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PREPARATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP: DISCIPLESHIP IN
JESUS' FAREWELL DISCOURSES, ST. JOHN 13-17

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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May 1966

40416

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CHAPTER I

DISCIPLESHIP IN JESUS' FAREWELL DISCOURSES

The word "Christian" is not native to the community of believers gathered around the resurrected Lord. "Disciple" is the proper term, historically considered, for a member of the community. The word "Christian" occurs only three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). The Christians first refer to themselves as "disciples."

The meaning of discipleship is significant for the church today. As the world changes, the church and the members of the church change, and it becomes necessary for the church to renew her churchliness. In order to be the church, the church must know the meaning of discipleship. If the church wants to understand her divine duty she must know the meaning of discipleship. This thesis presents an investigation of the meaning of discipleship in Jesus' farewell discourses in the Gospel according to St. John (chapters 13-17).

The investigation limits itself to the Gospel according to St. John (chapters 13-17). Although all four Gospels are records of discipleship, the Gospel according to St. John is unique because of the long discourses of Jesus to His disciples in these chapters. As Jesus' ministry develops, He enjoys a deepening fellowship between Himself and His disciples. In the farewell discourses the union of Jesus with His disciples is the basis for their discipleship. Jesus prepares the disciples for their discipleship by example, instruction, and intercession.

The writer attempts to understand the Gospel according to St. John on its own terms. The Gospel writer is an eyewitness, writing his Gospel in the light of Pentecost. He wants to proclaim that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. The Gospel according to St. John must be understood first of all on the basis of the book itself.

The author of the Fourth Gospel is, in this study, sometimes referred to simply as St. John. There is no intention to enter into the question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. St. John is referred to as the author because tradition labels the Fourth Gospel as the Gospel according to St. John.

There is no attempt to impose an outline upon chapters thirteen through seventeen of the Gospel according to St. John. Any attempt at a logical or sequential outline seems somewhat arbitrary and artificial. The chapters are not without a developed structural organization, but there are repetitions, problems at points as to sequence, and some sentences which do not seem to follow any strictly devised outline. Many scholars attempt to reorganize the material, assuming major editing or textual dislocations.¹ Each of these attempts

¹Cf. Wilbert Francis Howard, The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, revised by C. K. Barrett (4th edition; London: The Epworth Press, 1955), pp. 297-303 and passim for an overview of redaction and displacement theories. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, edited by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (11. durchgesehene Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1950), pp. 348-489, for extensive rearrangements of chapters 13-17. Cf. Dwight Moody Smith, Jr., The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel (New Haven: Yale University Press, c.1965) for a recent critique of Bultmann and a guide to other materials in this area.

bears its own peculiar advantages and disadvantages, and no attempt so far is conclusive. Whatever the original order, this writer attempts to understand the text as it stands, as C. H. Dodd says: "I conceive it to be the duty of an interpreter at least to see what can be done with the document as it has come down to us before attempting to improve upon it."²

Discipleship in the first twelve chapters and the last four chapters of the Gospel according to St. John does not enter the investigation. The writer feels there is a natural division in the Fourth Gospel at chapter thirteen. At this point St. John deals with the relationship of Jesus to His disciples. The first part of the Gospel according to St. John (chapters 3-12) shows how Jesus' love woos the world and how His love becomes an offence for the world. Beginning with chapter thirteen St. John shows how Jesus' love is revealed to the disciples, directly in the separation scene of the night before the Passion and then indirectly in the Passion itself. This investigation concerns itself with the direct revelation on the night before the Passion.

Repetitions of sentence and thought occur frequently in the Gospel according to St. John. Repetitions of thought also appear in the thesis because of the nature of the material, but there is an attempt to keep them at a minimum.

²C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1963), p. 290.

Serious study of the meaning of discipleship in the New Testament is recently receiving scholarly attention. An excellent study on discipleship comes from a war prisoner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who wrote The Cost of Discipleship.³ Another document on the meaning of discipleship in the Gospel according to St. Matthew is Dr. Martin Franzmann's Follow Me: Discipleship According to St. Matthew.⁴ Eduard Schweizer's Lordship and Discipleship⁵ is also a recent study. Little research, however, comes to grips with the meaning of discipleship in the Gospel according to St. John.

The main chapters of the thesis result from a natural division of chapters thirteen through seventeen of the Gospel according to St. John. Jesus' love for the disciples as He prepares them for their discipleship first shows itself in the footwashing scene. First, He demonstrates by example His love and lays the foundation for their discipleship. By instruction, secondly, Jesus prepares His disciples for the time when He shall be with the Father in glory. The disciples abide in His love and the love of the Father. Through their personal union with Jesus and by the help of the Spirit the disciples are

³Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (Revised and unabridged edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963).

⁴Martin H. Franzmann, Follow Me: Discipleship According to Saint Matthew (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961).

⁵E. Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1960).

adequately prepared for their life of discipleship in ministry. By intercession, thirdly, Jesus prepares the disciples. Their union with Him is complete in that Jesus prays for them. Their ministry is the ministry of the Word.

The reader of this thesis may refer to the last chapter for a concise summary of the entire investigation. Each chapter in the body of the thesis also concludes with a summary which is designed to help the reader to get a clear picture of the thrust and content of that chapter.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP BY EXAMPLE: THE FOOTWASHING, ST. JOHN 13:1-30

An Introduction to Discipleship

In the first twelve chapters of the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus calls His disciples and reveals Himself through signs and works and words to His disciples. Jesus calls the disciples to follow Him along the way of God, and they respond to Jesus' teaching and signs. They come to know Jesus and the God who sent Him; now in chapters thirteen through seventeen of the Gospel there is particular emphasis on the preparation of the disciples for their life of discipleship. They still have many questions to ask; they still often misunderstand the real import of Jesus' teaching. But Jesus loves His disciples, and He wishes them to know God more fully. He wishes to prepare them for their life of discipleship which they are to live after His departure.

The means whereby Jesus makes His disciples capable for their ministry and life of discipleship is simply open and continued association with Himself. Jesus does not give them technical preparation for their work. There are no long hours of instruction by rote, of sentences which they have to memorize, or of religious action which they must practice. Their capability for their calling rests only and completely in their knowing Him, in the fact that He gives them for their own persons their communion with God. Jesus' relationship to God does not depend on material means for maintenance, and

there is no material means which equips the disciples for their ministry. God's work is not done by such artificial means. Rather, the disciples grow as the branches grow on the vine. The fact that Jesus calls them disciples and Himself the Teacher does not prove that He has nothing more to give them and plans to give them nothing more than instruction.¹ They are to learn of Him, to be sure; but they are not merely to learn something that they already know. Rather, they are to learn how they are to obey God. This obedience involves a change not only in their thinking, but also in their willing.

Jesus' Love for the Disciples

At this point in the Gospel according to St. John (13:1-30),² Jesus particularly prepares His disciples by giving them an example of His love for them which shows them their union with Him and their communion with one another.

Out of love for the world God gives His unique Son, Jesus (3:16), to be flesh (1:14) and to ransom those who believe in Him as the Son of God (1:12). Out of love for the disciples Jesus calls them out of darkness into light; He is the Good Shepherd to His sheep; He is the Bread of Life for those who need life; He is their New Temple,

¹A. Schlatter, Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), p. 321.

²All chapter and verse references without mention of a specific book of The Holy Bible are from the Gospel according to St. John. All quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

their New Master, and He gives them a New Birth through His washing.

Jesus' love for His disciples does not end in frustration and utter disappointment because of their feebleness and weakness, their frequent misunderstanding and doubt. Jesus loves His disciples as a good shepherd loves his sheep (10:14-15); He is willing to give His life for them. He loves His disciples *εἰς τέλος* (13:1). Not only does Jesus remain with His disciples as long as He is on the earth (12:35), but always (14:23). Jesus loves His own to the last moment of His life, and His love is with them even until the end of time.³ His end in death is itself a deed of love, the necessary end in which His works of love find their fulfillment. Not only does Jesus love Judas, Peter, John--all of the disciples while He is with them; His love extends beyond this. He loves them "vollständig,"⁴ and to the very end.⁵ Luther says: "Alles gab er ihnen, auch sein Leben."⁶ Jesus' love for His disciples is the greatest kind of love: "Greater love has no man than this, that a

³Cf. C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John (London: SPCK, c.1958), p. 365.

⁴A. Schlatter, Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Zweite durchgesehene Auflage; Calw: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1918), I, 752.

⁵Cf. Edwyn Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), p. 436.

⁶Eduard Ellwein, editor, Das Johannes-Evangelium, in D. Martin Luthers Evangelien-Auslegung, edited by Erwin Mülhaupt (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, n.d.), p. 365.

man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13; confer 1 John 3:16). His death is an end, not as a cessation but as a *τέλος*, since it is the final and complete act of the love of the Son of God for those whom He has gathered out of the world--His own disciples. He loves the disciples completely and finally, to the uttermost, unto death. His cry, "It is finished" (19:30), marks the cross as the *τέλος*.

The unique Johannine account of the last night begins with the depiction of the footwashing. The event sets forth the thematic meaning of what follows in the discourses, and at the same time it is a continuation of what has gone before. St. John places the footwashing incident *πρὸ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα* (13:1).⁷ In 11:55 he introduces the event of the Passover of the Jews. The great crowd wonders if Jesus will appear for the feast, and Greek proselytes seek Him through the disciples. Jesus answers the disciples: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified" (12:23). The hour of His glorification is the hour when He goes to the Father (13:1). The hour of His Passion is the hour of His homecoming. The meaning of this hour for Jesus is the basis for

⁷Whether St. John is thinking of the evening before the great feast day on which the Passover meal is held or whether he moves the last meal of Jesus to the previous evening is not clear. But St. John writes "before the Passover" as he reflects back upon the events as they happened. Cf. Schlatter, *Erläuterungen*, I, 751. For a careful study of the identity of the last supper, see Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, translated by Arnold Erhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955).

the meaning of this hour for His own disciples.⁸ In this hour the disciples are united with Him in His love, love which chooses them *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου* and sustains them *ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ* (13:1). At His homecoming they are not left alone, but they are to carry on their discipleship in His love until the end (14:23).

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

After this carefully constructed introduction to the scene of the footwashing, St. John immediately explains that a dark shadow hangs over the scene of the last night, the betrayal of Jesus by one of His own disciples (13:2). The devil, having already put treason into Judas' heart, shuts him off from the love of Jesus and opens his heart to the works of the anti-divine power (confer also St. Luke 22:3). The *καρδία* is the place of the will, and once the devil turns a man's *καρδία*, he wills the devil's will.⁹

In this last night at the supper table St. John presents Jesus as acting in full consciousness of His divine majesty (13:3). The origin of Jesus is from God, His goal is in God, and God has given all things into His hands. This Jesus, living and working in His

⁸Walter Grundmann, "Die Gabe der Vollmacht, Gottes Kinder zu werden, in den Abschiedsgesprächen der letzten Nacht (13,1-17,26)," Zeugnis und Gestalt des Johannes-Evangeliums (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, [1960]), p. 65.

⁹A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt. (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 279.

divine majesty, humbles Himself to render slavish service to His own.¹⁰ Jesus is fully aware of His divine mission, origin, and destiny, and knows that He is about to leave the world and return to the Father (13:1,3). This gives peculiar emphasis to His act of humility. Jesus, who came from the Father and is going back to the Father, who has all authority (3:35), descends to the lowest place of service. He who is "in the form of God" assumes "the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:5-8). He stoops to serve His disciples.¹¹ He gives of Himself freely as God's gift to man. He gives service to those from whom He is entitled to claim service. In that service He gives all that He is and has: "The Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (St. Matthew 20:28).

St. John, in depicting the footwashing, prepares for the last and ultimate serving of Jesus when He gives Himself completely in the cross. This is the gift of God to man. Jesus' readiness to go to the cross demonstrates itself in His action of washing and wiping the

¹⁰Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1956), II, 557, explains that the act of girding with a towel marks the action of a slave (13:4) in the example of Abraham's dismissal of Hagar (Genesis 21:14): "(Abraham) entliesz sie (die Hagar) mit einem Scheidebrief, u. [nd] er nahm den Überwurf u. [nd] gürtete ihn um ihre Lenden, damit man wisse, dasz sie eine Sklavin sei."

¹¹C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1963), p. 401.

disciples' feet.¹² Jesus' love for His disciples brings Him to give Himself in service for the disciples.

When Jesus comes to Simon Peter to wash his feet, Peter questions the action of his Master (13:6). St. John thus shows that the disciple misunderstands the whole action of Jesus. Jesus tells Peter that he will not understand until after he has witnessed the reality of the crucifixion. He will understand after he denies Jesus and still remains His disciple.¹³ All the disciples will understand after the resurrection, through the Spirit (14:25,26; 15:26).

In his misunderstanding, Peter reacts negatively to the action of Jesus: "You shall never wash my feet" (13:8). The first condition of discipleship is self-surrender, but this Peter could not grasp. He could not understand that Jesus humbles Himself to be a servant to His own. His human disposition as such does not see salvation in terms of the humiliation or God in terms of a servant.¹⁴ Jesus' answer is that only the disciple who accepts this service has union with Him (13:8) and remains united with Him on His way to glory.

¹²Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 281. Cf. also Eric L. Titus, The Message of the Fourth Gospel (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 184.

¹³Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 282.

¹⁴Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar Über das Neue Testament, edited by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (11. durchgesehene Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1950), pp. 356-357.

Fellowship in the Father's house (14:2-7) is not possible without previous purification. Through this act Jesus prepares His disciples for union with Himself. Only on the basis of Jesus' forgiveness is there union with Him in everlasting life. His forgiving love for His disciples is manifest in His service of footwashing.¹⁵ Peter's response shows that he still does not understand (13:9). Now he desires more than what Jesus offers him. If washing is the only way to union with Jesus, then Peter would be washed entirely.

It is clear in Jesus' conversation with Peter that He has already acted to cleanse His disciples. He says: "He who has bathed does not need to wash, . . . but he is clean all over; and you are clean, but not all of you" (13:10).¹⁶ Again in 15:3 He says: "You are already made

¹⁵Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 282.

¹⁶In this verse *λούεσθαι*, to take a bath, is contrasted with *νίπτειν*, to wash a part of the body. Baptism is a bath (*λουτρόν*, Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5). The Christian reader is assured that having undergone the *λουτρόν*, he is *καθαρός*.

The context of verse ten seems to indicate that "except for his feet" may not have been in the original. The majority of manuscripts, however, support its inclusion. Both readings are ancient. Several considerations suggest that the shorter text is the original: (1) The context shows that what Jesus does here is not trivial (13:8). It is not a second washing subordinate to an initial bath. (2) St. John is fond of pairs of words; he may not have distinguished clearly between *λούειν* and *νίπτειν*. (3) The verb *λούειν* is not common in the New Testament, but is connected with religious washings. (4) It seems to have been the custom to bathe at home, and on arrival at a host's house to have only the feet washed. St. John, then, may introduce *λούειν* to suggest the rite of baptism. The verse is to point out Peter's misunderstanding of the footwashing. Jesus here shows that having once received His love and its benefits one "is clean all over." The text was expanded partly because *λούειν* and *νίπτειν* were not seen as synonyms and partly because of the social custom listed above. Cf. Barrett, p. 368.

clean by the word which I have spoken to you." The disciple who receives Jesus' service is united with Him in fellowship and is sure of the way to glory, for Jesus' service cleanses Him. As an act of love, it is an act of cleansing, which is essential to fellowship with Jesus (13:8). The one who belongs to the company of disciples is clean. In 13:10 it is not expressly said how the footwashing makes one clean, but Jesus' words seem to indicate that something preceding the footwashing made the disciple clean; 15:3 indicates that this "something" is His word. In His word which He speaks and which He Himself is, His ministry of cleansing is accomplished.¹⁷ He who accepts His service and believes in His word needs no other means of salvation. His love in service makes them clean. Schlatter explains how the disciples are clean:

Da Jesus als das Lamm Gottes die Schuld der Welt wegnimmt, macht die Liebe, die er den Jüngern gibt, diese ganz und für immer rein. Für ihren Verkehr miteinander bleibt aber die Waschung der Füße das inhaltvolle Gleichnis für das, was sie immer wieder bedürfen und sich gegenseitig geben. Denn in ihrer brüderlichen Gemeinschaft entsteht durch das Versagen der Liebe und die Unfähigkeit zum Dienen immer wieder das Bedürfnis, die verletzte Gemeinschaft durch gemeinsames Vergeben zu heilen. Dazu haben sie nicht nur die Pflicht, sondern auch das Vermögen deshalb empfangen, weil sie das sie rein machende Vergeben Jesu besitzen Als *οι υιοι* des Christus sind sie rein und "kommen nicht in das Gericht", 5,24.¹⁸

¹⁷Bultmann, p. 358.

