

OpenTheo

Upper Room Discourse (Part 8)



The Life and Teachings of Christ - Steve Gregg

In this discourse by Steve Gregg, he discusses the role of the Holy Spirit, how Jesus compares his departure with labor pains, and the importance of trusting in God. Gregg explains that the Holy Spirit reveals things that people need to know and is not in contradiction to the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Jesus compares his departure to a woman experiencing labor pains and emphasizes the importance of trusting in God during times of tribulation. Ultimately, Gregg argues that through the Holy Spirit, we can find peace even in the midst of suffering and trials.

Transcript

Some may be Pentecostals and Charismatics. There may be a temptation to speak more of the Holy Spirit than of Jesus, which is not a good thing, in my opinion. However, to say that the Holy Spirit doesn't want to talk about himself, we would have to say, all the passages in the Bible that talk about the Holy Spirit must not have been inspired by the Holy Spirit because he doesn't talk about himself.

The fact that there's a great deal in the Bible about the Holy Spirit, inspired by the Spirit, means the Holy Spirit has no qualms. He's not squeamish about, he's not shy about talking about himself. There's information about the Holy Spirit that we need to know.

And the Holy Spirit is not contrary to us knowing it. So to teach what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit is not to go against the grain of this verse. I don't expect anyone here has any problems with that.

But I wouldn't be surprised if you run into people who do because I've heard it many, many times. No, he doesn't talk about himself. No, of himself means it's not from his own authority that he speaks.

He speaks what he hears from the Father, just like Jesus did. And so we see the New King James has fixed that a little bit. He will not speak on his own authority instead of himself.

That's why the word authority is in italics. It's not in the Greek, but it's implied and the New King James translators were aware of this problem in the translation of the New King

James, so they fixed it. And he'll tell you things to come.

Now this speaks of the prophetic operation of the Holy Spirit in the church. Now, of course, Jesus was principally talking to the apostles and we can see by reading what they wrote that they did talk about the future. Peter and John and Paul, who was not, of course, in the upper room, but was an apostle like them, they did predict the future.

And James, but there's also, of course, ongoing prophetic ministry through the Holy Spirit. And so that's one of his functions is to tell things to come. He will glorify me, verse 14 says, for he will take of what is mine and declare it to you.

Now, what does that mean? He'll take of what is mine and declare it to you. I think this is related to his statement in verse 12. I still have many things to say to you, but you can't endure them now.

The idea is I'm going to say them to you later, but it'll be the Holy Spirit who will get this information from me and he'll give it to you. He'll take what is mine. That is what I would have ordinarily told you.

He'll take my teaching and he will declare it to you because I'm not going to be around to do it, but he will be. So even though I am not going to be able to be with you and you have many things I still want to say to you, he'll have to do that. He'll take it from me and give it to you.

Now, we find this operating in the apostles, for example, in 1 Corinthians 7, where Paul is talking to married people about the issue of divorce. And he says in verse 10, to the married, I say, yet not I, but the Lord. Let not the husband depart from the wife or put away his wife and let not the wife depart from her husband.

But if she departs, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. Then he says now to the rest, I speak, not the Lord. And then he talks about Christians who are married to non-Christians and what they need to do in that situation and so forth.

Now, when he says in the first case, in verse 10, 1 Corinthians 7, 10, when he says, I speak, not I, but the Lord. What he means is that Jesus already addressed this. Jesus already spoke about this.

I'm just right now going to encapsulate what you're already familiar with, what Jesus said earlier. But at verse 12, where he says, now to the rest, I speak, not the Lord. He's not trying to say he's not speaking by inspiration.

He's saying, I'm now going to go beyond what Jesus had time to say. First of all, Jesus never faced a situation where he was talking to Gentile believers who are married to non, you know, Gentile non-believers. Jesus never confronted a mixed faith marriage.

Jesus' audiences were principally Jewish people. And Jewish people are married to Jewish people. They're in the same faith.

So the issue of what to do in a marriage where a person is of one faith married to another of another faith was an issue that actually different teachings applied to and Jesus had never given him. That must be among the things that Jesus would have told the disciples, but they didn't have time and they weren't ready for it now. One thing they didn't know at this point, that there'd even be Gentiles getting saved, which is the very situation that raised the problem that Paul had to address.

