompasses all mankind as sinners, that resulted in God providing salvation for sin to mankind by giving His Son

e. the word in this verse is 'fileo' – that God enjoys the communion with those who are His children

3. the love relationship is tied to the faith relationship

- a. that faith relationship came about by their belief in the Person of Jesus Christ, and the resulting friendship love existing between Jesus and His disciples – we shall see more on that in John 21
- b. that love for Jesus Christ in the heart of the believer – based upon all that He is, and all that He has done – is given as why the Father now expresses that same kind of love to Jesus' disciples – and us

E. Plain Talk about Christ's Deity 16:27b-28

1. "27b ... and have believed that I came forth from the Father. 28 I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again, and going to the Father."

a. the tenses – time stamp – of the verbs in these verse is important

- (A) "I came forth ... I came forth" – refers to an event that took place at one distinct time in the past that began something new – that new thing was the proceeding of the God the Son from alongside God the Father, without in any way disturbing their eternal unity
- (B) "I have come" – refers to the associated result, His Incarnation, the fact of Immanuel – God with us – the Son's entry into the world in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, born of Mary in Bethlehem
- (C) "I am leaving ... I am going" – these events are already in progress and taking place simultaneously: from the world, to the Father

b. that fact is the paramount truth concerning Jesus Christ, of which all other truths concerning His Person are manifestations or evidences

2. their faith is a confession of the Deity of Jesus Christ

- a. as is also, if you meditate upon it, is Romans 10:9, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;" (Romans 10:9 NAS)
- b. our faith is founded upon the Person of Jesus Christ
 - (A) not just as a good man ... a miracle worker ... a great teacher
 - (B) but because He is the eternal Lamb of God, perfect in every way, whose sacrifice alone is sufficient to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) – and of our sins, who believe

F. Plain Talk about Faith 16:29-32

1. Their Profession of Faith (vv 29-30) – "29 His disciples said, 'Lo, now You are speaking plainly, and are not using

a figure of speech. 30 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.'"

- a. the disciples thought that the coming hour was then, but in its full realisation was only to come after the resurrection, specially Pentecost
 - (A) like the new believer who then prays, "Our Father", so spiritual growth can come in a sudden spurt, as theirs did here
 - (B) they have grasped the import of what Jesus has been saying
- b. without further enquiries on their part, Jesus begins to answer the perplexities travelling through their minds
 - (A) about their prayer, about the Father, about Christ's Deity
 - (B) and it is the last one upon which they focus
 - (C) Jesus has shown His divine nature by it being true of Him, as of God, that "Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, Thou dost know it all." (Psalms 139:4 NAS)
- c. so they can profess, "we believe that your came "from God"
 - (A) the nature of the incarnation is so beyond our comprehension that the original Greek uses three different words in these few verses, for no one of them properly describes the truth
 - (B) >apo/ – away from; as in "apostle", one sent away
 - (C) para/ –from beside, from alongside; as in "parallel"
 - (D) >ek – out from; as in "exit"

2. Real Faith (vv 31-32) – "31 Jesus answered them, 'Do you now believe? 32 "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'."

- a. Jesus responds to their protestation by a question
 - (A) it could equally be taken as a statement, "You believe at last"
 - (B) or as an exclamation, "Finally! You believe!
 - (C) but it alerts these disciples not to be complacent in their faith
- b. so He warns His beloved followers that they will fulfill prophecy
 - (A) "... Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; And I will turn My hand against the little ones." (Zechariah 13:7 NAS)
 - (B) that when the dreadful hour arrives, in a few moments, their faith will be found deficient, its limitations shown as they abandon Him
- c. they do not yet know the quality of faith that stands firm before difficulty and danger; they do not yet know

faith's consequences

Oh for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe: ...

Lord, give us such a faith as this ... ^{-{4}}.

d. this is the real faith that His disciples will learn in times to come

G. Plain Talk about Victory 16:33

1. "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

a. what Jesus has been saying to His disciples this evening was to meet their coming needs

(A) they were going to face anguish – like a mother bearing a new baby –, sorrow and tribulation

(B) they were going to meet with what seemed like utter defeat

(C) but Jesus assures them that the reality will be victory, for with what will come to pass, He will vanquish the world & Satan its ruler

b. this verse closes Jesus' discourse with His disciples and contains three very marked contrasts

2. the disciples then, as we do today, lived in two different environments at the same time

a. by faith they lived in Christ – "in Me" He says – in communion with the eternal Son of God, and thus in the spiritual realm of God's kingdom

b. but also in the sense of their being humans, "in the world" – and thus in the physical sense in this present, fallen creation which is so heavily under the influence of Satan, the evil one.

3. there are two different levels of expectation corresponding to the environments

a. in our spiritual environment, of being "in Christ", there is a level of uncertainty. Why should this be? It is not an uncertainty respecting Christ nor His power, but rather of how the believer may lay hold of the benefit there for him: as Paul writes, "Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:12)

b. in our physical environment, of being "in the world", there is a level of certainty. Being "in Christ", the world is an alien environment. As with fish out of water, that environment will certainly affect us.

4. there are two strongly contrasting results
 - a. "in Christ", there can be peace, with all the implications that word has in Scripture: a wholeness of being, a fulfilment of the purpose of our creation, a reconciliation between the Creator and His creation in us
 - b. "in the world", there will be tribulation

5. assurance of victory
 - a. in view of these plainly stated truths, Jesus has reassurance for His disciples and for us
 - b. it is of the same nature as that given to Joshua on his entering into the unknown of the promised land, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9); victory was promised
 - c. "be of good cheer" – "be courageous" ... do not let these concerns and anxieties upset your minds and hearts
 - d. for this there is a very sound reason: "I have vanquished the enemy" – "the ruler of this world has been judged" (16:11); victory is promised

H. Conclusion – "Faith Is the Victory!"

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NLT	New Living Translation © 1996 Tyndale Charitable Trust
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 National Council of Churches of Christ
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Bruce	- <i>The Gospel & Epistles of John</i> , by F. F. Bruce, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI; 1983
BM	- <i>Biblical Museum</i> , Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
EGT	- <i>The Expositor's Greek Testament</i> , Hodder & Stoughton; 1903 <i>The Gospel of St. John</i> , by Marcus Dods
Kerux	- The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, www.holwick.com .
LBBC	-- <i>Layman's Bible Book Commentary, Volume 18: John</i> , by James E. Carter; Broadman Press, Nashville, TE; 1984
NICNT	- <i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> <i>The Gospel according to John</i> , by Leon Morris
NTC	- <i>New Testament Commentary</i> , by William Hendriksen; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI; 1954
RWP	- <i>Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> , by Dr. A. T. Robertson

2. Adapted from Sermoncentral.com; Article: Preaching Crisp, Effective Gospel Messages, Kerux illustration #20590
3. Paraphrased from BM, *in loc*.
4. 'Oh for a Faith!' by Rev. William Hiley Bathurst (1796-1877)