¹⁸Schlatter, Evangelist, pp. 282-283.

Jesus thus maintains fellowship with His disciples by washing their feet. Jesus cleanses the disciples through His act of love. All that Jesus does in accomplishing the work of the Father is also for the disciples. His every act is in love to the Father and to the disciples. By Jesus' love the disciples are made clean. It is not that they were unclean before this, for already before this they have shared in the life of Jesus. Even as the Great Husbandman *καθαίρει* the fruitful branches of the Vine by pruning off dead and useless shoots, so Jesus in washing the disciples' feet prunes them, cleanses them for their discipleship. The disciple is clean because he is a disciple; he hears, sees, and knows Jesus, the Word in the flesh. Only by the bestowal of the love of Jesus upon the disciples are they made clean to do their ministry for Him to others.

The introduction of Judas into this section (13:10) serves to bring further clarification. Judas is a partaker in the footwashing of Jesus. The fact that he persists in his plan to betray Jesus shows that he is cut off from Jesus' love *εἰς τέλος*. Judas' confrontation with Jesus is different from Peter's, for Peter comes to know of the love of Jesus (21:15-17): "Petrus bleibt dieser Liebe erschlossen, Judas verschlieszt sich ihr."¹⁹

Judas also hears Jesus say *ὑμεῖς καθαροί ἐστε*. But Judas is not *καθαρός* (13:11). Membership in the company of

¹⁹Grundmann, p. 67.

disciples, whose feet Jesus washes, is not a guarantee for life. Yet the presence of this one unclean member does not alter the cleanness of the whole company of disciples. Only Judas is unclean and rejects Jesus' love.

The Application of Footwashing to Discipleship

The footwashing completed, Jesus rhetorically asks a question to prepare for His instruction to the disciples, "Do you know what I have done to you?" (13:12). The disciples are certainly correct in their expression of faith by calling Jesus "Teacher and Lord" (13:13). He is a teacher in the highest connotations of that title. He teaches His disciples well, as all rabbis seek to do. The disciples have only one teacher, and that is Jesus Himself: "But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren" (St. Matthew 23:8), and "Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ" (St. Matthew 23:10). Jesus is their Lord and their Master who brings them and nourishes them along the way. On this basis Jesus gives them the duty of mutual subjection and service:²⁰ "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (13:14). Jesus, their Teacher and Lord, washes their feet. If He does this,

²⁰Already in 1:42 Jesus completely connects the duty of service with discipleship by the fact that He gives Simon his name Peter immediately upon his becoming a disciple; "Peter" describes a function.

they also ought to do the same to one another. This a maiore ad minus conclusion of Jesus basically describes the interaction of the disciples: their washing of one another's feet is to lead to the goal for which Jesus prays in chapter seventeen, that His community or company of disciples be one. Schlatter says: "Jesus [zeigt] den Jüngern durch sein Waschen, was sie zu tun haben, damit ihre Gemeinschaft nicht zerbreche."²¹ To wash one another's feet is the continuing ministry of love for the disciple. It is a service in which each proves to be his brother's keeper. Foot-washing points to fellowship with Jesus (13:8) and with one another (13:20); and this corresponds to the twofold relationship in the analogy of the vine and the branches, an abiding in Jesus (15:1-8) and an existing for one another through abiding in His love (15:9-17).

The disciples' confession that Jesus is their Lord and Teacher can be put into action by what they receive from the footwashing. Their Teacher puts before them an example for their interaction with one another. Jesus chooses the disciples to be united with Him and with one another. The footwashing shows that the disciples are to protect and preserve one another; that belongs to the office of the apostle, which stands under the promise that "in ihrer Sendung Jesus selbst und in ihm Gott zu den Menschen kommt" (13:20).²²

²¹Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 284.

²²Grundmann, p. 67.

The disciples must be filled with the love with which Jesus loves them. To love is to serve. Jesus bows in love to serve His disciples. But He is not merely an *ὑπόδειγμα* for imitation; rather, the reception of His service involves the disciple in a new possibility of fellowship with his fellow man. Because He really lives His life in the disciple, therefore, the disciple can do as He does (13:15) and love as He loves (13:34; 15:12).²³

To demonstrate to the disciples that they should not think themselves too important to perform the acts of service which He performs, He gives them a rule to regulate their manner of behavior (13:16). "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master" is St. Matthew's account (St. Matthew 10:24). St. John parallels the latter contrast, and adds, "nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him" (13:16). Jesus' declaration, introduced with the solemn *ἀμὲν ἀμὲν*,²⁴ speaks directly of discipleship and apostleship. A disciple is not greater than his Lord, for only because of the Lord is there a disciple. Moreover, a disciple, who is sent by his Lord, is not greater than the Lord who sent him.

²³Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (Revised and unabridged edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 344.

²⁴Schlier says: "Thus in the *ἀμὲν* preceding the *λέγω ὑμῖν* of Jesus we have the whole of Christology in nuce. The one who accepts His word as true and certain is also the one who acknowledges and affirms it in his own life and thus causes it, as fulfilled by him, to become a demand to others." Heinrich Schlier, "*ἀμὲν*," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964), I, 338.

The meaning is clear. The disciples are not to expect better treatment than their Lord receives, nor are they to think so highly of themselves as to not do the works of service which the Lord does.²⁵ Blessed is the disciple who, knowing the lessons of the footwashing, does them (13:17). Jesus' example to the disciples requires action. In effect He tells them, "Go and do likewise" (St. Luke 10:37), and God will give you blessing.

At this point the discussion of the significance of the footwashing is interrupted, and there is an oscillation of thought between the community of disciples, united in the love of Jesus, and the traitor. What Jesus says about the footwashing and the relationship of the disciples to Himself and to one another does not apply to Judas. Jesus loves His own completely and totally and to the end. Judas, however, denies both Jesus' love for the disciple and the love the disciple is to have for the disciple. Judas not only fails to serve the disciples; he does disservice to them. He betrays Jesus and deals irresponsibly with his fellow disciples. Even in the face of this treachery, however, Jesus knows whom He has chosen. He chose all His disciples: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you" (15:16; confer 13:18). The disciples cannot get away from their calling. By their calling they stand in opposition with the world, and they must deny their own will. This

²⁵Barrett, p. 370.

brings with it the possibility that they might fall. Beside their certainty there is uncertainty, beside their faith there is fear. Jesus opposes the idea that entrance into the circle of discipleship guarantees per se the salvation of the disciple. Not every branch on the vine bears fruit. Even though Jesus gives this warning, yet He does not expect that it will weaken His union with them, or will cool their love. For Jesus the first will is to do God's will, and the love of God is His first commandment. Every disciple, therefore, understands that Jesus will reject him when he breaks God's will, because Jesus does not, for the sake of men, deny the Father who sent Him, and does not obey the sinful desires of the disciples. By this His love for the disciples is not diminished but completed. A disciple may fall, but this does not make the conversion of the disciples doubtful or their union with Jesus worthless. God's genuine grace calls them; they are firmly and effectually united with Him.²⁶

Already in 6:70 Jesus prophesies His betrayal at the hands of one of the disciples; His own word is now being fulfilled. Jesus sees in His betrayal the fulfillment of the Psalmist's words: "He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me" (13:18).²⁷ God thus executes His hard, death-dealing justice in Jesus' own

²⁶Schlatter, Geschichte, pp. 319-320.

²⁷The quotation comes from Psalm 41:9. The Psalmist was in trouble, but the Lord delivers him. He especially laments, in verse nine, that even his so-called friends turn against him in his trouble and use the occasion for malice against him.

circle, not only by the fact that Israel separates itself from Him and that many of His hearers no longer hear His word, but by the fact that He, Jesus, must give up one of these whom He has chosen as having fallen prey to Satan.

Jesus interjects these words about the traitor, even though at present the disciples do not understand them, in order that when the betrayal does happen they might believe that He is the One, the Messiah, the Son of God, sent from the Father (13:19). The disciples will remember these words later, under the influence of the Spirit (14:26), and then they will become an occasion for faith.

Now Jesus returns to comment on the intimate union which exists between Him and His faithful disciples. Men do truly meet God in the person of Jesus: "He who receives any one whom I send receives me; and he who receives me receives him who sent me" (13:20). The greatness of the office of the disciple consists in this, that they bring men into a union with Jesus by which they are united with God. The commission of the disciples is parallel to the commission of Jesus. In both the work of the disciples and the work of Jesus the world is confronted by God Himself. The work of Jesus is an extension of the work of the Father (5:19), and to see Him is to see the Father (1:18; 14:9); the disciples in turn will do greater works than Jesus (14:12),²⁸ and their mutual love

²⁸Cf. chapter three of thesis under 14:12 for an explanation of "greater works."

will reveal the unity of the Father and the Son (13:35; 15:9-10).

Basically, then, Jesus assigns a twofold significance to the act of washing the disciples' feet. In the first place, it signifies union with Jesus (this is the explicit theme), and secondly, this union of the disciples with Jesus involves likewise a communion of the disciples with one another. The disciples are marked by the fact that they are chosen out of the world, are separate from all wickedness, and have been brought to a pure and perfect love. They cannot satisfy the demands of their calling by a particular singular function,²⁹ such as washing one another's feet, but they can fulfill these demands only by acting in love. With this love they have union with Jesus, and with this love they perform their peculiar service.³⁰

Following the act of washing the disciples' feet and giving them

²⁹The early church could not agree on the sequence of events in the upper room. Did the washing take place before or after the breaking of bread? The Before-group gave a sacramental interpretation to the footwashing. The After-group viewed the event as an additional act of love and humility; thus it was no sacrament. Nowhere, however, did it become a general, public, solemn, churchly act. Some still perform the act today. It did not become a sacrament in the universal church. Cf. Ernest H. Kantorowicz, "The Baptism of the Apostles," Dumbarton Oaks Papers, edited by The Committee on Publications of The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, c.1956), Numbers Nine and Ten, 203-251.

³⁰Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 324.

the subsequent lessons for their discipleship, Jesus once more comes back to the unfaithful disciple (13:21). Jesus' previous act of complete sacrifice is now followed by an act of righteous judgment. He speaks as a prophet, which He is. He foretells His betrayal. The disciples are in doubt, however, as to what will ensue; they do not know the betrayer. Peter is bold and asks what probably is also on John's mind: Who is it of whom He speaks?³¹ Jesus answers by making a last appeal in love to Judas. He loves Judas, too, *εἰς τέλος*. Judas is still in the company of disciples, having fellowship at table with Jesus; however, Judas refuses this last appeal of Jesus to him, and instead, follows Satan completely. At the table Judas has the greatest honor of the disciples offered to him. Jesus offers him the dipped morsel first (13:26); this is Jesus' last appeal.³² Judas rejects Jesus' love for him. He is still free to accept it, but "after the morsel, Satan entered into him" (13:27), and he is no longer free. In essence the betrayer's work is already begun, and so Jesus says, "What you are going to do, do quickly" (13:27). Judas

³¹Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 286.

³²William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955); p. 218.

is now removed from the presence of Jesus.³³ Humanly speaking, the cross is now inevitable; events will lead to it.

The disciples are in consternation at what Jesus says to Judas (13:28-29), but they need to account for the action of Judas' leaving. Some think he goes out to buy food for the feast, and others think he goes to give something to the poor in accordance with Passover custom. The disciples do not understand what Jesus says to Judas.

Judas leaves; "and it was night" (13:30). Judas is now completely in the power of Satan.³⁴ He leaves immediately at the word of Jesus. The darkness of the night closes in on Judas.

³³Some may think that Jesus' election was wrong in choosing Judas. Schlatter explains that even here God's righteousness is executed. The will of man is confirmed both for good and for evil; both belief and unbelief get what they desire. Jesus acts in the certainty of the execution of divine justice. Judas never hears an abusive word from Jesus. The norms which determine Jesus' call to repentance, the norms which obligate Him to honor man in his moral freedom even when man goes against Him, these norms Jesus carries through. Even though Judas defies Jesus' former call, and even though Jesus sees that the grace which He gave Judas is overcome by the power of evil, yet Jesus hallows God's right and pronounces over the disciple the woe which He also pronounces over Israel. Jesus does not break association with Judas until the end. He does not judge the desire but the completed work. Cf. Schlatter, Geschichte, pp. 390-391. Cf. also Gottlob Schrenk, "ἐκλέγοντα," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, [1942]), IV, 177-179.

³⁴A rabbi said that no one commits a sin unless the spirit of infatuation has entered into him. Cf. Strack and Billerbeck, II, 559. Satan having entered into Judas' heart, he now is inspired with a foolish passion.

St. John's statement, however, seems more than merely an historical account.³⁵ Not only is Judas in darkness; it is in him. Judas is one who loves darkness rather than light, for his works are evil (3:18-19). The night which brings work to an end comes for Jesus: "We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work" (9:4). It is night for Judas as he moves to the door and opens it and walks from the lighted room to the darkness outside. There is darkness in the soul of Judas; his heart is turned from the Lord; he rejects the Light. Judas goes of his own will from that light into that darkness, from the presence of the Light of the world into the outer darkness (12:35). The time is dark and dismal, and this is the back-drop to the great event yet to come. Light will appear in this darkness (1:5), in His resurrection.

On the last night Jesus washes His disciples' feet. Jesus' act gives to the disciples a share in what the Father has given to Him, and takes them into fellowship with Himself. As an act of love, Jesus' act cleanses His disciples. Jesus' act, itself coming out of His love, fulfilled in His life sacrifice, is a part of His service whose fulfillment is in the sacrifice of His life. He administers the fruit of His going to the Father. His act obligates His disciples to a similar love and to a similar

³⁵Barrett, p. 374.

service. The disciple who turns from this act of Jesus is cut off from His communion.³⁶

Jesus prepares His disciples for their discipleship by giving them an example. Jesus loves His disciples whom He has called out of the world to be His in the world. Jesus shows His love for the disciples in His service of washing the disciples' feet. He cleanses His disciples through His love, and charges them to carry on this love among themselves. Through the love of Jesus for His disciples they are united together with Him in a perfect bond, and through their love for their fellowmen they bring these men into union with Jesus. Jesus' only "lost love" is Judas. Judas breaks from the bond of love with Jesus and the disciples. He chooses not to go the way of discipleship. Love is the only way for the disciples to carry out their task of discipleship. Jesus prepares them by giving an example of His love for them and how it effects them. Through example the commission of the disciples is spelled out. In surrendering their wills, in surrendering their lives, in giving love to God and in giving love to one another, they begin their discipleship.

³⁶Grundmann, p. 68.

CHAPTER III

PREPARATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH INSTRUCTION: THE FAREWELL DISCOURSES, ST. JOHN 13:31-16:33

The Glorification of the Father and the Son

In the Gospel according to St. John the farewell words of Jesus¹ are devoted exclusively to His central interest. They are concerned only with the question of salvation, a question which is raised with deepened seriousness for the disciples by Jesus' departure. In His last words and instruction to the disciples Jesus shows them how they may enjoy His good pleasure and preserve their communion with Him. By His death He is not set off on a course different from that in which His association with them moved up to this time. He is still their Lord and Teacher. They perform their service by remaining His disciples and by preserving what He has given them. He does not in His last words give His disciples a collection of church laws. He does not give them any instruction

¹Concerning the literary structure of the discourses, Clarkson suggests the combination of several original accounts by a creative writer into the present engrossing form. Mary E. Clarkson, "Underneath the Last Discourse," Anglican Theological Review, XXXIII (January 1951), 12-17. On the other hand, Harrison maintains the historicity of the Johannine discourses. He views the discourses as reliable, objective reporting on the part of St. John. Everett F. Harrison, "The Discourses of the Fourth Gospel," Bibliotheca Sacra, CXVII (January 1960), 23-31. Cf. also A. J. B. Higgins, The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel (London: Lutterworth Press, c.1960), p. 67, who maintains that the discourses may validly be considered a historical fact.

in evangelization and the arrangements of the church. The whole attention of the disciple, however, is directed to those inner processes by which the disciples receive their inward communion with Jesus and contact with Him. This does not mean that theirs is to be a self-centered piety; the thought of their obligation to serve dominates all the sayings. But the disciples have no special service to perform besides their service as disciples of Christ, and they receive no office that is separable from their person. Their Christian state and their task in the world are completely united and completely coincide. If only the disciple remains united with Jesus, then he is sufficient for his calling.²

At the beginning of the farewell discourses Jesus interprets His impending death for His disciples. For the disciples His death is not to be defeat, but the glorification of the Father through the Son and the glorification of the Son. Thus His death becomes the basis and presupposition of the disciples' ministry. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and in him God is glorified" (13:31).³ This is what the forthcoming event means for Jesus. The Son of

²A. Schlatter, Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), pp. 452-453.