But you see, the apostle Paul, when he said, now I'm going to have to go beyond what Jesus spoke. And I'll tell you the scoop here. I believe that this is no different than Jesus saying it.

It's just that Jesus said part of that when he was on earth. And that's part where he says, not I, but the Lord says this. And the other part, Jesus didn't say when he was on earth, but he was now saying it through Paul.

Because the Holy Spirit was taking it from Christ and giving it to the apostle to give to us. Just as if Jesus had said it on earth. That's what I think Jesus is promising here.

He will, the Holy Spirit will take what's mine and he'll declare it to you, to you apostles particularly. All things that the Father has are mine, therefore I said that he will take of mine and declare it to you. Likewise, when Paul addressed the issue of the women in the church and so forth in 1 Corinthians 14.

Jesus had never addressed this, but when Paul finished his comments on it, 1 Corinthians 14, he said. Now, if anyone seems to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. And the word, the expression the Lord in the New Testament almost always means Jesus.

These are the commandments of Jesus. Yet Jesus never uttered these things when he was on earth. But he's saying, these are Jesus commandments given through me by the Holy Spirit.

That's in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 and verse 37. This is right after he's talked about the issue of women and so forth speaking in church. He says, if anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 14, 37. Now, in other words, although Jesus didn't say these things when he was on earth, he's saying them now. The Lord is commanding this.

How? Because the apostolic authority inspired by the Holy Spirit is the teachings of Jesus continuing. You know, the book of Acts opens with this line. Luke says, in my first

treatise, Sophiophilus, I told you all the things that Jesus began to do and teach.

And the implication is that now that he's going into his second volume, he's going to talk about the things that Jesus continued to do and teach. Through the apostles, of course, because the book of Acts is about the apostles, not the life of Christ. But he's implying in verse 1 of Acts, Acts 1, 1, that what the apostles did were a continuation of what Jesus was doing and teaching.

So, that's what I think is meant by these closing verses. Or not closing verses, but these verses, 13 or even 12 through 15 of John 16. Now, let's go on.

Verse 16. A little while and you will not see me. And again, a little while and you will see me, because I go to the Father.

Now, I'm not going to answer the question, but I need to raise the question. What going away and what seeing him is he referring to here? Is he talking about his death? And a little while, like later, the next day, he was going to be crucified, taken from them then. And a little while later, they'd see him again, that is, after he rose from the dead, he'd appear to them.

That's probably the most natural way to understand it. Although he said, because I go to the Father. You're going to see me because I go to the Father.

It's not exactly clear how that ties into that situation. Now, of course, if he said, I'm going away, but you're going to see me again. We could understand that of his ascension.

He went away and he's been gone for a long time. And then he's going to come again and we'll see him again. But it can hardly mean that, it would seem, because that's, he said, a little while.

A little while I'm going away and a little while more you're going to see me again. Well, he left them in the ascension only a few weeks after this time. But it's been thousands of years and we haven't seen him again yet.

So it hardly seems like a little while is the right way to talk about that. If that's what he's talking about. It may be that what he means is, I am going away.

Namely, I'm going to be ascended within a few weeks from now. I'm going to disappear from you. Maybe even at his, he did go away from them, in a sense, at the point of his crucifixion.

Because he only then made periodic visits to them. He wasn't really with them on a continuing basis after that. But a little while and you will see me because I go to the Father.

May have something to do with, you will see me in another sense than you see me now.

You will see me at work, in my body. You'll see me at work through the Holy Spirit.

Now, the reason I say that is because of his statement, because I go to my Father. What's that got to do with, you will see me? Well, probably has little to do with his resurrection. Because that was not directly related to his going to his Father.

In fact, he specifically said after his resurrection to Mary Magdalene, I have not yet ascended to my Father. Yet she saw him and he had not yet ascended. Likewise, the apostles saw him the same day and he apparently had not yet ascended either.

So, it doesn't seem to be related to his resurrection. And as I said, it doesn't seem to refer to his second coming because that was far more than a little while off. So, I think maybe the best way to understand this is that when the Spirit comes down, when I am embodied in you.