³All chapter and verse references without mention of a specific book of The Holy Bible are from the Gospel according to St. John. All quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

Man⁴ will be glorified, and God will be glorified.

The expression of mutual glorification at the beginning of the farewell discourses (13:31) points forward to the explication of the Father-Son relationship in 17:1-5. In both cases the reference is to the forthcoming event of His Passion. The Son glorifies the Father through His obedience, obedience even to death.⁵ This point becomes clear at the end of the discourse in 14:30-31: "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; but I do as the Father has commanded me, so

⁴The term "Son of man" appears less frequently in the Gospel according to St. John than in the synoptic gospels. It appears only before His Passion, the last occurrence being in 13:31. The term is heavily laden with Christological import. Dividing the "Son of man" passages in the Fourth Gospel into sayings of present authority, passion predictions, and futuristic sayings, the result is that the futuristic Son of man is almost totally absent. The Gospel according to St. John concentrates on the present and suffering aspects of the Son of man. One new note is St. John's emphasis on the Son of man as Revealer. In the synoptic gospels the Son of man sayings occur mostly after Caesarea Philippi. In St. John's Gospel the Son of man appears already in the first chapter. There is no Messianic hiddenness in St. John. In the call of the first disciples nearly all the titles of Jesus in the synoptic gospels are brought in: Lamb of God (1:29), Rabbi (1:38), Messiah (1:41), Christ (1:41), Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph (1:45), Son of God (1:49), King of Israel (1:49), and Son of man (1:51). Jesus claims from the very beginning of this Gospel to be the absolutely unique Teacher, Revealer, Rabbi, Messiah, Son of God, and King. Nearly all the Son of man passages in the Fourth Gospel emphasize the exaltation of the Son of man (1:51; 3:13-14; 6:27,53; 12:23; 13:31). This does not exclude a reference to His Passion, for in Johannine usage *ὑψωθῆναι* means "to be raised up on the cross" and "to be raised up (exalted) to God." Cf. Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, translated by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (London: SCM Press, Ltd., c.1963), pp. 182-187. Cf. also Ernest Cadman Colwell and Eric Lane Titus, The Gospel of the Spirit: A Study in the Fourth Gospel (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1953), pp. 164-171.

⁵A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt. (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 287.

that the world may know that I love the Father." Jesus does the will of the Father out of love for Him. He gives the life which God demands of Him, and He suffers the sorrow and shame which accompanies the giving of that life. Because Jesus places the will of the Father above life and honor, and because He could not divorce Himself from the Father, the Father is glorified. The Son demonstrates that He does not place Himself above the Father. Through this the prince of this world is defeated. The battle between God and the Other impends, but the battle is already basically decided. The prince of the world has no power over Jesus; he has no right or claim on Jesus and cannot have Him, since Jesus is not of this world (8:23). He is totally and absolutely under the full order and command of the will of the Father. He demonstrates to the world what love for God and obedience to God really mean.

At the same time, and just in this way, the Son is glorified. Jesus is glorified because He has unbroken union with the Father. Jesus is and remains a Son and does not lose His Sonship. This is revealed in His resurrection. Barrett says:

God was glorified in Jesus' temporal act of self-consecration; Jesus is glorified in the eternal essence of God the Father, which, in a sense, he re-enters at the resurrection and ascension.⁶

⁶C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John (London: SPCK, c.1958), p. 376.

God does not give Jesus up at the resurrection, but rather He calls Him home to Himself and thereby vindicates Him before the eyes of the disciples (16:10). The unbroken communion of love between the Father and the Son is the power which makes possible the glorification of the Father through the Son and brings about the glorification of the Son by the Father. Thus Jesus prays: "Glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee" (17:1). The glorification of the Father through the Son and the glorification of the Son by the Father are entwined. As the Son glorifies the Father on earth and thereby completes His work (17:4), He does what Israel should have done and did not do (Isaiah 49:3). The Father glorifies the Son in that He takes Him to Himself in His eternal glory from which He was sent forth (17:5).

The Ministry of the Disciples

The glorification of the Father through the Son and of the Son by the Father is not a glory far removed from the disciples, a remote and abstract theological concept which does not touch them and is only for instruction. The glorification of both the Father and the Son affects the disciples profoundly. The glorification of the Father and the Son is a turning point in history, a turning point in the history of Jesus and a turning point in the life of the disciples. The hour of His departure from them is the hour of His going to the Father. Jesus' departure means that His ministry is complete, but His going to the Father means at the same time that the disciples' ministry begins. By His going to the Father Jesus binds the disciples

to the Father, and they can now begin their ministry united with the Father and the Son.⁷ Jesus' glorification and the glorification of the Father, then, is the basis for their efficacious ministry, as the following verses (13:33-34) make clear. They carry on the work of the Father through the Son who sends them and equips them for their ministry.

The Way of Love and the Commandment of Love

First of all, Jesus equips His disciples for their ministry by going the way of love for them, alone, and thus establishing the commandment of love: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you, 'Where I am going you cannot come'" (13:33). Jesus plainly is looking forward to His departure in death.⁸ But the disciples cannot yet share in the departure of Jesus; they remain in this world (confer 17:11). Jesus must fulfill the scriptures, however, and die the death by which God claims Him to be His own. Now He is with His disciples, but when that hour comes, then the disciples will seek Him; they cannot go where He is going. This could be a terrible situation for His disciples. Their Master gone, they would be left without mission or direction. They would be floundering

⁷Cf. George B. Caird, "The Will of God," The Expository Times, LXXII (January 1961), 116-117, for an exposition which clearly shows the Cross as the point at which Jesus unites Himself with the disciples and the disciples with the Father.

⁸Barrett, p. 376.

disciples of a God-Man completely separated from them. Left on their own they would be nothing but unfruitful branches. Such is not to be their lot. They have a part in His glory, the glory of the Son of God. But they cannot die with Him or for Him; they cannot walk the way of love for which God sent Jesus. This way Jesus must go alone.⁹ Despised and rejected of all men, Jesus surrenders to the will of the Father and completes His mission on earth. He goes the way of love alone. Even His disciples will desert Him (16:32). But the effects of that cross touch the disciples. God's love through Jesus becomes a model and a source of power for the disciples. A new commandment springs from Jesus' act in accordance with the will of the Father. Jesus' obedience to the Father's will becomes a direction for the life of the disciples. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (13:34). Because the life of Jesus is the basis of this commandment and its fulfillment, the disciples remain bound to the service of Jesus. The past and the future of the disciple is bound together. The future ministry of the disciple derives its meaning from the past, namely, Jesus' work of redemption; and the past has its meaning in the future, namely, in the ministry of the disciples.¹⁰

⁹Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 290.

¹⁰Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, edited by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (11. durchgesehene Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1950), p. 404.

Jesus gives "a new commandment" to His disciples. The newness is in the depth of meaning that love receives from what Jesus is and from the manifestation of His love toward His disciples described as loving them *εἰς τέλος* (13:1) and in laying down His life on their behalf. Bultmann says that the commandment is new not because it is a new principle or ideal, or because of its relative newness in the history of the Spirit, or because of its point of time in history; rather, "'Neu' ist das in der empfangenen Liebe des Offenbarers begründete Liebesgebot als ein Phänomen der neuen Welt, die Jesus heraufgeführt hat."¹¹ If there is no new commandment here, then there is no new grace. Out of the new grace of the new union there necessarily comes a new commandment. Schlatter explains:

Er heisst das ein neues Gebot, das ihnen niemand geben konnte als er. Durch ihn ist für die Jünger alles neu geworden, sowohl ihr Anteil an Gott als ihre Verbundenheit miteinander. Neu ist für sie ihre Versetzung in Gottes Gnade, neu darum auch das Gebot, das ihnen jetzt kundtut, worin ihr Dienst Gottes bestehen musz. Neu ist auch ihre Gemeinschaft miteinander. Sie ist durch Jesus geschaffen. Auf seiner Gnade beruht ihre Liebe, auf seinem Vergeben ihre Geduld, auf seinem Wort ihre Eintracht im Denken und Handeln, auf seiner Verheissung ihre Hoffnung füreinander. Auch er selbst hat ihnen sein Gebot bisher noch nicht in dieser Weise gegeben, sondern gibt es ihnen erst jetzt neu. Die Stellung und Aufgabe der Jünger wurde ja durch seinen Weggang völlig neu.¹²

¹¹Ibid., pp. 404-405.

¹²A. Schlatter, Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Zweite durchgesehene Auflage; Calw: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1918), I, 760.

There comes in Jesus a new Temple (2:19) and a new Israel (1:49), and so there also comes a new commandment. It comes now, at the end of Jesus' ministry, not at the beginning. "Er begann nicht als der Gebietende, sondern als der Gebende."¹³ Now Jesus gives His commandment so that men may serve men, and disciple may serve disciple.

The disciples are to love one another just as He has loved them (13:34). Jesus draws His disciples together in order that they may love and serve one another. The mutual love of Christian disciples is different from any other; it is based upon and reveals the mutual love of the Father and the Son (13:34; 15:12). It is essential to the life of discipleship that every disciple love the other disciple, and in so far as a disciple fails to do so he fails to reproduce the divine life which should inspire him and should be shown to the world through him. Schlatter comments:

Darum ist die wechselseitige Liebe der Jünger das Zeichen, in dem Jesus erkannt, das Mittel, durch das sein Sinn und Wille offenbart und der Welt wirksam verkündigt wird, die ganze und einzige Amtspflicht der Apostel, die alles übrige regiert und gestaltet, was sie tun und lassen, und ebenso die ganze und einzige Amtspflicht der Christenheit.¹⁴

Jesus binds together His disciples and thus builds the fellowship.

And the commandment of love is based on the conduct of Jesus:

¹³Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 289.

¹⁴Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 761.

"just as I love you" (13:34). The new commandment of love is a way of life for the disciples, a life motivated by His love: "We love, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). The death of Jesus is the ultimate standard and source of the love of disciples (13:34; 15:12).

Love among the disciples is, for the rest of the world, the proof of discipleship.¹⁵ If others in this world see this phenomenon of love between disciples, then the possibility exists that the world may react. With that possibility lies the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer in 17:21,23.¹⁶ Union with Jesus depends on discipleship, on obedience to the commandment of love.¹⁷ However, to be a disciple not only means obedience, but there is also honor in being a disciple. The command to love is at the same time a promise of love. The love here is love of disciple for disciple. Not common love of man for man, not love for neighbor or love for enemy, but it is love inside the circle of disciples. The departed Jesus actually remains with His own; He does so by the presence of His love in the disciples who live in mutual love.

The Evangelist of the Fourth Gospel portrays Peter as misunderstanding Jesus' role (13:36-38). Peter does not want Jesus to lower Himself to the service of a slave in the footwashing, and here he

¹⁵Barrett, p. 377.

¹⁶Bultmann, p. 405.

¹⁷Ibid.

does not want Jesus to separate Himself from them. Peter does not understand that Jesus' departure to the Father is so necessary. And yet, behind Peter's question there still remains the readiness of the disciples to follow. To follow is the basic requirement of one who would be a disciple of Jesus, and to follow Jesus must mean in the end to follow Him both to death and to glory. But to follow Jesus is not a heroic act (13:37-38).¹⁸ If one misunderstands following Jesus as a heroic act, the world will quickly become master over him. Following Jesus is not a human possibility, waiting only upon a human decision. It can take place only in a future guaranteed by the Spirit. Peter's intentions of laying down his life for Jesus are excellent, but he remains in the world of ignorance and unbelief and impatience. Peter's appointed hour is not yet come. In his own strength and his own time he cannot do what he now impetuously promises.¹⁹ Jesus, therefore, explains by saying that the disciple cannot follow now, but will follow later (13:36).

In view of the forthcoming event, the event of Jesus' Passion, Jesus now turns to the fear of the disciples, fear of what His departure means for them and their future (14:1). Jesus calls them

¹⁸Ibid., p. 460.

¹⁹Edwyn Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), p. 452.

to faith in God and in Himself;²⁰ to God whose work Jesus performs, to Jesus who still remains the Son of the Father and fulfills His work. Jesus is about to leave the disciples, but they must not be afraid. The separation is a temporary one and ultimately for their benefit. For the first time in the discourses the disciples are called to faith in God, and it is through Jesus' departure to the Father that the disciples are bound together in union with the Father, with whom Jesus Himself is bound and united.

Jesus here reveals Himself as the way to the Father for the disciples, and shows them that His commission involves preparation of an abode for His disciples in the house of the Father (14:2). His way is not the way into Hades, the abode of the dead, but His way is the way into the house of the Father. The result of Jesus' going to the Father for His disciples is that He prepares an abode for them, for He will take them to Himself (14:3). His abandonment of His disciples is only provisional; Jesus will come and fetch them. Even as the earthly temple of God's people in the Old Testament

²⁰The second part of this verse is variously understood, with diverse grammatical interpretations. Westcott summarizes four possible interpretations as: (1) You believe in God, you believe also in me, (2) You believe in God, believe also in me, (3) Believe in God, and you believe in me, and (4) Believe in God and believe in me. He suggests that the double imperative best suits the context. It seems that since *ἰσχυροτέρως* is an imperative this might suggest that the later verbs also be imperatives. Nearly all the old Latin versions and many of the early Fathers interpret it so. Brooke Foss Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), I, 166-167. Cf. Barrett, pp. 380-381, and Hoskyns, p. 453.

included many chambers in its court (1 Kings 6:5,6,10; Ezekiel 41:6), so the heavenly is to be conceived of as far as earthly figures can symbolize that which is spiritual. There is room enough for all. The disciples need not fear that they will find no shelter, as they will find no shelter among men (16:1-2), for they will find it amply with the Father. Jesus is the Way to this union with the Father. Westcott says: "Christ by His death and resurrection opened heaven, and by the elevation of His humanity thus made ready a place for men."²¹

Jesus is speaking of His parousia when He says that He goes to prepare a place (14:3). It is not that the disciples, when they die, come to Jesus; Jesus comes again to His disciples.²² They will abide with Him in union with the Father. The promise is sure; He will take the disciples to Himself (14:3). Along with this promise is the promise in 16:16,22 that they will see Him and He will see them. The promise of the heavenly dwellings and of being where He is, is something more than the promise of joy, into which the sorrow of the disciple is turned (16:20). It is a promise of seeing or having a view in the world to come. The departure of Jesus is itself the condition of the fulfillment of this promise. The separation of Jesus from His disciples is the first step toward a complete union with them.

²¹Westcott, I, 168.

²²Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 293.

The promise is only to those, however, who believe that Jesus is from the Father and is going to the Father, for only such a faith knows the way: "And you know the way where I am going" (14:4). The coming of the Son to the Father opens the way to the Father for the disciples. The meaning of the Passion for the disciples is, in a sense, the same as its meaning for Jesus Himself. By His Passion Jesus glorifies the Father, and He is glorified, and also by His Passion the disciples are given a part in that glory, for as they believe so they know and follow the way of the Son to the Father.

Thomas does not understand this, and he reiterates the position or question of the Jews (14:15; confer 7:35-36; 8:22), without the Jews' mockery, however. Jesus answers him with a new *ἐγώ εἰμι* saying in which He manifests Himself as the Way to the Father because He is the Truth and the Life (14:6). When the Jews wonder about the destruction of their temple, Jesus says that He is the temple. When the Samaritan woman asks for water, Jesus says He is the water. When the Galileans ask for a sign comparable to manna from heaven, Jesus replies that He is the living bread. When Martha affirms her belief in a future resurrection, Jesus says, "I am the resurrection" (11:25). Now Jesus answers Thomas' question about the way by saying, "I am the way" (14:6). He is the Way²³ because it is only

²³ *πλῆθος* and *ὁδός* are the Old Testament terms for "way." The true and false *πλῆθος* is contrasted in Psalm 119:15, 101, 104, 128. In Deuteronomy 26:17 *ὁδός* refers to God's commandments as "his ways." The ways of the righteous and sinners are contrasted in Psalm 1:6. God's will is called "the way" in Psalm 25:4, 9, 12; 27:11. The teaching of "the two ways," set forth in Deuteronomy 11:26-28, is elaborated by

through Him that man can come to the Father; He is the Truth²⁴ because in Him, the Son, is the Father and through Him the Father is made known. Jesus purely reveals Himself here. He is the Way to God, and as seems implicit in the $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\dot{\iota}\mu\epsilon\iota$ and in the "no one can come to the Father except through me" (14:6), He is the only Way. Jesus

Jeremiah (21:8) as the way of life and the way of death. Jesus, in the Gospel according to St. Matthew 7:13-14, contrasts the "way" leading to life and the "way" leading to death. Here Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. George Allen Turner and Julius R. Mantey, The Gospel According to John, in The Evangelical Commentary on the Bible, edited by George Allen Turner, et al. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmann's Publishing Company, n.d.), IV, 283.

²⁴The Septuagint translates $\aleph\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ as $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$. In the Old Testament $\aleph\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ refers to the right speech (Deuteronomy 22:20; 13:17; 17:4). The kinship between truth and $\epsilon\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is at once apparent. In the Old Testament truth often means the right way, the way of God (Psalm 25:5,10; 43:3). Truth is also personified as in Psalm 85:11, $\epsilon\psi\alpha\lambda\mu\acute{o}\varsigma\ \aleph\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\eta$ (as in Proverbs 14:22; 20:28; Hosea 4:1) and with righteousness (Zechariah 8:8). In St. John 1:14 and 17 truth is linked with $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ and in 4:23; 16:13; 14:17; 15:26; 1 John 4:6; 5:6 with Spirit. In St. John 1:17 the truth is mediated through Jesus Christ, and here Jesus is the truth. Truth thus becomes incarnate in Christ. Both John and Jesus bear witness to the truth (5:33; 8:45; 16:7), and this truth emancipates (8:32). The believer who is acquainted with Jesus, by virtue of this fact, knows the truth (8:44) and is, in fact, of the truth (18:37). All this is beyond the scope of a worldly man like Pilate (18:38). Truth is equated with God's Word which sanctifies (17:17; 15:3). Thus in Jesus, the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ of God and the Truth of God merge. Cf. Turner and Mantey, IV, 283-285.

Truth is not a perceived reality, but an encountered reality. In Jesus Truth comes among men; grace and truth come into history. He is an encountered reality laying claim on men's lives. His truth is a redemptive laying-hold-of, freeing man from sin. Martin Franzmann, "Truth According to the New Testament," lecture to Pastoral Conference at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, dated November 13, 1961 (Tape Recording Library, St. Louis, Missouri).

is not the way in that He mediates the way, or in that He is the means through which one sees a vision of God. But He is the Way because He is the goal or object, for He is "the truth and the life" (14:6). Franzmann says:

He is the Way to God, and Life in God, because He is the Truth. He is the disclosed reality of God; He is the encountered reality of God. That reality is grace; it opens the way to God; it is life, for the Father has life in Himself and has given His Son to have life in Himself (John 5:24ff.).²⁵

Jesus is the Life,²⁶ and He gives life to the disciples. All three concepts are tied together by the *ἐγώ*.²⁷ As Jesus is the Way, in the same way He is the goal; as He is the goal, in the same way He

²⁵Franzmann, "Truth According to the New Testament."

²⁶St. John built on the Jewish concept of life inherited from the Old Testament. This concept is that of physical life and well-being, except in Daniel 12:2 where the term "eternal life" occurs. But more, life is the sum of the ways by which man realizes his destiny of the image of God. Only God possesses life in its fulness. One of the greatest blessings in the Old Testament is the power by which life is maintained and augmented. The result of the blessing is *חַיִּים*. In the New Testament three words are used: *Bios*, *ζωή*, *ψυχή*. *Bios* is the conduct of life, and *ζωή* is the human existence. The latter connotes all that is highest and best in the association of the saints with God (e.g. St. Matthew 7:14; Romans 5:17; Ephesians 4:18). This term is usually associated by contrast with death. Jesus as the *ζωή*, gives life *ἐκ τοῦ ὄκοῦ*, life which is His victory over death in the resurrection. Cf. O. A. Piper, "Life," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Arthur Buttrick, et al. (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1962), III, 124-130.

²⁷Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium und bei Luther Betrachtungen und Texte, Schriften der Luther-Agricola Gesellschaft in Finnland (Helsinki: Akateeminen Kirjakauppa, 1944), p. 84.

is the Way. Thomas could ask for no further guarantee. He could only hear again the reply of Jesus: "I am coming again and I will take you to be with me" (14:3). Jesus is the Way through whom, as the Truth, one receives the knowledge of God and in whom, as the Life, one has here and now eternal life. The goal of Jesus is the knowledge of the Father, and this knowledge comes only through knowing Jesus.²⁸

Jesus thus is the Revealer, for it is only through Him that the Father is present (14:7). The disciples know Jesus and so they would also know the Father. Philip asks for a theophany (14:8). He does not see that in Jesus a theophany has already taken place. Jesus tells him that when man confronts Him, Jesus, he is really confronting God (14:10), and that He and the Father are one. Jesus' words manifest the works of the Father. For the words of Jesus are God's word, and His work is God's work.²⁹ Men ought to believe what Jesus says. If they refuse to be convinced on these terms they should consider His *ἔργα* (14:11).³⁰ Jesus appeals to His works

²⁸Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 294.

²⁹Ibid., p. 295.

³⁰In the Gospel according to St. John *ἔργον* most commonly means a deed or work which the Father works in and through Jesus (5:20,36; 7:3,21; 9:3-4; 10:25,32,37,38; 14:10,11,12; 15:24). Jesus obediently works out the Father's will and purpose, and the works of Jesus tell who He really is. Cf. Georg Bertram, "*ἔργον*," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964), II, 642.

as a ground for faith; His ministry by itself manifests and reveals God. And this ministry does not terminate with Jesus' departure, for the disciples will do the same works (14:12). The disciples, who are united with Him and with one another, act as His representatives in the world. The works of the disciples are not limited; in fact, they will do "greater works" than Jesus because He goes to the Father. The works of the Father, which have their beginning in the works of Jesus, will prove His power even more in the works of the disciples.³¹ Their works will be more extensive and more diversified (confer Acts 2).³²

So the disciples have a part and a share in Jesus' glorification. He equips them for their ministry; in fact, their ministry can only come about because Jesus departs and goes to the Father; then they will do the "greater works." He equips them for their ministry by going the way of love for them, alone. But by His going the road of love, He establishes the way of love for His disciples. This is their distinguishing mark--love.

The Privilege of Prayer

In the second place, Jesus equips the disciples for their ministry by bestowing on them the privilege of prayer in His name:

³¹Bultmann, p. 471.

³²Cf. Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 766, and Evangelist, p. 295.

"Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (14:13-14; confer 16:23). Jesus grants the disciples their petitions, petitions which are in accordance with His character and will,³³ and so the Father is glorified in the Son. Because Jesus grants to the disciples their petition or request, He is saying that in the works of the disciples His revelatory work is accomplished. In 15:16 it is also shown that the disciples are given the honor of prayer in His name: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you." Jesus calls the disciple to be His own; His initiative makes the disciple. Jesus accomplishes His revelation of the Father through His disciples whom He has chosen. They are not alone, as He was alone, but He is always with them. They always have Him to come to, and in the best way possible, the way of prayer. They have the promise that their prayers will be heard and answered. The Father is glorified in Jesus' answering the prayers of the disciples; the Father acts in and through the Son. This promise, that they have the privilege of prayer in His name, is certain. Jesus repeats the promise. The disciples are equipped for their ministry in the best possible way, equipped with access to the Father through the Son, equipped with

³³A. M. Hunter, The Gospel According to John (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1965), p. 143, thus describes the meaning of "in my name."

the privilege of prayer, equipped with the promise that it will be heard and answered.

The Bondage of the Word

In the third place, Jesus equips the disciples for their ministry by binding them to His word. The freedom of the disciples is not freedom to follow their own whims and ways, not freedom for private proclamation. The disciples are bound in order to be free. They are enslaved to be liberated. Their bondage comes from Jesus' love; their freedom comes from Jesus' love. The commandment is this: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (14:15). To keep His commandments is equal to keeping His words, since they both mean to believe.³⁴

The relationship between Jesus and His disciples is maintained by the disciples' keeping of His commandments. Obedience is the necessary consequence of love; obedience is the sign of the presence of love. Therefore "he who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (14:21). The love of God is not conditional upon man's obedience; rather, in spite of man's disobedience God still loves man. When the disciples love one another they will appear to men as members of the divine family; their love for Jesus, and union with Him, means that the Father loves them in Him. Jesus' love for

³⁴Bultmann, p. 474.

the disciples is declared in His self-manifestation. The disciples' love for Jesus, won from the disciple by His love for the disciple, wins love from the Father, and loving self-manifestation from Jesus (14:23). A disciple cannot keep His word, cannot meet the claim of God upon him, unless he truly loves Him. A disciple cannot obey unless he loves, and if he is to love, he must be with Him whom he desires to love. The first requirement is personal union with Jesus. If he loves Jesus, obedience will follow. In 14:24 Jesus speaks the antithesis to this thesis: "He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me." Disobedience to Jesus is in fact disobedience to God. To reject Jesus' word is to reject the Father's word.

The Presence and Power of the Spirit

In the fourth place, Jesus equips the disciples for their ministry by promising them the presence and power of the Spirit:

And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.³⁵

Jesus promises the disciples another Paraclete after He goes to the Father, one who will not leave them and will be given only to them and not to the world. He is "the Spirit of truth" (15:26). Jesus

³⁵St. John 14:16-17.

is the Paraclete for the disciples while He is on earth. Schlatter says:

Wie er selbst der Weg ist, weil er die Wahrheit ist und als das Licht in die Welt kam, so ist auch der Geist deshalb ihr Führer, weil er mit der Wahrheit eins ist und sie innerlich mit ihr durchdringt.³⁶

What the disciples receive from Jesus they need not be without when He goes away. What Jesus is for them the Spirit will be for them--a Paraclete. Jesus leaves the disciples to go to the Father, but He is with them in a never-ending union through the Spirit. The Father sends the Spirit, just as Jesus is sent by the Father. The Spirit unites the disciples with Jesus. The Spirit comes in order that the divine presence may continually be with the disciples.

The power of the Spirit is no magical power, nor is it power which suddenly takes over the disciple. The Spirit is the power of truth for the proclamation of the Word in the disciples.³⁷ Jesus gives His disciples no other power or foundation for their work besides the Truth, and the Spirit communicates that Truth to the disciples.

The fact that the world cannot receive the Spirit (14:17) does not mean that those who are not disciples cannot come to faith, but it points out the distinction between the disciples and the world. The world as the world cannot receive the Spirit; it must change, or give up its ways. The Spirit is not something that one comes to know

³⁶Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 768.

³⁷Bultmann, pp. 475-476.

and then possesses, nor is the Spirit something that one possesses and then comes to know. The possessing and the knowing are simultaneous events because the Spirit is the "how" of the disciples' existence.³⁸ The world, therefore, knows so little about the disciple and discipleship because it does not know the Paraclete. Only the disciple is able to see and know the Paraclete.

The disciple knows the Spirit because the Spirit abides in the disciple (14:17), just as the Father abides in the Son and the Son abides in the Father. The Spirit abides in the disciple just as the Son abides in the disciple and the disciple in the Son. The Spirit's dwelling is in the individual disciple. The Spirit guides the disciple into all truth, for He speaks only what He hears from Jesus (16:13), who is Truth.

Jesus will depart: "Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also" (14:19). In a little span of time Jesus will die and be buried, and the world will see Him no more, but the disciples, to whom He will appear in His risen body, will see Him. Even though Jesus dies, the disciples will see Him because He will be alive, raised from the dead, and they too will be spiritually alive and capable of seeing Him. The Spirit of truth will be in them and with them, witnessing to Jesus, declaring His words to the disciples. They will be alive with Jesus through the Spirit.

³⁸Ibid., p. 477.

The Spirit who comes from God and is known through Jesus is "the Holy Spirit" (14:26). Bultmann explains this expression in saying:

Die Charakterisierung des Parakleten mit dem gemeinchristlichen Terminus als des *ἀγίου πνεύματος* weist wieder darauf hin, dass er die der Gemeinde geschenkte Kraft ist.³⁹

The Holy Spirit comes "in the name"⁴⁰ of the Son just as the prayers of the disciples will be heard "in the name" of Jesus (16:23). The task of the Spirit is to teach and to call to mind (14:26). The witness of the disciples, then, is more than a mere historical report; it is a testimony in which Jesus' own uniquely powerful testimony is renewed. The disciples interpret the true character of Jesus: who He is and what He does; their minds are open to the right understanding of Jesus' words.⁴¹

The disciples are not left alone to carry on their ministry and to fulfill their discipleship. Jesus equips the disciples by promising

³⁹Ibid., p. 484.

⁴⁰Godet explains that Jesus has just said that he who loved Him should be loved of His Father, and that the manifestation, which is the Spirit's work, should come from this love. The disciple's title to this gift will be his love for Jesus, and the motive for the gift on the part of the Father is His love for Jesus, and for him who loves Jesus. This is the meaning of "in my name." F. Godet, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, translated by S. Taylor and M. D. Cusin (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1877), III, 149.

⁴¹Some describe the Spirit's teaching as a function which demonstrates that revelation did not end with Jesus' departure, but that new revelation will come in each coming age. Therefore, the Paraclete receives fresh teaching from Jesus and transmits it to the church. Cf. Bultmann, p. 484. This seems contrary to the meaning of the passage as a whole. Cf. Barrett, p. 391.

them the presence and the power of the Spirit.

The Presence of Jesus and the Father

In the fifth place, Jesus equips the disciples for their ministry by promising them His own and the Father's presence among them: "I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you" (14:18). The disciples are not left without a master. They are not left as orphans, without a father. Jesus knows the sorrow of the disciples as they think of His departure to the Father, and He comforts them by telling them that they will not be left alone and that He will come again to them. Jesus will come to the disciples at all times. This is a positive and an abiding promise. Jesus will come to the disciples after the resurrection, appearing to them numerous times, and He will come continually to them in a spiritual revelation of Himself through the Holy Spirit. It seems appropriate to include also His appearance in glory at the last day.⁴²

Jesus' own words are that He will manifest Himself to the disciples (14:21). He and the Father will come to the disciples and make their home with them (14:23). The disciple does his ministry with the abiding presence of the Father and the Son. The ministry which the disciples carry out "in the name" of their Lord is none other than a ministry in which the Lord Himself supplies them with all that they need. They are equipped sufficiently for their calling by the very

⁴²Barrett, p. 388.

God in whose name they are sent. God Himself works through them to accomplish His love among men. The Son receives the things whereof He speaks from the Father, and the Spirit speaks of the things which He receives from the Son. The disciple, inspired by the Spirit, speaks to men the declarations and proclamation of the Spirit of truth, even God Himself.

The disciples can rejoice even though Jesus is departing and going to the Father (14:28). Only the disciple can rejoice at Jesus' going to the Father, for the disciple loves the Lord. "Die Liebe, die er verlangt, ist der Glaube, der in ihm den Offenbarer sieht."⁴³ Jesus will return to the glory of the Father through death, yet He will come to the disciples and be closer to them than ever. As yet the disciples do not truly understand all that is coming and is happening. They do not fully see that Jesus' departure is to their advantage; they do not really rejoice in His being lifted up to the Father. But Jesus tells them in order that when these things happen, they might believe (14:29). When the time comes, they did believe and they did rejoice (20:20).

Jesus, speaking to the disciples at this point in the farewell discourses, is aware of His humbly obedient role before the Father: "the Father is greater than I" (14:28). As an obedient servant Jesus carries out the task which the Father gives Him in the world, but this humble servant role now is to reach its climax and its end

⁴³Bultmann, pp. 486-487.

in His death. After Jesus' death and resurrection He will share in the glory of the Father. The Father is glorified through the Son, and the Son is glorified by the Father. The Father is glorified because of the Son's obedience, and the Son is glorified because He has unbroken union with the Father. This glory is not confined to the Father and the Son, for the disciples, following Jesus in faith and love, also have a part in the Son's glorification. They carry on the work and the words of the Father through the Son who sends them on the way. They need not be afraid of the awesome task for the Sender Himself cares for them. He equips them for their ministry and task in the world. He equips His disciples by going the way of love for them, alone, and thus establishing the commandment of love. He equips them by bestowing on them the privilege of prayer in His name, by binding them to His word, by promising them the presence and power of the Spirit, and by promising them His own and the Father's presence among them.

Equipped with such power and grace, the disciples can carry on their ministry; they can have peace (14:27). Jesus leaves peace for those remaining behind. It is a novel peace, peace which is not *ἡσυχία* (14:27).⁴⁴ It is peace which brings joy (16:33). "My peace," Jesus says, just as it is His joy which He gives to His own (17:13; 15:11). It is that peace which the world cannot give. In

⁴⁴Paul Bretscher, "The Gospel of John," (Unpublished notes from class given at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, Spring, 1965).

the world the disciple experiences sorrow and tribulation. The world cannot have the peace of the disciple just as it cannot have his joy. The disciple should not strive after the peace of the world, for it is only the peace of death. Not so with Jesus' gift of peace; His peace springs from His union with the Father. The peace of Jesus manifests itself in unbroken union with the Father and maintains itself in continuous strife with the world, in persecution, in humiliation, and in death for the glory of God. His bequest of peace is effectual and actually bestows a permanent possession. "Let not your hearts be troubled" (14:1), Jesus says. His peace dispels fear from the heart. His benediction of peace depends on His return to the Father and His coming to the disciples. His departure, therefore, is a ground for rejoicing rather than sorrow.