Now, as you look at me right now, I'm embodied in me. Jesus could say, I mean, it could be implied. Here's my body, right here, eating bread, drinking wine with you, sitting at the table.

You can look at me, you can touch me, you can feel me. Here I am embodied in you. It's the Word made flesh.

But when I go away, you won't see me like that. But, you will see me another way. I will be embodied again in flesh and bones, which is the church.

Because Paul says in Ephesians chapter 5 concerning the church. He says, we are his flesh and we are his bones. Ephesians 5. Where he's comparing our relationship with Christ to that of a husband and wife.

Who are said to be one flesh, in Scripture. So also are we in the church, in a sense. Because he says, in Ephesians 5, verse 28.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as the Lord does the church.

For we, verse 38, we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. In 2 Corinthians. I don't know if I can find this as quickly as I want to.

Maybe I won't. I think it's in the 5th chapter. Yes.

2 Corinthians 5.16. Paul says, therefore from now on we regard no one according to the flesh. That is, we don't just know people in the natural. There's another aspect to people that we see as well.

Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh. Yet now we know him thus no

longer. We don't know Jesus in the way anymore that we did.

But that doesn't mean we don't know him. We see him and we know him in another form. We know that a little earlier in the upper room.

In chapter 14. Jesus had said, in verse 19. John 14.19. He said, a little while longer and the world will see me no more.

But you will see me. Because I live, you will live also. Now, in what sense did they see him? We talked about this before.

Let's go over it again. Down in verse 22. Judas asked him this very question.

Judas, not as scary as it said to him. Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? He's referring to the fact that Jesus said, you will see me. The world won't see me, but you'll see me.

And he's asked that. Well, what do you mean by that? How are you going to show yourself to us and not the world? And the answer is, in verse 23. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.

My father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him. He's talking about the indwelling of Christ in the believer and in the church. This is the way in which we see him.

It's not a literal scene with our eyes. Except, of course, we do see him. We see each other.

And we are of his flesh and blood. I can see Christ in the flesh right now. Because your flesh and your bones are his flesh and bones.

You're members of Christ. I can't see the whole body of Christ at one time, but I can see him. And I can also see him, in a sense, by his working in our lives.

And mine and yours. So that the writer of Hebrews can say, we do not yet see all things put under his feet, but we see Jesus. In Hebrews chapter 2. We see Jesus, do we? Well, obviously he's talking about something that we see in the spirit.

Something that's not really, not like we're going to see him later. John said in 1 John chapter 3, We know not what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him because we'll see him as he is. We see him now, but we don't see him quite as he is.

You know why? Because when you look at me, you see Jesus, but you don't see Jesus as he is. You see him as I am. Which is not as good as how he is.

But when he appears, then we'll see him as he is, and that'll make a big difference. But although we don't yet see him as he is, we see him. We see him as we are, in a sense, and as he's working in our lives.

So I personally think, given the context of Jesus' statement here, that he says, A little while you won't see me, a little while you will see me. I think you won't see me has to do with his ascension. And you will see me has to do with what happened at Pentecost and beyond.

And in the present time. To me, it just is the only, of the three alternatives, it seems like the only one that really makes an awful lot of sense in the context. And it agrees with what he said in chapter 14.

Essentially using the same words. Verse 17, this is John 16, 17. Then some of his disciples said among themselves, What is this that he says, 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.

They said therefore, What is this that he says, A little while? We do not know what he is saying. Now notice, they didn't say it to him. This must have been something they were whispering among themselves.

It says that Jesus knew that they were desiring to ask him this. Now, obviously, they didn't say it loud enough, or else that word would be strange. I mean, if they came right out and said, Lord, what do you mean? And then it said, Now, Jesus knew they wanted to ask him.

You know, that would be kind of redundant. But the implication is they didn't ask him, but he knew their hearts. He knew that they were curious about this.

So their murmuring among themselves must have been under their breaths, whispering to one another, What do you mean? What do you think he means by that? They were afraid to ask him. There were probably so many things he was saying they didn't understand, they didn't want to seem too dull, so they just kind of tried to pool their notes. What are you getting out of this? Are you seeing anything here? I'm not seeing anything.