United with Jesus in Ministry

United with Jesus as Branches

The disciples are united with Jesus in their ministry as branches are united to the vine. Jesus is *ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή* (15:1), and the disciples are the *κλήματα* of the Vine (15:5). This imagery is used only in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus gets the imagery from the Old Testament. The people of Israel are often referred to as a vine (Isaiah 5:1-7; Hosea 10:1; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezekiel 15:1-8; 19:10-14; Psalm 80:8-19). Jesus, however, uses the imagery to refer to Himself, but with a new meaning. In the Old Testament the metaphor

is used of Israel grown degenerate though her origin is pure and favored. That may explain why Jesus says that He is the *ἡ ἀληθινή* Vine.⁴⁵ Jesus is the genuine or true Vine as opposed to the vine that never fulfilled its divinely-given function. He is the genuine Vine in that He comes from God. True life can only be life with Him. The disciples have true life because they believe that Jesus comes from the Father. The disciples believe that Jesus is "the way and the truth and the life" (14:6), and He truly is. He is the true Vine. Israel of old is called a vine, but the true Vine is not the apostate people. The true Vine is Jesus.⁴⁶ If a vine bears real fruit, then it is a true vine. Thus Israel is not the true vine, for it bears no fruit for God.⁴⁷

Jesus is the genuine Vine;⁴⁸ He alone is the Vine. All that

⁴⁵Vincent Taylor, The Names of Jesus (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962), pp. 104-106.

⁴⁶In demonstrating that the Fourth Gospel cannot be understood without its deep foundation in the Old Testament, Morgan points out that the figure of the vine most adequately expresses the Evangelist's proclamation of the fulfillment. Jesus fulfills the destiny promised to Israel; He is the true Israel, the true Vine. Richard Morgan, "Fulfillment in the Fourth Gospel," Interpretation, XI (April 1957), 161-162.

⁴⁷Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 304.

⁴⁸In Barrett's commentary on the Gospel according to St. John there is a summary of the background of the symbol of the vine. In the Old Testament, as stated above, the image is used to describe Israel, who is degenerate and in danger but favored by God. The same use is found in rabbinic literature. As the vine is the lowest among plants and yet becomes king among plants, so Israel appears lowly in the world, but in the messianic age she will obtain possession of the world from one end to the other. In later Judaism the Messiah and Wisdom are likened to the vine. Philo, in commenting

God proposed to do in and through Israel is now consummated in His person and work. There is none other beside Him who can claim the title. With the vine comes the superabundance of the messianic age. He alone is the living Vine equipping for the production of fruit. He alone is the Vine which enables the branches to remain green and productive, escaping the ominous ax of the gardening Father. Jesus is God's new Israel; He is the genuine One who offers life.⁴⁹

The Father is *ὁ γεωργός* (15:1). The vinedresser does the necessary work for the vine. The vinedresser is spoken of as a definite person. He cares for the vine. The vine is God's vine, for Jesus is the Son of God. The Father, therefore, owns the vine

on Isaiah 5:7, explains that Israel means "seeing God" so that the soul, which houses the mind, which sees God, is "that most holy vineyard which has for its fruit that divine growth, virtue" (De Somniis, II, 173). Certain non-Christian literary sources also use the vine imagery. Interestingly, among the decorations of Herod's Temple was a golden vine, and a certain rabbi around 70 A.D. had disciples who were called the vineyard of Jabneh. The Old Testament usage is most important for Johannine usage. Cf. Barrett, pp. 393-394.

⁴⁹Some scholars see in the vine imagery a eucharistic sign. Macgregor contends that St. John is rightly regarded as the supreme teacher on the sacraments. He gives a sacramental interpretation especially to chapters six and thirteen. His evidence to demonstrate the sacrament of the Eucharist in the vine seems to rest on an allegorical interpretation. G. H. C. Macgregor, "The Eucharist in the Fourth Gospel," New Testament Studies, IX (1962), 111-119. Cullmann contends that Jesus' farewell discourses can be understood only when interpreted eucharistically. His position seems hardly demonstrable, unless one accepts his presupposition that St. John's Gospel has as its chief concern to set forth the connection between the contemporary Christian worship and the historical life of Jesus. Oscar Cullmann, Early Christian Worship, translated by A. Seward Todd and James B. Torrance (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), pp. 110-114.

and is the prime agent in the care of the branches and the production of the fruit. Bultmann explains the Father as the vinedresser as meaning "dasz das Sein Jesu für die Seinen seinen Grund in seinem Sein vom Vater her hat."⁵⁰

As the vinedresser, the Father executes judgment: "Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away" (15:2). To bear fruit is an imperative, and the disciples are to bear more fruit: "genug ist nie genug!"⁵¹ The Father, as the vinedresser, *καθαίρει* the fruitbearing branch so that it bears plenteous fruit. His word (15:3) cleanses the disciple. His word challenges them with something new and presents them new power. God sees to it that the disciple can never be at rest. Every branch is under constant examination. If it produces the fruit of its sap, it is pruned and nurtured; if it shrivels and dies in its separation from the vine, it is burned. There is no neutral ground. Either it is attached or it is not. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew (25:14-30) this aspect of discipleship is brought out in the parable of a man who entrusts his property to his servants. He gives them talents according to their ability, not to hold idle, but in order to gain more talents. As the servant who received one talent and returned one talent to his lord is cast out as a worthless servant into outer darkness, so it is with the branch or disciple who does

⁵⁰Bultmann, p. 408.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 410.

not bear fruit. He is cast out.⁵² The bearing of fruit is simply living the life of a disciple. For what is a branch of the vine if it does not bring forth fruit? The inner riches of the gift given the disciples gives rise to their calling, for this gift has a fullness in itself which becomes manifest and effectual only by their work. The disciple is never in isolation, but he is a member of a community. Before the disciple lies the earth which needs salt, the world which lacks light, and in which light is to shine, and in that they give God's gift to others and perform God's will upon them they bring themselves to their goal of discipleship--fruitbearing.

The disciples must bear fruit, but they can only do this because of the word of Jesus which cleanses them. The disciple is clean through His word (15:3). The basis for the cleanness of the disciple is not in churchly institutions, but only in the word of Jesus. Schlatter explains:

Das, was sie rein und zu ihrem Dienste tauglich macht, ist Jesu Wort. Durch sein Wort sind sie in Gottes Wohlgefallen und Vergebung gestellt und mit Brauchbarkeit und Fruchtbarkeit begabt. Er spricht damit nochmals aus, was er ihnen durch die Fußwaschung vorgehalten hat. Weil sie rein sind, da ihre Berufung zu ihm ihre Reinheit ist, können sie nun einander die Füße waschen oder, wie er es hier ausdrückt, Trauben tragen.⁵³

⁵²Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 775.

⁵³Ibid.

The disciple is clean and will always be so because he possesses in the Word the steadfast, moving, and life-creating power of God. The disciple cannot put himself into motion; he cannot make himself grow or act; he cannot bear fruit of himself. God must do that through His Word.

A disciple of Jesus is completely dependent on Him. The life of discipleship is unthinkable except in union with Jesus. There is a mutual indwelling: "Abide in me, and I in you" (15:4). The "in me," in distinction from "with me," shows that the death of Jesus changes and completes His union with the disciples. Because Jesus actually goes the way of God for them, the disciples have their place "in him." Bultmann explains what it means to "abide" reciprocally:

Das *μῆνειν* ist das Verharren in der Haltung des Glaubens; es ist treues Stehen auf Sache nur in dem Sinne des Stets Sich-umfassenlassens, Sich-schenken-lassens. Die geforderte Treue ist nicht primär ein ständiges Sein für, sondern ein Sein von, nicht ein Halten, sondern ein Sich-halten-lassen, wie es dem Verhältnis des *κλήμα* zur *ἐκτελεως* entspricht. In diesem Sinne kann das Verhältnis ein reziprokes sein, ja musz es das sein.⁵⁴

There is no abiding in Him without bearing fruit, and there is no bearing fruit without abiding in Him. This is a promise (15:5). Apart from Jesus the disciple can do nothing. Man is a creature and owes his being to the Word of God. He does not have himself in hand; he cannot even begin his discipleship. In faith man is

⁵⁴Bultmann, p. 412.

brought back to the lost relationship of a creature in which he can do nothing apart from Him. In the discipline of discipleship the disciple does not brace his will to conformity with a law. The disciple's discipline is the maintenance of communion with the Lord to the point of mutual indwelling; it is obedience to a commandment⁵⁵ only in the sense that "this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us" (1 John 3:23). The disciple's commandment is not so much "do" this or that, but trust and love. The disciple cannot love by himself; he can only win love by surrender to it.

The disciple abides in Jesus and is dependent upon Him. He who does not abide in Him, the same shall be cast out (15:6). This does not mean formal church excommunication,⁵⁶ but God's righteousness executing judgment. Even as "to abide" and "to bear fruit" go together, so also "not to abide" and "to cast out" go together. Not to abide is already rejection and destruction; but to abide is to be a disciple of the Lord. Just as Jesus stood before Israel in His holy sternness and chastised their alienation from God, so He displays the same sternness in His

⁵⁵William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p. 260.

⁵⁶Bultmann, pp. 413-414.

fellowship with His disciples. The disciple who does not abide in Him and bear fruit is cast out.⁵⁷

Through Jesus' word the mutual indwelling is effected (15:7). Through Jesus and His word the disciples receive from Him so that they may become one with Him and He with them. This is, in a sense, the culmination and fruit of discipleship. Jesus' word and the union of the disciples bear on each other: "Ist dagegen ihre Verbundenheit mit ihm eng, fest und kräftig, so regiert sie sein Wort stark, lebendig und tief."⁵⁸ United with Him the prayer of a truly obedient disciple cannot fail; he will ask nothing contrary to the will of God. Jesus' amazing promise, "ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you" (15:7), is not a blank check for selfish people. It is for the disciples who respond to Jesus' call. They are given their requests to fulfill their call.

Fruitbearing is proof of the reality of discipleship. Disciples are to love (15:9,12) and keep His commandments (15:10). By their fruits the Father is glorified (15:8; confer St. Matthew 5:16; Philippians 1:11). The Father is glorified in the Son by His obedience and perfect fulfillment of His work. The Father is also glorified in the obedience and fruitfulness of the disciples who are united

⁵⁷In the parting words of Jesus to the disciples in the Gospel according to St. Matthew Jesus makes the same point by the parables of the foolish maidens (25:1-13) and the haughty servant (24:45-51).

⁵⁸Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 776.

with the Son. With incomplete fruitbearing, however, there is incomplete discipleship. Westcott says:

Something is always wanting to the completeness of discipleship. A Christian never "is," but always "is becoming" a Christian. And it is by his fruitfulness that he vindicates his claim to the name.⁵⁹

Fruitbearing is to abide in Jesus' love. "Abide in my love" (15:9), Jesus says. The disciple does this by keeping His commandments: "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" (15:10). Love and obedience are mutually dependent. Love arises out of obedience; obedience arises out of love. The relationship of the disciple to Jesus is analogous to the relationship between the Son and the Father. The Father sends Jesus into the world to reveal Him, and the Son fulfills His mission by obediently performing the work of the Father. So also the disciple must respond to the service and love which he receives from Jesus with obedience. For the disciple receives the servant Jesus when he keeps His commandments, which in reality is only one commandment, the commandment of love (15:12). The love of the disciple for Jesus carries with it the purpose and the power of obedience. The spirit of obedience is more than the sign of love; it secures for the disciple the enjoyment of Jesus' love. The love of Jesus, as it is realized, unites and includes inseparably man's love for

⁵⁹Westcott, I, p. 202.

Jesus, and Jesus' love for man. Love and obedience are two parts of one relationship, the relationship of creature to Creator, of child to Father, of sinner to Redeemer.⁶⁰

Since Jesus has spoken of the love of God, that the disciples were His own and He did not separate Himself from them, the bridge to joy is prepared (15:11). Jesus' joy becomes the joy of the disciples. Jesus' joy is the joy of unbroken communion with the Father, joy that a world of selfishness and mutual destruction is redeemed by Him to love and life. His joy is known only to those who, with Him, are obedient to the divine command and responsive to the divine teachings. Jesus, therefore, gives His command and His instruction in order that the joy which is His may be in the disciples. And "this is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (15:12). This is not a command to "the world" but a command concerning the relation of disciple to disciple, that fellowship whose origin is in the love of Jesus.

To be a disciple of Jesus is to abide in Him, and to abide in Him is to abide in His love, and to abide in His love is to love one another. Discipleship, therefore, goes back to its source and origin--the love of Jesus and His service as Redeemer. Jesus' whole act of love for the disciples is consummated in His death. He gives the perfect love, a love which is nothing less than that love which unites the Father and the Son.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 203.

United with Jesus as Friends

The disciples are united with Jesus in their ministry as a branch is united to the vine, but the personal aspect of the disciples' relationship to Jesus in their ministry is further described in their relationship to Him as friends. The disciples are Jesus' friends: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13). God's love for the world results in the calling forth of a small group of disciples-- φίλος . Jesus pours out His love upon His "friends" to the end that among them and in them love in turn might grow. The disciple cannot be an enemy of another disciple and be a friend of Jesus at the same time. They are to love one another. Their mutual love is a reflection of Jesus' love for them, and even more, of the love which exists between the Father and the Son. The glory of the type of love between friends is spelled out in the commandment, "Love one another." This love Jesus gives to His disciples as He completely gives Himself; that is what Jesus endures for His disciples; that is what a disciple must be ready to endure for disciple. If the love in the disciples is comparable to that of their Lord, it follows that it should make them willing to lay down their lives, as the Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (10:15).

Friends are those who do what Jesus commands them (15:14); they know the will of their Lord (15:15). The slave does not know what his master does, he does not understand him, and he stands in darkness. The disciples, however, are free in their relation or

union with Jesus. They know God and stand in light. The difference between a slave and a friend lies in understanding or not understanding the will of the master. The disciples of Jesus are friends because they believe in Him and know and understand His will. The distinguishing mark of a "friend" is obedience and humility, just as Jesus showed Himself obedient and humble.⁶¹

One does not become a friend of Jesus because of his own doing or because of his own decision. Men are not Jesus' friends because they have a natural affinity with Him, but because He has named them (*εἰρη κτ*) His friends. In all the gospels Jesus chooses, calls, and appoints His disciples.⁶² The initiative is entirely His. They are united with Him because He first becomes one with them.⁶³ If

⁶¹Walter Grundmann, "Das Wort von Jesu Freunden (Joh. XV, 13-16) und das Herrenmahl," Novum Testamentum, III (1959), 67.

⁶²Cf. Günther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, translated by Irene and Fraser McLuskey with James M. Robinson (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1960), pp. 145-147.

⁶³In the Gospel according to St. John Jesus finds His first disciples among those who, because of the Baptist's preaching, are waiting penitently for the Kingdom of God. Where John's preaching found obedience, faith in Jesus as the Christ also was born (1:35-37). Cf. E. Schweizer, "Discipleship and Belief in Jesus as Lord from Jesus to the Hellenistic Church," New Testament Studies, II (November 1955), 91-92. St. John focuses his attention on how Jesus finds the first believers; then in the following account he presupposes an established circle of disciples, but he does not speak further of the genesis of this circle. By the fact that Jesus creates faith in His own He unites them with Himself inwardly, and it is in that that St. John sees the essential mark of discipleship. Since Jesus puts these men by their faith into an abiding communion with Himself, the first believers constitute a circle of disciples.

they lay down their lives in love, it is because He first laid down His life for them. The disciples see the grace of God in the fact that they are called to Him, and they bow before Him with a subordination that never grows doubtful. At the same time, however, there is never a suggestion that they are servile devotees in their association with Him. Their association with Him becomes a genuine friendship, and since this friendship has for them an absolute value because of the mission of Jesus, His grace and love becomes for the disciples a revelation of the grace of God and their friendship with Him becomes religion.⁶⁴

The relationship of the disciples to Jesus cannot be a direct return of His love for friends. Only indirectly can the disciples return this love and that is by bringing forth fruit (15:16), and this is accomplished by loving one another (15:17). Then the promise to the disciples is that their fruit should abide (15:16). Their ministry in the world is not ineffective, for bearing fruit and prayer which is sure of its answer (15:16), the twin privileges which flow from the appointment of Jesus, assure its effectiveness.

The disciples, then, are united with Jesus in their ministry as friends. But to have Jesus' friendship involves having the world's hatred.

⁶⁴Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 18.