What do you figure he means by that? And so Jesus, knowing that they desired to ask him, said to them, Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I've said a little while, and you will not see me? And again, a little while, and you will see me? Most assuredly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. And you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come.

But as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish for the joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you now have

sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. And in that day you will ask me nothing.

But let's wait on that one. Let's just go through verse 22 for a moment. He talks to them now.

He knows they're inquiring what he means by a little while, a little while. He compares it, that the little while that he's going to be gone, he compares it with the time of mourning. In fact, he compares it with labor, going through labor, a woman going through labor to have a child.

But like that situation, the labor pains are all but forgotten. They're put behind once they're a thing of the past. Most women don't sit around suffering labor, sympathetically in retrospect, after they have the baby.

Now, when Jesus says that she no longer remembers the anguish after the baby is born, that's a bit of a hyperbole. Most women I know who have had babies do remember the anguish. In fact, when they find themselves pregnant again, that's one of the things they have to cope with.

They know it's coming. Although, let me just say this, side issue. Many women fear labor pains more than the pains themselves warrant.

And this is true not only of the labor of heaven, maybe it's true of almost any painful situation that human beings face. It's almost always worse in anticipation than it is at the time, especially for Christians, because of the grace of God. He doesn't give you grace to anticipate it, but he gives you grace to go through it.

And I can think of... There's a couple here in this town. I used to go to church with them here, who had been married several years and were childless, and they got to know us. We talked to them about our vision for children, and they wanted children, but the wife was scared to death of labor.

She didn't want to get pregnant, not because she didn't want a child, but she didn't want the labor pain. She'd heard horrible things about it. And finally they got pregnant.

I don't know if they decided to bite the bullet and go ahead and through with it, or if it was an accident that they got pregnant. But in any case, they found themselves pregnant. And so everybody in the church knew that this lady was afraid, scared to death of labor.

She was a real sweet, meek kind of a lady. Everyone loved her. But they knew that she was afraid of labor.

And so as the time approached, everyone began to pray for her. And you know what?

She's the only one I know who felt no pain in labor. She experienced no labor pain.

Now, I'm not telling you women that you can always count on that, but I'm saying that her fears were unjustified. I mean, God knew what she needed. He gave her such grace that she felt no pain.

And since then, I think she's had another baby. I don't know how that one went. I think she might be pregnant now.

I'm not sure. But anyway, was that? Yeah, now she'll just have a whole litter. But the point is, I mean, there is pain in childbirth, generally speaking.

And going into it, a lot of times women show a tremendous amount of fear, though there's no need to because God's grace is sufficient. And there are a lot worse things that people may have to go through for the faith than what they go through to get a baby. And when you think about it, the longest labor I ever heard of that anyone went through was 36 hours.

I hardly ever hear of it being anywhere close to that. I mean, usually it's only just a very few hours for most people. But the very longest labor I've heard of was full of complications and so forth.

It was a 36-hour labor, very rare. But even if, you know, it's sort of like I've said in the past, even if you suffered all your life and then went to heaven and were excited, positively excited for all eternity, that little time of your life that you suffered would seem like nothing by comparison to eternity if you see things in the right perspective. Likewise, even if a woman was in labor for a week, and I've never heard of such a thing, and it was painful every moment, which it isn't.

Labor is not painful every moment. It goes through its waves. It comes and goes.

I'll give you a little sex education class here, too. But if it was painful every moment, yet when you think about it, after, at the very most, after a very few days of this, it's over, and you're never going to go through that labor again for that child, and you're going to have that child for a lifetime. I mean, it's worth it.

It's worth it. And that's what Jesus said. It's so much worth it that once the baby's born, it's almost as if the woman forgets the anguish she went through getting there.

Now, again, he's not saying that she can't call his wife. Somehow there's this missing piece. She's repressed it in her subconscious.

It's so painful or something. It has to come out through psychotherapy. But what it does mean is that it's not on her mind anymore.

Her labor is no longer a present concern. She now has the joyous reality of a child that

she'll have the rest of her life, presumably. Yeah, okay, there you go.