United with Jesus as Partners in Persecution

United with Jesus in their ministry, the disciples are partners with Him in persecution. They become fellow-sufferers with Jesus as they do their ministry of love which corresponds in character and, therefore, also in issue with that of their Lord. The love of Jesus for the disciples is the occasion of the world's hatred. Jesus first establishes the foundation of this love, and then lays open the antagonism which the disciples must face.

As friends of Jesus, the disciples are in the world, and they experience both hatred and persecution. This is not only something directed against the disciples, but is also, and more significantly, directed against Jesus Himself (15:18). It is hatred against the disciples because Jesus has chosen them out of the world (15:19). By His choosing they are drawn out of the world to Him even as He is not of the world (17:14). The disciples are "of the world" and they continue to be "in the world" (17:11), but they are chosen out of the world. Since the love of the world is selfish and is directed to that which specifically belongs to it, it hates the disciples just as it hates Jesus. Jesus prepares the disciples to face hostility for no other reason than their love for Him. Jesus reminds them, "'A servant is not greater than his master'" (15:20). In the footwashing (13:16) Jesus had demonstrated by example His will that the disciples willingly serve, even as He does. Now the disciples are to prepare themselves for suffering, just as He bears suffering and will suffer even more. Their discipleship calls them to be

servants and sufferers with Jesus, but they will never be greater in these respects than their Master. His suffering and service is the basis for their discipleship.

The disciples are partners in persecution. The world persecutes them, but there are also those in the world to whom the disciples' ministry of the word of Jesus is effective: "If they kept my word, they will keep yours also" (15:20). The mission of the disciples results in the same response from the world as the work of Jesus Himself. There are those who will persecute the disciples, and there are those who will come to know and accept Jesus as the Son of God through the word of the disciples. In the Old Testament the prophets had their message rejected by the people as a whole, yet there was the formation of a remnant. So it is with the disciples as they minister to the Word and work of God among men. Some will hear and believe; some will persecute the disciples.

The disciples are not partners in persecution on their own account. The world neither hates them nor believes them because of themselves, but because they are disciples (15:18,21), and as such because they proclaim the things of God. The disciples are hated and persecuted because of Jesus who sends them: "And you will be hated by all for my name's sake" (St. Matthew 10:22). The world hates the disciples because it does not know the Father or the Son. The world lives in unbelief; its unbelief is sin. The world does not know Him who sent Jesus (15:21). The world sins because it turns against Jesus, who proved Himself through His words and works to be God's sent One.

Jesus' coming makes possible the ultimate and unmistakable manifestation of sin--disbelief in Him (16:9). The world consciously and deliberately rejects the Light and the Truth. Those who see and hear Jesus have no excuse. Jesus says that those who reject Him, reject the Father (15:23). God is actually present in the Son, and they who reject and hate the Son also hate and reject the Father. What Jesus does is done by God, and every attitude of man to Him is an attitude to God. The hatred of the world toward the Son of God is groundless. Their own "law," the holy scriptures of the Jews, condemns them, for it is written, "'They hated me without a cause'" (15:25).⁶⁵ Jesus distinguishes Himself and His disciples from the Jews by speaking of "their law." The Jews' hatred of Jesus is causeless in their own law; thus they are self-condemned and without excuse.

As partners in persecution, fellow-sufferers with Jesus in their ministry, the disciples are not without help and assistance. The disciples are in contradiction with the world, but Jesus promises the

⁶⁵The quotation may be either from Psalm 35:19 or Psalm 69:5. Bernard plausibly suggests that St. John had in mind the latter Psalm because it was regarded as messianic. Psalm 69 is a prayer for deliverance from personal enemies. Cf. J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 495-496.

sending of the Counselor, even the Spirit of truth (15:26).⁶⁶ The mission of the Spirit is closely parallel to that of the Son. As the Son testifies of the Father, so the Spirit testifies and bears witness to the Son. The disciples are to trust and rely on the Spirit. Their preaching is nothing other than proclamation of Jesus. Their preaching is a continuation of His preaching, of which the Spirit reminds them. His own have been with Him from the beginning and His going away is no end. Because they have been with Him from the beginning, they can proclaim Him (15:27). Their proclamation is not merely a historical report, but it is a repetition of Jesus' impact upon the world, a remembrance of Jesus in the light of their present communion with Him. Their union with Jesus is not broken by His departure; they have a permanent union with Him.

In the light of the hatred and persecution which the disciples meet in the world as they minister and witness, Jesus does not leave them without comfort. He sends a Counselor to testify, who is the power for their proclamation of Him. Their ministry will be a difficult ministry, but Jesus sends them into their battle as knowing disciples, just as He Himself went knowingly to the cross. Would the disciples stand the test of the world's hatred (15:18-27), or

⁶⁶The unity of the Father and the Son is impressively stated in 15:26. Before this Jesus told the disciples that He would pray to the Father (14:16) and He would send the Spirit. Then Jesus says that "the Father will send in my name" (14:26) the Spirit. Now He says that He will send the Spirit from the Father. Jesus and the Father are united in their wills and deeds.

would they fall away (16:1)? Jesus forewarns the disciples, so that no surprise of persecution will shake their faith. Martyrdom is coming (16:2). The disciples will be thrown out of synagogues. Just as the Jews would think they do a service to God by killing Jesus, so unbelievers will react to the disciples. The Jews persecute the disciples because they fail to know God in the person and work of Jesus (16:3). The disciples must find their continuing strength in the strength of Jesus, remembering that Jesus told them of these things (16:4). When these things do happen, therefore, they will not be shocked and fall away; they are strengthened in their faith because they see in this persecution the fulfillment of Jesus' word and the confirmation of His supernatural knowledge.⁶⁷

The Spirit in the Disciples' Ministry

Now the hour of Jesus' departure is come, and He instructs them in these things to prepare them for their ministry. But the disciples do not think of this (16:5); instead of looking upon Him, they are thinking about themselves. They do not ask where He is going. They stand in sorrow because they think they will be left in their distress (16:6). Grief comes over them. Their sorrow, however, is born of misunderstanding. Jesus' going to the Father is a cause for joy, not sorrow. If Jesus does not go away, the Counselor will not come to them, but if He goes to the Father, then He will send the

⁶⁷Barrett, p. 404.

Counselor to the disciples (16:7). If they do not experience the sorrow of being left, they will not have the joy of union with Him. The coming of the Spirit waits upon the glorification of Jesus. By His death He is glorified, and the disciples receive the Spirit; thus His victory becomes their victory.

When the Spirit comes His function is *ἐλέγχειν* (16:8).⁶⁸ The Spirit uncovers the guilt of the world. The Spirit confronts the world with a life-and-death situation. He confronts the world and exposes it concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.⁶⁹ The world stands accused, and the Spirit is the accuser. The world has rejected the works and words of Jesus; now through the disciples, in whom the Spirit dwells and works, the world is again confronted by Jesus.

The Spirit exposes the world concerning sin (16:9). Since the world does not believe in Jesus it sets itself up against God and loads itself with guilt. Its sin is this: "Das Sündigen, mit dem

⁶⁸For a detailed study of the meaning of *ἐλέγχειν* and its relation to *παράκλητος* see J. T. Mueller, "Notes on John 16:5-16," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIII (January 1952), 16-22. He concludes *ἐλέγχειν* to mean "convince savingly."

⁶⁹Sasse views the Fourth Gospel as a polemical and apologetic book. The *ἐλέγχειν τὸν κόσμον* concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment summarizes the central points of the Gospel. Thus he concludes: "die Botschaft des Parakleten, die Jesus nach Joh 15 16 seinen Jüngern in Aussicht stellt, ist nichts anderes als das vierte Evangelium." Hermann Sasse, "Der Paraklet im Johannesevangelium," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XXIV (1925), 274.

der Mensch sein Ziel verfehlt, geschieht dadurch, dasz er nicht an Jesus glaubt."⁷⁰ By rejecting the Truth the world sins. It rejects Jesus who comes to take away the sins of the world (1:29). And the Spirit exposes the world concerning righteousness (16:10). What righteousness is becomes clear through Jesus' going to the Father. This righteousness is the conquering of the world (16:33). This righteousness comes through the victory of Jesus on the cross; it is full freedom from the power of the world. This freedom is characterized by "and you will see me no more" (16:10). Jesus no longer belongs to the world. The disciples have a part in this victory of Jesus through faith (confer 1 John 5:4-5; 2:13-14; 4:4). The world is separated from this righteousness.⁷¹ The world cannot see Jesus' death except as a defeat. The Spirit, however, removes this objection against Jesus' death and resurrection and proves Jesus right, that He is exactly what He claims to be. Only the Paraclete can bring the world to see that this is right. Jesus is right; He is the Truth. And the Spirit exposes the world concerning "judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged" (16:11). In the cross of Jesus comes the end of all satanic claim on mankind. Man's dependence upon Satan is gone and with it life is obtained for mankind. Franzmann explains:

⁷⁰Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 312.

⁷¹Bultmann, pp. 434-435.

In the humility of the Son the pride of the prince of this world was judged. In the obedience unto death of the Son the disobedience of the prince of this world was judged. In His utter Truth the lie of Satan was judged.⁷²

The world is judged; the world has judged itself; its fruits judge it. Only through the Spirit can the world escape its judgment as it comes to see Jesus as the Son of God. Schlatter explains:

Allen denen dagegen, die dem Christus gehören, ist die Freiheit von aller teuflischen Knechtschaft durch das Kreuz gewährt. Das sieht aber die Welt nimmermehr ohne das Zeugnis des Geists. Erst Gottes Geist macht es ihr deutlich, wem sie in ihrer sündigen Art dient, und nur jener zeigt ihr, dass ihr Gebieter gerichtet und entthront und die Befreiung von seinem Dienst und seinem Verderben erworben ist durch jenes Kreuz, dessen Geheimnis ihr verhüllt bleibt, bis es ihr der Geist erschlieszt.⁷³

Only through the Spirit's testimony concerning the cross of Jesus can the world be freed of its condemnation.

The function of the Spirit is to expose the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. As described by Jesus, the Spirit is a figure parallel to Jesus Himself, as is clear from the fact that both have the title *παράκλητος* (14:16); but, more significantly, it is clear because of the parallelism in their functions. The Paraclete is sent from the Father (14:16), just as Jesus Himself is sent from God (5:30; 8:16). The Paraclete is not of the world, but a reality apparent only to the believers (14:17),

⁷²Franzmann, "Truth According to the New Testament."

⁷³Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I. 783.

just as Jesus Himself is not of the world, but visible only to the believers as the Revealer and Redeemer (1:10,12; 8:14,19; 17:8). The Paraclete leads and guides in the truth (14:26; 16:13), just as Jesus Himself leads and guides in the truth (7:16-17; 8:32; 40). The Paraclete does not talk about Himself (16:13), just as Jesus does not talk about Himself (7:16-17; 12:49-50). The Paraclete bears witness for Jesus against the world and convinces the world of its sin (15:26; 16:8), just as Jesus Himself bears witness to Himself (8:14), and convinces the world of sin (3:20; 7:7).⁷⁴

In the Gospel according to St. John the creative work of the Spirit in the followers of Jesus is not directly connected with the earthly ministry of Jesus (7:39). The work of the Spirit remains a promise. It is a promise which is not to be fulfilled until Jesus goes to the Father (16:7). First Jesus establishes faith by His cross, faith which guarantees the possession of eternal life, and He Himself first receives His glorification before the sons of God come into being who are created through the Spirit (3:14,15 with verse 5; 7:39; 14:16). In the farewell discourses of Jesus there is not only Jesus' promise of inner union with His disciples but also the promise of the Spirit who is now to come to them. What the Spirit gives the disciples, His name tells them; He is the Advocate, the Paraclete.⁷⁵ The central idea is not that the Spirit pleads their

⁷⁴Bultmann, p. 337.

⁷⁵ *παράκλητος* literally means "one called to someone's aid."

cause before God but that He is the Advocate of the disciples in their struggle with the world.⁷⁶ The disciples are to serve and to proclaim the crucified and the invisible Jesus as the Christ, but the world will contradict their confession. They will appear as fools because they are disciples of Jesus. The disciples, however, do not carry on this struggle alone (14:18), nor do they have to rely on their own wisdom and eloquence and energy, but the Spirit sent to them makes the truth prevail (16:13), makes the cause of Jesus to triumph (16:8), and glorifies His name (16:14), not without them, but through them (16:15). The disciples are bearers of the Spirit. The Spirit is the disciples' sole protection, and they do not begin their ministry until they are convinced that the Spirit is with them (14:17). This attitude of the disciples rests upon the instruction of Jesus Himself.⁷⁷

The function of the Spirit is to reveal the truth (16:13). Franzmann describes this function of the Spirit: "He is called Spirit of Truth because He mediates the encounter with the reality

⁷⁶Otto Betz untenably proposes *ὁ παράκλητος* to be a title for the archangel Michael. He says St. John does not give his name, but if he would, it would be Michael. He rests his case on inquiries into Qumran texts, newly found Gnostic texts, and the Apocalypse. His conclusion is: "Darin gleicht Michael dem Parakleten." Otto Betz, Der Paraklet, in Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentum (Köln: E. J. Brill, c.1963), II, 195.

⁷⁷Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 460.

of God in Christ. He takes of what is Christ's and reports it to the disciples."⁷⁸ The Spirit is the Advocate of the disciples and the Giver of victory to them in their struggle with the world. The Spirit is power to make the truth visible and effective (15:26). Jesus Himself was able to bear the cross because His strength rested upon the unconditional estimation of the truth. There is no doubt, then, that the disciples will fulfill their mission, for truth conquers all. Nothing is added to truth; truth alone effects the fulfillment of their mission; but it is the truth as "the Spirit of truth."⁷⁹ Therefore, the word of the disciples establishes faith; for when the Spirit lays hold of man, He gives him an eye which sees the truth, and then faith is there.⁸⁰ But where faith does not arise, there the Spirit makes a man's guilt apparent to him and judges his unbelief (16:8-9). The disciple cannot do this with his proofs for Jesus or with his admonitions, but only the Spirit.

The truth of the Spirit is a gift of God (14:16). It makes the disciples subject to God in their thinking and their willing. Jesus describes His word as the means by which man is connected and bound to Himself and to God (14:23-24); and in that He assigns to the content of the Word exclusively the work of God (14:10), which now

⁷⁸Franzmann, "Truth According to the New Testament."

⁷⁹Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 461.

⁸⁰Franzmann, "Truth According to the New Testament."

is being done through Him (14:11), He bases the work of the disciples completely upon the truth, the truth which unveils God's working to the human eye (15:26). Jesus chooses His disciples out of the world and sets them apart by the fact that He permits no untruth among them, but He helps them to attain a total obedience and a genuine love. Because the Spirit rests on Jesus, He is in His disciples, and, therefore, they remain subject to the truth. This is not lost when Jesus departs and goes to the Father. The disciples are given protection; they are preserved in the truth; they are given victory over everything opposing them by the fact that the Spirit is present with them and so also truth is present in them (14:17).⁸¹

Because the Spirit enters into the inner life of man, one might expect that Jesus would say something about the intensification of life as a result of the Spirit. But the disciples are instructed to recognize in the Spirit only their equipment for their ministry (14:26; 16:13). They are not capable of this ministry by themselves, but in order that they might not fear and fall into despair, Jesus points them to the Spirit (14:16-17).

Two thoughts stand side by side in the Gospel according to St. John: the one that Jesus lives and works in the disciples (14:20-23), and the other that the Spirit as the Giver of truth is in them (14:17). The one does not displace or replace the other. The gift of the

⁸¹Schlatter, Geschichte, p. 461-462.

Spirit does not mean that Jesus is no longer united with His disciples. Neither is the eschatological promise of His return negated. The goal of the future remains the reunion of the disciples with Jesus. Jesus' call to repentance finds its conclusion and climax in the thought of the Spirit. Through the call of repentance the present life is condemned, and the repentant man is accepted by God, forgiven by Him, and united with Him as His son. Repentance gives salvation and life and gives man a part in the divine sonship and in eternal life, and this takes place through the Spirit.⁸²

The disciples have the duty to continue in the task of Jesus. They are prepared for their ministry through Jesus' example of love (13:1-30), and now He prepares them through His instruction. Jesus is going to the Father (14:28) and departing from the disciples (13:33). They will have to face the struggle in the world as servants of God (13:16), but not alone. They will effectually call men to God, will truly make them free of their guilt, and will bring divine grace to men. Their work will reach its goal because God's Spirit works through them. Since Jesus has what He inwardly is through the Spirit, the disciples become like Him by the fact that God endows them, too, through the Spirit and guides them through the Spirit (16:13).⁸³

⁸²Ibid., p. 462.

⁸³Ibid., p. 463.

The Word of God is considered to be the complete and sufficient offering of divine grace to man, so that when man receives the Word he is thereby united with Jesus. The thought of the Spirit is added to that of the Word, not because of any doubt that the Word might not be sufficient to form a union with God; rather, the thought of the Spirit arises from the unlimited confidence which hears the call of God in the Word, the call by which God turns to man. Thereby man enters into that relationship with God in which the Spirit of God completes its work in him.⁸⁴

The disciples are united with Jesus in their ministry as partners in persecution. They face the hatred of the world even as Jesus did in His ministry, although He faced it alone. The disciples have no need to despair or to fear because they have the help and the assurance of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, in their contradiction to the world. They can be calm as they face the future; they can anticipate the future in faith. Even though Jesus cannot say everything about the future (16:12), yet He has said everything which the disciples need to be prepared for their ministry. The Spirit is power which enables the disciples to struggle with the dark future (16:13). The Spirit does not bring the disciples anything new (16:14); rather, "er erhält das Alte in der ständigen Neuheit des Gesprochen-werdens im Jetzt."⁸⁵ The Father declares to the Son, the Son declares

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 465.

⁸⁵Bultmann, p. 444.

to the Spirit, and the Spirit declares to the disciples the message of divine truth (16:15). The Spirit places the disciples in a living union with the Vine and is the means through which Jesus' power comes to the disciples. By the word of Jesus and the word of the Spirit and by the power of Jesus and the power of the Spirit the disciples' union with Jesus remains unbroken. Schlatter says: "Hier waltet die volle Gemeinsamkeit, die darin begründet ist, dasz beide ungeschieden im Vater sind."⁸⁶

Jesus' Departure from the Disciples

Jesus reveals to the disciples His departure and going to the Father. He prepares them for His departure through the instruction given them in the farewell discourses; but still they ask what He means when 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'?" (16:17). Jesus answers the inquiry of the disciples by telling them that the occasion of their sorrow is the occasion of joy for the world (16:20). The disciples must take upon themselves the hate of the world and throw in their lot with Jesus because they belong to Him and not to the world (15:19). That means sorrow for them, tribulation (16:33), and troubled spirits (14:1). But the world will rejoice because Jesus' appearance and witness has called the world's security, safety, and certainty in question. Jesus makes

⁸⁶Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I. 784.

a promise to the disciples. Their sorrow will be turned into joy. But more than this, sorrow necessarily belongs to the disciples' existence if the meaning of God's revelation to man is really clear.⁸⁷ Jesus uses the analogy of a woman giving birth to a child (16:21). Out of a travailing woman's sorrow springs joy. Out of her birth-pangs comes satisfaction that a child is born. In the Old Testament (Isaiah 26:17) the messianic salvation which relieves the affliction of God's people is compared to the relief and joy of childbirth. The birth-pangs of the Messiah is a period of trouble which must intervene before the final consummation. The death of Jesus brings sorrow to the disciples. There are birth-pangs before the joy of the resurrection and Jesus' final victory over the forces of the world. But the basis for the disciples' sorrow and the basis for their joy comes from their turning away from the world. They are one in this respect. Jesus will see them again (16:22). In their turning away from the world, therefore, they become united with Him and their "hearts will rejoice" (16:22), and the world cannot touch their joy. Only the disciples who stand united with Jesus have joy, a joy which no one can take away. They shall be without sorrow and question (16:23). They have unspeakable joy on Easter day when Jesus lives and shows Himself to them as the Living One. Then all their desires are fulfilled and their every question silenced. The disciples stand opposed to the world and are joyful because they will see Jesus again.

⁸⁷Bultmann, p. 446.

They are "sons of light" (12:36), and the future is no longer gloomy. They live in an eternal today.

Another reason for the disciples' joy is their access to Jesus in prayer (16:23). The Son talks to the Father, and the disciples can talk to the Son. They can call upon Him because they know Him, and God gives the fulfillment in that He is known through Jesus. The disciples do not have to hide from God; they have complete access to God; they ask and they receive (16:24).

Prayer in the name of Jesus may have precedents in the invocation of the name of the patriarchs in the Old Testament. When Moses prays for the people He reminds God of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 32:11-13); when Solomon asks for wisdom he bases his request on God's promise to his father David (2 Chronicles 1:9), and later, at the dedication of the temple, again appeals to God's covenant with David (2 Chronicles 6:14-17). Elijah invokes the name of the patriarchs in his prayer at the time of Israel's major spiritual crisis (1 Kings 36-38). In each case in which the name of a patriarch is cited as a reason why prayer should be granted, it is an appeal to a commitment made by God to them. Disciples, able to use the name of Jesus in prayer, have a more powerful basis for appeal than the men of the Old Testament. Jesus, united with God in an unbroken communion, Himself the genuine Vine and the Life, promises to hear and grant the petitions of the disciples. This is completion of that joy which the

disciples have in their union with Jesus.⁸⁸

But do the disciples understand the basis for their joy and its implications of their ministry? Why does Jesus speak to them in figures (16:25)? The disciples do not understand everything that Jesus has told them (for example 14:9), but now it must be clear to them because their ministry and discipleship require it. The time is coming when the Spirit will teach the disciples plainly of the Father, and then the disciples will know and believe the truth. In faith they will pray in Jesus' name (16:26). The disciples have access to the Father through the Son, for as the Father loves the Son, so He loves also the disciples; and indeed, as He says in 17:23,26, even with the love with which He loved Him.

Jesus goes to the Father from whom He came (16:28). By His coming into the world He establishes His union with mankind; by His going to the Father he fulfills His union with God. Jesus' coming and going makes discipleship possible. Discipleship is the result of God's coming into the world: *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* (1:14). Jesus, the Word made flesh, unites Himself with the disciples; He comes into the world and prepares them for their ministry in His name. Jesus unites Himself with the Father by going to the Father, having completed His mission of redemption and salvation. His disciples are effectually given God's divine grace. They are men equipped

⁸⁸Turner and Mantey, IV, 326-327.

to bring the Word of God to men. They believe that Jesus is the Son of God, sent from God. They speak the "Yes" of faith (16:29-30) to the truth of God. There was a time when they did not believe; but now (16:31) faith is theirs.⁸⁹ There will be a time when they will not appear victorious; there will be a time when they are unsteady and wavering and seek refuge in the world and leave Jesus alone (16:32). The disciples will leave Jesus to go alone to His cross. But Jesus is not alone even then for His Father works in Him, and He is one with the Father.

Thus the disciples take up their ministry equipped with the love and grace of their Lord. Through His word they know His forgiveness and see His grace. And this prepares them to withstand the hatred of the world. Jesus says to His disciples, "You will see" (16:16), and they will see because the victory over the world is sure: "I have overcome the world" (16:33). Just as the joy of Jesus will be the joy of the disciples (17:13; 15:11), so His victory will be their victory.

Jesus prepares His disciples for their ministry through His instruction to them in the farewell discourses. He interprets His death for them, showing them that His death is not a defeat but the glorification of the Father through the Son and the glorification of

⁸⁹Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 317. ἵστε πιστεύετε is to be read as a statement, not as a question. Even if the words are understood as a question, "the question does not perhaps deny the existence of some kind and measure of faith." Barrett, p. 415.

the Son by the Father. His death is the basis and presupposition for the disciples' ministry among men. The disciples have a part in His glorification. Through His glorification they can begin their ministry. Jesus Himself equips them. He goes the way of love for them, alone, and thus establishes the commandment of love. He bestows on them the privilege of prayer in His name. He binds them to His word. He promises them the presence and the power of the Spirit and His own presence and the presence of the Father among them. The disciples are not left desolate in their ministry. Even though Jesus departs from them and goes to the Father, yet they are united with Jesus in their ministry. They are united with Him as branches are united with the vine. He is the genuine Vine, and they are the branches. The disciples are dependent upon Him; they abide in Him, as Jesus abides in the disciples. To abide in Him is to bear fruit, and as fruitbearers the disciples are given a blessing, even the blessing of being one with the Father and the Son. The disciples are also united with Jesus as friends. They are chosen out of the world and appointed to be His representatives, bringing the grace of God to men through the effectual call to repentance. They work under the love of God for them. They know Jesus' will, and thus their ministry becomes an extension of the will and ministry of Jesus. And the disciples are united with Jesus in their ministry as partners in persecution. First the world hated Jesus; it condemned Him and would not accept Him. The disciples also will come under the condemnation of the world. The selfish love of the world will reject and

persecute them. Their ministry is in contradiction to the world. But this is not a reason to fear and despair, for Jesus Himself will send the Counselor, the Spirit of truth, to declare to them the things of Himself. The Spirit will be a permanent power for them in proclaiming the Word in the world. Jesus will depart and go to the Father, and the disciples will be sorrowful. But their sorrow will be turned into joy, for Jesus will come again and be seen by them. Now the world rejoices because Jesus will be gone, but He shall return, and then the joy of the disciples will be full. They have joy in His victory and in His gifts of prayer and peace. Even though their life and ministry in the world will mean tribulation and sorrow for them, yet they shall see God and rejoice. They are united with Jesus in their ministry. They go prepared, prepared to proclaim the Word of God with power from on high, even the power of the Spirit. They will bring the truth of God to men, even Him who is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6).

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH INTERCESSION: JESUS' HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER, ST. JOHN 17

Jesus Prays for Himself

In Jesus' association with His disciples He seeks their complete personal union with Himself. He regards them not only as His servants who must care for some business, not only as pupils who must learn a teaching; but He desires their love and their trust for Himself because He desires them for God. If this love and confidence show themselves in action, then there is true discipleship.

Jesus' union with His disciples becomes complete by the fact that He can pray for them. Even now, at the close of Jesus' life, He holds fast to His communion with His disciples as He stands before the Father. His sonship and His oneness with the Father are the bases for the Father's love for the disciples. Jesus' action for His disciples at the beginning of the farewell discourses (13:1-30)¹ shows Him stepping down from His high majesty into communion with them. Now at the close of the discourses (17:1-26) Jesus' action shows Him turning upward toward the Father for the disciples, making His sonship effective for them. Both acts together show how His communion with the

¹All chapter and verse references without mention of a specific book of The Holy Bible are from the Gospel according to St. John. All quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

disciples will endure beyond His death. By His intercession for the disciples to the Father Jesus unites them with Himself.

United with Jesus the disciples are to begin their ministry in the world. The basis for their ministry is Jesus' glorification by the Father (13:31-32). Jesus now prays for this glorification, for the hour has come (17:1).

Jesus' ministry in the world is now being completed (17:4; *καὶ* *ὁ* *υἱὸς* in 17:5). His ministry is to reveal God as His Father, and in His role as Revealer He comes to His glory.² His revelation completes itself in the cross. Soon to come, the cross is the climax of His ministry, and in it Jesus will receive His glory.³ His glory is in His death when the Father will restore Him to His place of glory. Now Jesus addresses His Father at the beginning of the high-priestly prayer. He prays to His Father for His glorification (17:1),⁴ fully

²Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, edited by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (11. durchgesehene Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1950), pp. 375-376.

³George Allen Turner and Julius R. Mantey, The Gospel According to John, in The Evangelical Commentary on the Bible, edited by George Allen Turner, et al. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmann's Publishing Company, n.d.), IV, 332-333.

⁴*πατήρ* is the name for God used very frequently in the Gospel according to St. John. In this prayer Jesus thrice addresses God as Father (17:1,11,25). This address by Jesus to the Father demonstrates the unity of the Father and the Son. The Father loves the Son (3:35), and the Son fulfills this love by completing His work. There is no broken relationship between the Father and the Son. Jesus can call Him "Father" because He knows Him, and now He goes back to the Father. Cf. Gottlob Schrenk, "*πατήρ*," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, [1954]), V, 1000-1002.

confident that the Father will glorify Him because He remains united with the Father in love. The hour of His death is imminent (13:1), the hour of the Son's glory (13:31-32). His glory proceeds from the Father and is the consequence of His obedience. Jesus leaves nothing unfinished; He completes the work the Father gave Him to do. Bultmann says: "Jesus' *ἰσχύς* . . . vollzieht sich in seinem Wirken als Offenbarer."⁵ Jesus' ministry, wherein He does the work of His Father, brings Him glory, glory He shared with the Father from all eternity (17:5). In the prologue to the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus is regarded as God's agent in creation (1:1). Now Jesus prays that the Father glorify Him by causing Him to return to the position He enjoyed before the incarnation.⁶ Denied and betrayed, Jesus yet prays with certainty for eternal union with the Father in eternal glory. The Father glorifies Jesus by accepting the faithful fulfillment of His ministry in the world. By His perfect love and obedience Jesus brings glory to God.

Jesus glorifies the Father by revealing His name (17:4,6). Earlier Jesus stated the task of His ministry in these words: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (4:34). In His ministry Jesus reveals the name of God to men: "Auf ihr [Erden] den Vaternamen . . . kundzumachen, das war das Werk, das ihm

⁵Bultmann, p. 375.

⁶C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John (London: SPCK, c.1958), p. 421.

der Vater aufgegeben hatte."⁷ Until now He had only revealed the Father's name to the disciples, but now the hour is come that He will do this for all mankind. By revealing God's name the Son glorifies the Father: "To make God known is to glorify Him."⁸ The Son glorifies the Father by His complete obedience and the faithful completion of His ministry.

Jesus' ministry brings the gift of eternal life (17:2). Jesus' authority is power to free man from sin.⁹ The Father gives the Son power over all flesh (3:35). *Πᾶσα σὰρξ* renders the Hebrew phrase *כָּל בְּרִיָּה* which describes mankind in its weakness and transitoriness as contrasted with the majesty of God. The term *ἐξουσία* as used by St. John, means "authority, right."¹⁰ Jesus is specially empowered by the Father for His earthly ministry. The *ἐξουσία πάσης σαρκός* shows Jesus' office as primarily in relation to fallen man.¹¹

⁷Karl Bornhäuser, Das Johannesevangelium, in Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie, edited by A. Schlatter and W. Lütgert (Gütersloh: Druck und Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, 1928), XV, 105-106.

⁸A. Plummer, The Gospel According to St. John, in The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, edited by J. Perowne (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1906), p. 307.

⁹R. H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment (3rd revised edition; London: Student Christian Movement Press, Ltd., 1955), p. 301.

¹⁰Barrett, p. 136.

¹¹Brooke Foss Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), I, 241.

Schlatter says: "Der Vater hat ihn zum Herrn der Menschheit gesetzt, damit er allen, die Gott ihm gegeben hat, ewiges Leben gebe."¹²

Freedom from sin in eternal life is a gift. Jesus' motivation for the gift is His divine grace to all men.¹³

The gift of eternal life is knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ (17:3). Eternal life must be understood in the sense in which St. John uses it. Life and light are the terms most characteristic in the Gospel according to St. John. Jesus is the life (11:25), and He is the light of the world (8:12; 9:5). These two concepts, life and light, are also in the Old Testament. They appear in the creation narrative. Later, the prophets Ezekiel (37:1-14) and Daniel (12:2) show that God gives eternal life. The Old Testament teaching is summarized by Psalm 36:9: "For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light do we see light." The Psalmist may well have influenced St. John, for in the Fourth Gospel light and life come together in Jesus. Jesus is the Giver of both light and life; He gives life by giving knowledge of God. Schlatter's words bear repetition.

Leben geben heisst Erkenntnis Gottes geben, Erkenntnis Gottes geben Leben geben. Ein anderes Leben kennt Jesus nicht als das, das den Blick auf den wahrhaftigen Gott in sich hat. Wo dieser Blick aufstrahlt, ist das Sterben vergangen und die Vergänglichkeit überwunden. Mit der

¹²A. Schlatter, Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Zweite durchgesehene Auflage; Calw: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1918), I, 789.

¹³R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1942), p. 1120.

Nacht flieht auch der Tod. Gott an seinem Bild und Werk erkennbar zu machen ist der Beruf des Sohns; durch dieses Mittel wird er an uns zum Schöpfer der ewigen Lebendigkeit und zu diesem Zweck bittet er für sich um Herrlichkeit. Weil Jesus der Geber des Lebens und Lichtes ist, ist die Erkenntnis Gottes untrennbar mit der seines Boten vereint. Jesus kann uns den Blick auf Gott nicht schenken, ohne unseren Blick auf sich selbst zu wenden, damit wir ihn erkennen und verstehen. Dadurch dasz wir den, den Gott gesandt hat, erkennen, findet unser Auge den wahrhaftigen Gott, weshalb unser ewiges Leben wie auf die Erkenntnis des Vaters, so auf die des Sohns gegründet ist.¹⁴

By knowing Jesus, whom God sent, man comes to know also the true God, whom to know is eternal life.