It's like when you get in the shower, and the water's cold at first. I don't get in the shower until it's no longer cold. I don't get into cold showers and wait for them to warm up.

But some people are more macho than I am, I guess. And they get in the cold shower, and by the time the shower's over, they're warm and happy. But I can think of something that is like that.

I can remember... Now, right here I'm standing out in the sunshine, and I'm hot. I'm not too uncomfortably hot, but I, you know, if I stay here the rest of the afternoon, I'm sure I'll be fairly uncomfortable. I can remember, academically I can remember, standing out on an on-ramp all night, freezing to death, thinking I was going to die.

I thought, I'm not going to survive this. My blood just can't continue to flow at this temperature. It's oozing already, and it's going to stop.

It's going to come to a total standstill. A human being can't survive these temperatures. I can remember thinking that.

And I remember thinking at the time, I'm so cold I can hardly imagine it. And thinking, I can remember, but not very well, times when I was so hot, I could hardly stand it. Now, as I stand here now, I can't relate in any sense with feeling like I'm going to die of freezing.

You know, I mean, I know it back there. The fact that I can tell the story means I really remember it, but I don't remember it. I can't relate to it at all.

It's maybe like that shower story. There are things that, once the pain is over, you know, one thing I've noticed, I don't know about women in labor and so forth, but one thing I've noticed, the things that were the hardest to go through when I went through them, not only are tolerable in retrospect to think of them, a lot of times they're the most humorous things in retrospect to talk about. I don't know about you, but it seems like some of the things that were the hardest to go through at the time are things that you can almost see humor in now.

I'm not talking about, you know, your wife cheating on you, stuff like that. It's never good. You know, where there's sin and stuff like that, that's not humorous.

It's never humorous. But I'm talking about things where you just were, you know, in a hard situation, and looking back, you know, it's just not hard anymore. Like getting a tooth pulled.

I don't know. I guess I don't spend too much time joking about getting my wisdom teeth

out, which I did a long time ago. But yeah, maybe so.

It's more like a friend of mine who was hitchhiking in Arizona, and it was so hot he had to stand in the shadow of the sign that says, no pedestrians beyond this point. And the shadow kept moving, and finally he had to stand for a few moments in this one spot, because that's the only place there was shade. He'd die out in the direct heat in Arizona.

You'd die there in a few minutes, probably. And so he was standing in the shade, and he realized he was standing on an ant hill, and all the ants were climbing up his legs, you know, and he couldn't move. And it probably wasn't funny at the time, but it seems funny to remember it, you know.

So anyway, that's one thing that we need to remember, and this is what Jesus is trying to say is, when you are going through sorrow and suffering, it seems like the end of the world at the moment. But in most cases, and in fact for the Christian, I'd say in every case, you don't go through anything like that unless there's something good God intends for it, and you will someday know the good thing. You'll someday have the baby, and the labor will just be, you know, you'll remember it was there, but you'll hardly remember it.

It won't be in your mind. You won't be thinking about it. You won't look at that baby and say, Boy, were you ever hard to come by, you know.

Did she say that to you? Well, she hadn't read this, probably. Yeah, she holds that issue to this day, right? Well, we've got some inner healing available over here. Okay.

But the particular suffering he's talking about right now is the suffering that they were going to experience through his crucifixion. That's what he's talking about. They, at this point, still weren't getting it straight in their minds that he was going to die and go away.

That was still going to take them as something of a shock, and it was going to be the most horrendous trial they had ever known in their lives. But, of course, when he would return from the grave, that would change everything. Their joy would be returned to them.

And what was taking place was a birth of something, a birth of a new order, a birth of a new covenant, a birth of a new creation. And Jesus was the one who had to bear the labor of hands for it, and the disciples, to a certain extent, had to go through sympathetic labor. You know what that is? I remember my first wife's father was so sympathetic that when his wife was in labor, when my first wife was born, when her mother was in labor, her father was given a hospital bed too because he was in labor also.

They call that sympathetic. I've never had that experience, and I don't think it's very common. But the disciples were going to have to go through labor too sympathetically.

Jesus was the one who was going to bear the cross. They would eventually have their turn, but at this point in time where they were going to be in labor, in anguish, it was going to be because they couldn't understand what was going on. Their leader was gone.

They loved him, and they saw him suffering and dying. Just like you, labor. I've suffered seeing me sneeze like this out here just so I could be out here because you wanted to be out here.

I'm sure you're all grieving in anguish. Yes. I do.

I sneeze indoors also. Okay, well, then that doesn't apply in this case. I'm sure you all pity me anyway.

You know I pity myself. If you don't, I'll get enough pity for myself. But what Jesus is saying, you're going to be suffering anguish because I'm going to die.

You won't understand it. It's going to be a painful thing, but something's going to be born, and what's going to be born is going to be so good that when it's over, you're going to be glad you went through it. What's going to be born is a church.

What's going to be born is a new man. A man-child. You know, John, who recorded these statements of Jesus, also wrote the book of Revelation.

And there in Revelation 12, he sees a vision of a woman laboring to give birth. And she gives birth to a man-child, a male child, it says. And the language is very much like this.

And I believe that the two passages are connected. I believe both are really talking about the same thing. Take notes, you guys who are working on Revelation.

I think that woman in Revelation 12 is the faithful remnant of Israel. And I believe the child she gives birth to is Christ. But of course, the church and Christ are identified.

There's something new that was born. But those who were instrumental in bringing it about had to suffer a bit for a while before it came about. Okay, let's move along here because we're low on time.

In verse 23, "...and in that day you will ask me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name.

Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. These things I have spoken to you in figurative language, but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name.

And I do not say that I shall pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you

because you have loved me and have believed that I came forth from God." Now, this is another time, as some earlier ones have come up in chapter 14 and so forth, where he's talking about prayer. And in 15 he talks about it too. Praying in his name.

He was going to be gone from the earth, but he would not be without representation. He would have those who had the power of attorney to act on his behalf, to act as he would if he were here. That's what it means to act in someone's name.

Now he says, when you are in that condition, when I've gone and sent you my spirit and you're now part of me, you're my flesh and my bones, you're my body, since you'll be part of me, you can act as if you were me. You'll act in my name. Now, up till now you haven't been able to do that.

I've been someone other than you. You've asked me things. But in the future, you'll ask the Father just like I do, because you'll be me, essentially.

You'll be part of my body, and you can ask in my name. You haven't been asking the Father for things because I've been with you. You haven't learned how to pray yet, because I've always been here for you to talk to.

And remember, even earlier on in his mystery, when they asked him, the Lord teaches to pray, he said, when you pray, say, Our Father. According to Jesus, prayer is offered to the Father. Normative prayer is not offered to Jesus, but to the Father.

Pray, Our Father, which art in heaven. And here he says it again. You've never yet really asked the Father anything in my name, but that's what you're going to do when I'm gone.

As long as I've been with you, you've asked me things. That's changing. And he says, he says in verse 26, you'll ask in my name, you'll ask the Father in my name, and I don't say that I'm going to pray to the Father for you.

That's not how prayer works. You don't talk to Jesus, and then he goes and talks to the Father for you. You talk to the Father yourself in his name.

Now, you know, that's something Christians need to understand probably better in many cases. Some of them probably understand it perfectly well. But, you know, as I hear people pray, and as I talk to people about prayer, and hear people talk about the way they understand prayer, I get the impression a lot of Christians don't quite understand what it means to pray in Jesus' name.

It doesn't mean to pray to Jesus. It means to pray to the Father in Jesus' name. That means you stand as Christ's agent, as his representative, with his power of attorney, asking the Father the very thing that Jesus would ask for if he were standing right in your shoes, because in a sense he is standing there in your shoes.

The same spirit that was embodied in the human body of Jesus of Nazareth is now in you, in your human body. And you are linked by that sharing of the same spirit with him as an extension of his body, of his flesh and his bones. Therefore, as you ask in his name, it's because basically he is asking the Father in the person of you.

You, as Christ, are asking. So, it's not the thing that you talk to Jesus about, then he goes to the Father. Now, that might be the way things had been going with Jesus and the disciples.

While he was present with them, they'd ask him things, and ask for things. It's possible that he may have, in his prayer sessions, gone and talked to the Father about it for them. After all, they said, Lord, can we sit at your right hand and your left hand? And he said, well, that's not for me to say, that's for my Father.

Who knows, maybe he went and asked the Father about it for them after this. We don't know that he did or didn't. But, anyway, the teaching that Jesus gives here about prayer is no doubt would be a good corrective to the way some of us understand prayer.

We pray to the Father. He loves you. Don't be afraid of him.

For in verse 27 it says, the Father himself loves you, because you've loved me, and I believe that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to my Father.

His disciples said to him, See, now you are speaking plainly and using no figure of speech. Now we're sure that you know all things and have no need that anyone should question you. Why do they know that? Because earlier, in verses 17 and following, they were talking among themselves, what do you think he means by that? What do you think he means by that? And Jesus said, in verse 19, Are you asking? Do you want to ask? I know what you want to ask me, and so I'll give you an answer.

And so they say, Now we know that you know all things and no one has to ask you any questions, because you already know before they ask. By this we believe that you came forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? There's a little bit of doubt registering in his comment.

Not so sure. After all, Jesus was told by Peter in chapter 13. Peter said to him in verse 37 of chapter 13, Lord, why can't I go follow you now? I will lay down my life for your sake.

Jesus answered him, Will you lay down your life for my sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied me three times. Peter was sure that he would lay down his life for Jesus' sake, and Jesus fed his exact words back to him. Will you lay down your life for my sake? And he then predicted that Peter was a little too self-confident, and Jesus knew him better than that.

Now he says something very like that to the whole group. They say, Now we know. Now we believe that you came forth from God.

He says, Do you now believe? And what does he tell them? You're going to be stumbled. You're going to be scattered. Do you now believe? Indeed, the hour is coming, yes, and now has come that you will be scattered each to his own and will leave me alone.

And yet I'm not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world. Now, when he says in verse 32, You're going to leave me alone, but I'm not alone, because my Father is with me. Paul had exactly the same observation to make about his own case in 2 Timothy chapter 4, because he had sometime prior to writing 2 Timothy, he had had to stand trial before Nero for the charges the Jews had brought against him.

And when he did stand trial, a lot of his friends abandoned him. It says in verse 16 of 2 Timothy 4, 2 Timothy 4, 16 and 17, At my first defense, meaning the first time he stood trial, no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them, but the Lord stood with me and strengthened me.

So, he's saying the same thing Jesus said. You're going to leave me alone, but I'm not going to be really alone, because the Father is going to be with me. Paul says, Everyone left me alone, but I wasn't alone.

The Lord stood with me. And this is something you'll have to remember, because there's going to be times... Mark my words, I'm not just trying to find some kind of artificial application of this text. This is real.

Unless you have an entirely different kind of Christian life than I have, which I doubt. I think what I'm talking about is fairly normative. There will be times when you feel like you don't have any friends.

Even your Christian friends are no longer acting like friends. You wonder, when you wonder, is there anyone else? Is there anyone I can talk to? Is there anyone sympathetic? Is there anyone who's on my side? And when you come to that point, it's really kind of a sweet thing. It really is.

I've been there on many occasions, believe me, in the years. And by the way, those times do pass. They're just a matter of perception at the time.

You get a handful of people who come against you at one time from different directions, and you suddenly feel like, wow, everyone's against me. That's not exactly right. Not everyone is against you, but it feels that way sometimes.

And those times pass, and eventually you've got as many friends as before, maybe more. But during those times, it's a good thing. In fact, I think God wants us to go through those times.

Where Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1 that we despaired of life itself. We were pressed beyond measure, above strength, so that our faith might not be in ourselves, but in God, who raises the dead. I think that's the idea.

He doesn't want us to trust in relationships. He doesn't want us to trust in people. He wants us to, you know, relate with people, but once in a while, he may put us through a cycle where everyone that we were trusting in, everyone we thought was with us, they're gone.

Maybe temporarily, maybe they're permanently gone, and someone else will replace them in the future. Yes. 2 Corinthians 1, it's somewhere in that first chapter.

I couldn't find it, I guess. That's verse 9. 8 and 9. So God will have you pressed beyond strength and so forth, so that you'll learn to trust in him. Jesus was forsaken by everybody, but not by his Father.

Paul was forsaken by everybody, but not by the Lord. The Lord stood with him. And those are times when you feel pretty close to the Lord, because that is if you're suffering for righteousness' sake.

Then you can sense in a very real sense that you're suffering, fellowshiping with Christ and his sufferings, really. Verse 33, These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace, in the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Now, it hardly seemed at this time that Jesus had overcome the world. He was hiding out at that very moment. In fact, there was at that moment, Judas had left the room already and was already gathering people to come and arrest him, and within a few hours' time, he would seem to be totally at the mercy of the world.

And for him to say, I have overcome the world, must have been strange sounding. But he had overcome the world in this respect, in the way that he intended. You know, some people think that Christians ought to overcome the world through taking over the political institutions and things like that.

Obviously, Jesus never showed any interest in doing any of that, but he overcame the world in the way that he wanted to. And that was by not allowing the world to corrupt him. He had run his course, as Paul later could say he had.

He had run the good race. He had been tempted on many occasions to defect, but he never did. The world was continually trying, as it tries with us, to pull him down, to tempt

him, to corrupt him, but he had overcome all those efforts.

He had beat the world. He had beat the system. As he said earlier, the prince of this world is coming, and he has nothing on me.

He said that at the end of chapter 14. Verse 30. I will no longer talk to you, for the ruler of this world is coming, but he has nothing in me.

I've beat him. He's been trying all my life to corrupt me, and I haven't been corrupted. And that's the way to overcome.

To be faithful unto death. Jesus is basically saying, I've been faithful, I'm now going to die within a few hours, and I have been faithful unto death. That's what overcoming the world means.

In the book of Revelation, again and again, it says, to him that overcomes, to him that overcomes, to him that overcomes. I'll grant this, that, or the other thing. Certain promises, mostly associated with eternal life.

Do you know why? Because overcoming means dying. It means being faithful until death. And I'll give you the crown of life.

And in Revelation 12, 11, it says, they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives unto the death. That's how you overcome, by being a martyr. By being faithful until you die.

And that's how Jesus had overcome the world. So, we live in two realms, in Christ and in the world. In Christ, he says you have peace.

In the world, you've got tribulation. Two very different circumstances at the same time. I've spoken these things so that in me you'll have peace.

In the world, you also live there and you'll have tribulation there. But in me, all the while, you'll have peace, even in tribulation. And the peace will be in this, that the tribulation is not going to be able to corrupt you.

The tribulation will not be able to force you to back down from your stance, me. How do I know that? Because I have overcome all such tribulation in my life. And I, you know, the Spirit who has been in me to give me the victory over the world is also going to be in you to give you the victory over the world.

This is why you can have peace in him because the Spirit of God brings the fruit of the Spirit. And the fruit of the Spirit is peace. In the world, you may have tribulation.

But in Christ, the Holy Spirit gives us peace. And that's another way in which it demonstrates that the prince of this world has been judged. And Paul even says that in 1

Thessalonians, I believe.

By the peace and tranquility that you have while you are in the midst of trials. I think it's actually Philippians. Let me see if I can find it.

By the tranquility you have in trials, it proves that what you have is true. And I guess maybe it's in Philippians. I thought it was in... Yeah, it's in Philippians chapter 1 verses 28 and 29.

Philippians 1, 28 says, And not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition. It is a proof that they are wrong and they're going to hell and that their prince has been judged. What is? That you're not terrified in the midst of tribulation.

You're not afraid to die. In the world, you have tribulation. But in Christ, you have peace.

And that is another testimony of the Spirit of God that the prince of this world has been judged. To them, it's a proof of perdition. But to you, of salvation.

And that from God. For to you, it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake. So this part of what Jesus said in the Upper Room was not just for the apostles.

But for us all. Paul says, the church has been granted to suffer for his sake. But that is a proof.

When you suffer graciously, when you suffer courageously, not terrified by your adversaries, this is a proof of your salvation and a proof of their damnation. And that's, I think, essentially what Jesus was saying, too, in that passage in the Upper Room. Okay, we'll stop there and come back to the prayer of Jesus next time.