The concept that knowledge of God is essential to life and salvation is common to Hebrew thought.¹⁵ Hosea urges the people "to know the Lord" (Hosea 6:3). God desires steadfast love and knowledge of Him (Hosea 6:6). Only in the Lord is there healing for sickness and vivification (Hosea 5:15-6:2). Isaiah describes the messianic king and his reign (Isaiah 11:1-9), and shows that in his reign there will be harmony in nature "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:9). The "hurt-and-destroy" character of nature will be no more. Jeremiah likewise stresses the relation between knowledge and salvation. He says God will establish a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) with His people, and then "they shall know me, . . . says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34). In later Judaism, however, the

¹⁴Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 789.

¹⁵Cf. Barrett, p. 419. Cf. also Turner and Mantey, IV, 335-336.

concept of knowledge came to mean obedience to the law.¹⁶ In contrast to this interpretation, St. John points out that knowledge of God comes through Jesus Christ (confer 1:17). St. John gets his idea of knowledge from the Old Testament and applies it to Jesus. For him "to know God" is "to know Jesus," and "to know Jesus" is to know the only true God. This is saving knowledge; this is eternal life. Eternal life stands in closest relation to the apprehension of that which is true through fellowship with Him who is true. Even as the Father of Jesus is *ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἀληθινός* (17:3), so the Son is *τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν* (1:9), *ὁ ἄρτος . . . ὁ ἀληθινός* (6:32), and *ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή* (15:1).

Jesus gives eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him (17:2). The unity of the disciples is assumed as a fact. The disciples, as a unit or group, are men whom God has given to Jesus. Discipleship is a gift and act of God, and rests upon the finished work of Jesus.¹⁷

Jesus Prays for the Disciples

Now Jesus turns His eyes to the disciples and prays for them. He cannot pray only for Himself because He stands before God united with His disciples.¹⁸ He prays for the disciples to whom He has revealed the will of the Father.

¹⁶Barrett, pp. 419-420.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 419.

¹⁸Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 790.

Jesus has manifested the name of God to the disciples (17:6). The revealing of the name of God is a notion peculiar to this chapter in the Gospel according to St. John. Certainly the revelation by Jesus of God's name is associated with Yahweh's revelation of Himself in the Old Testament (אֲנִי ה'). St. John summarizes the task of Jesus' ministry with the aorist verb $\text{\textepsilon}\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\sigma\alpha$; ¹⁹ He has manifested the name of the Father. ²⁰ The Father's name is a dark and foreign word to the world, but to the disciples, whom the Father gave to Jesus out of the world (17:6), the Father's name is clear and certain. His name for the disciples is above every name; it is the chief and central name which fills and shapes their thinking and their willing. ²¹ For the disciples God is self-revealed in Jesus and invites them to say "Father." For St. John the manifestation of the name of God

¹⁹There are four words used in the Gospel according to St. John to convey the same idea. They are: $\text{\textepsilon}\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\sigma\alpha$, $\text{\textepsilon}\mu\phi\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\xi\omega$, $\text{\textdelta}\eta\lambda\acute{o}\omega$, $\text{\textiota}\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\pi\tau\omega$. The last verb occurs only once, in an Old Testament quotation, Isaiah 53:1.

²⁰Cf. Strachan, pp. 301-302, who shows that the "name" of God was too holy for a Jew to pronounce. Schlatter also says that St. John probably has in mind in verse six the Jewish silence which did not have the courage to name Him but hid His name in a mystery surrounded by fear. A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt. (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), pp. 319-320.

²¹Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 791.

means the revelation of God Himself.²² The disciples receive the revelation of God, God's word, from Jesus.

The disciples are the possession of God from the beginning; He has given them to Jesus: "thou gavest them to me" (17:6). God gives them to Jesus to be His disciples as part of the gift of authority over all flesh (17:2). The disciples are "in the world" (17:11), but they have been chosen out of the world (15:19). These chosen ones have kept the Father's word (8:55). To keep the word of God seems to be equivalent to abiding in the word of Jesus which is also the Father's word.²³ It means to believe and to obey the revelation of Jesus from God.²⁴ The disciples now, at the end of Jesus' ministry, "know that everything that thou hast given me is from thee" (17:7). The disciples themselves make this confession: "Now we know that you know all things, and need none to question you; by this we believe that you came from God" (16:30). They recognize that πάντα come to Jesus from God. They know the truth only because Jesus gives it to them, and they receive it (17:8). The word of God becomes

²²Bultmann, pp. 380-381. In a footnote on page 381 Bultmann points out that the "name," "das Jesus offenbarte, hat Gott ihm nach V. 11 'gegeben'; es ist nichts anderes als die 'Worte', die er ihm nach V. 8 'gegeben' hat; und wie er das ὄνομα 'offenbarte', hat er die *ρήματα* (V. 8) bzw. den λόγος Gottes (V. 14) den Seinen 'gegeben'."

²³E. M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel (London: SPCK, 1961), p. 41.

²⁴H. Riesenfeld, "Τηρέω," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1966), VIII, 144.

incarnate in the words of Jesus. Strachan concludes: "Thus the disciples have been able through listening to the 'words' of Jesus, to keep God's Word (v. 6)."²⁵ But the disciples' knowledge is not apart or different from faith.²⁶ Their knowing and their believing are one and the same thing. Bultmann affirms their synonymity: "Es ist ja das Gleiche, was erkannt und was geglaubt wird. . . . Und dieses eine ist: Jesus als den Offenbarer verstehen und so Gott erkennen."²⁷

Jesus does not now pray for men who are godless and dead to sin, but He prays for His own (17:9). Jesus and the Father have a common interest in the disciples. The disciples, as all things, belong both to the Father and to the Son for they are united in an unbroken fellowship.²⁸ Jesus prays for them, therefore, and not for the world. Barrett says: "To pray for the *κόσμος* would be almost an absurdity, since the only hope for the *κόσμος* is precisely that it should

²⁵Strachan, p. 302.

²⁶The two *ὅτι* clauses in the second half of verse eight are not a dichotomy. Some scholars believe that the first clause refers to a matter of knowledge while the second clause is a matter of faith for the disciples. Cf. Westcott, I, 248. Both clauses say the same thing; to say that Jesus came from God is the same as saying that He was sent by God. Turner and Mantey, IV, 339.

²⁷Bultmann, pp. 381-382.

²⁸A. Schlatter, Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), p. 157.

cease to be the *κόσμος*."²⁹ It is not that the world is past praying for, but the disciples (later the entire Church) have the ministry to spread the message that will save the world. The world is to "know" through the witness of the disciples (13:35; 14:31; confer 17:22-23). The prayer of Jesus for the disciples strengthens that witness. By the disciples' witness Jesus is glorified (17:10); that is, His name and revelation becomes known to men in the world. The disciple, who serves as his Master serves, who bears His name and makes Him known, who brings His grace to fallen man, brings honor to Jesus.³⁰ If Jesus is glorified in the physical miracle of the raising of Lazarus (11:4), how much more in the spiritual miracle of the faith of the disciples! Even as the vine is glorified in its branches and fruit, so Jesus is glorified in His disciples who bring Him to men.³¹

Having thanked the Father for what the disciples have received, Jesus now turns to the needs of the disciples as He departs from them to go to the Father. Without Him they stand alone in the world (17:11). This is a difficult position for the disciples, and therefore Jesus prays for their well-being. He addresses the Father as "Holy Father"

²⁹Barrett, p. 422.

³⁰Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 791.

³¹Already in His ministry Jesus is glorified by His disciples. The perfect tense of the verb *δοξάζω* would indicate this. Cf. Barrett, p. 423.

(17:11). Already in the Old Testament the holiness of God is a fundamental concept. "Holy Father" is a characteristically Jewish mode of address in prayer. In 2 Maccabees 14:36 the expression is used: ἁγίε πάντος ἁγισμοῦ κύριε . 3 Maccabees 2:2 uses a similar expression: ἁγίε ἐν ἁγίοις, μόνωρχε, πάντο κρότωρ .³²

The concept goes back to Leviticus 11:44: "For I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy." Holiness originally means for the Jew that which belongs to God and must not be violated or defiled. The appellation "Holy Father" agrees well with the content of the prayer that God would preserve the disciples from the unholiness of the world (17:15) in the holiness which Jesus revealed to them and prays the Father to give them (17:17).

Jesus prays that the Father keep the disciples in His name (17:11). The "name" of the Father, the knowledge of God as Father, is a region of security for the disciples. The "name" of God, moreover, is the perfect expression for men of God's essence. This "name" the Father gives to the Son to declare in His incarnation to His disciples. Schlatter explains that ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου is used here because the name of God is the power through which they are protected from what might destroy them.³³ By being kept in the

³²J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 567.

³³Schlatter, Evangelist, p. 321.

name of God the disciples stand in faith and obedience before God, and in this way they are united with one another.

The disciples are to be one, just as the Father and the Son are one (17:11; confer "I and the Father are one," 10:30). The disciples are to fashion their unity after this Father-Son relationship. The unity of the Father and the Son is not only of will and love, but a unity of nature, perfectly realized in absolute harmony in Jesus. As the divine union of Father and Son consists with a variety of Persons, so too, the final unity of men consists of separate persons.³⁴ Schlatter draws a helpful comparison to point up Jesus' desire for the unity of the disciples.

Der Hirt sorgt für die Herde, dasz sie sich nicht zerstreue, der König für sein Reich, dasz es sich nicht auflöse und zerfalle. Der Christus ist dazu gekommen, damit die Gemeinde entstehe; so bittet er nun darum, dasz sie wirklich eine Gemeinde seien, die in der Einheit steht.³⁵

The perfect unity of the disciples is traced to the community of their life with Jesus in all its relationships. This unity is not thought of as isolating the disciple in his relationship to Jesus, "but as producing a community, binding individuals together into complete union."³⁶ The binding element is the "name" of the Father. In God all men become truly united, but only in Him.

³⁴Westcott, I, 251-252.

³⁵Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I. 792.

³⁶W. F. Howard, Christianity According to St. John (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 137.

Since Jesus now is going to the Father, He hands over the disciples to the safe-keeping of the Father. While Jesus was with the disciples, He "kept them" and "guarded them" (17:12).³⁷ As a result none of the disciples has perished; as the Evangelist says later, "This was to fulfill the word which he had spoken, 'Of those whom thou gavest me I lost not one'" (18:9). But Jesus makes one exception, "the son of perdition" (17:12). This expression occurs only twice in the New Testament, in 17:12 and in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. In the Thessalonian passage it is said that the parousia of Jesus will not take place until "the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition." The New Testament term *ἄπώλεια* commonly means eschatological perdition or damnation, the opposite of eternal life.³⁸ Perhaps there is a play on words by St. John between *ἄπώλετο* and *ἄπωλείας*. Bernard suggests:

It signifies one whose end will be perdition, not necessarily that this is inevitable but that it will be so because of his own acts. . . . Judas was "the son of loss," although Jesus came to save the lost.³⁹

Jesus guarded His disciples during His ministry, "but now I am coming

³⁷The imperfect tense of the verb *ἐτήρουν* indicates Jesus' continual watching over His disciples. The aorist *ἐφύλαξα* sums up the process represented by the imperfect.

³⁸Cf. among others St. Matthew 7:13; Acts 8:20; Romans 9:22. In the Fourth Gospel the noun occurs only here. In 3:16 and 10:28, however, *ἀπόλλυμι* has this meaning of eternal damnation.

³⁹Bernard, II, 571.

to thee" (17:13). His task completed, He now resumes the glory which He had before the foundation of the world.

Before Jesus departs from the disciples, however, He utters a last prayer for them "that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (17:13). Jesus Himself, of course, does not have need of the formal practice of prayer because He is the Son who is in perpetual communion with the Father. This human practice, however, "is the only means by which the communion he enjoys can be demonstrated to human observation."⁴⁰ Jesus' prayer forms the pattern for the communion which His disciples will enjoy following His departure to the Father. The prayer, therefore, helps to convey to them His joy. His joy

is the joy that arises from the sense of a finished work. It is creative joy, like the joy of the artist. It produces a sense of unexhausted power for fresh creation. This joy in the heart of Jesus is both the joy of victory (xv. 11), and the sense of having brought His Church into being.⁴¹

The joy Jesus experiences comes from the completion of His work and from His unbroken communion with the Father. The disciples need this joy because the world hates them as it hates Jesus (17:14). The disciples will share in this joy as they commune with the Father through prayer.

The joy of the disciples, however, will be joy amidst hatred. The

⁴⁰Barrett, p. 425.

⁴¹Strachan, p. 303.

world hates the disciples (17:14,16). Jesus has warned the disciples of the world's hatred toward them.

If the world hates 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, therefore the world hates you.⁴²

The joy of the disciples, which stems from the life-giving "word," from the fact that the disciples are in the world and not of it, and from the protection of Jesus against the Evil One, is in contrast to the inevitable hatred of the world. The nature of the disciples' ministry is set forth in these two facts. Their ministry is a charge from God through Jesus, and in the execution of their ministry they will inevitably be hated by the world. "This hatred Luther terms 'the true court colours of Christians that they bear on earth.'"⁴³ Verse sixteen repeats the theme of the hatred of the world for the disciples.

Jesus goes to the Father, but the disciples are in the world, and the world hates them. Jesus does not ask the Father to "take them out of the world" (17:15). Jesus does not take the disciples away from their conflict, for through this conflict is victory. The disciples do not accomplish their ministry by isolation or removal.

⁴²St. John 15:18,19.

⁴³Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospel of John, in Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, translated from the 5th edition of the German by William Urwick, W. D. Simon, and Edwin Johnson (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1881), p. 291.

The Father will protect the disciples from the Evil One (17:15). Echoes of the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew 6:13 seem evident: "But deliver us from evil (*τοῦ πονηροῦ*)." St. John echoes the same thought when in his epistle he writes: "We know that any one born of God does not sin, but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). It seems impossible to determine exactly what St. Johns means with *τοῦ πονηροῦ*, but most scholars hold that the last word is a masculine noun and refers to the devil.⁴⁴ Jesus' disciples are kept from the Evil One through the "word" of the Father. Bornhäuser points this out in his paraphrase of this verse:

Das geschieht durch dein Wort. Wenn du es in ihnen wirksam werden lässtest, so dasz sie durch es dir zu eigen werden und bleiben, dann sind sie bewahrt. Dein Wort ist die Wahrheit als Macht.⁴⁵

The Evil One and the world are warded off through the "word." The "prince of this world" (12:31; 14:30; 16:11) meets his judgment in the death of Jesus, but he is not deprived of the capacity to hurt or harm the disciples. If they are left without divine aid, the Evil One may attack them. The disciples, however, have the "word" of God to preserve and protect them in their ministry.

Jesus makes another petition to the Father in behalf of the disciples: "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (17:17).

⁴⁴Bultmann, p. 389.

⁴⁵Bornhäuser, XV, 107.

The preparation of a sacrifice helps to explain the term *ἁγιασμός*.

The animal offered in sacrifice to God was "sanctified" in the sense that it was given to God, acknowledged as His possession (Deut. xv. 19). So with the first-born (Exod. xiii. 2). Similarly, the priest was "sanctified" (Exod. xxviii. 41), as one whose life was devoted to the service of God, on behalf of the people. Jesus is both priest and victim. He is therefore a voluntary sacrifice. In thus "sanctifying Himself," Jesus consecrates Himself in death to God.⁴⁶

Jesus consecrates Himself as the Lamb of God on the cross in order that He might redeem the world from its iniquity (1:29). Jesus consecrates Himself for the disciples (*ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν*) in order that they may (*ἐν τῇ ἀλήθειᾳ*) be consecrated in truth (17:19). Their consecration consists of more than being set apart for God.⁴⁷ The Old Testament describes consecration in terms of being set apart for a specific task. Aaron and his sons were sanctified to be priests (Exodus 28:41); Jeremiah was sanctified to be a prophet (Jeremiah 1:5). In late Judaism holiness came through the Law. An example will point this out.

Unzählige Male im Laufe eines Tages wurde Gott von der Israeliten dafür gepriesen, dass er sie durch seine Gebote geheiligt habe. Sooft ein Israelit sich anschickte, ein Gebot zu erfüllen, hob er einen Lobspruch mit den Worten an: "Gepriesen seist du, Jahve unser Gott, König der Welt, der uns geheiligt hat durch seine Gebote."⁴⁸

⁴⁶Strachan, p. 304.

⁴⁷Plummer, p. 313.

⁴⁸Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1956), II, 567-568.

Consecration, then, means to be set apart in holiness for a sacred duty.⁴⁹ The disciples are made holy and thus set apart by God for their ministry in the world, but their consecration does not come through the Law; it is the saving truth revealed in the teaching and death of Jesus that separates the disciples for their ministry.

The concept of *קדוּשָׁה* retains much of the meaning of *קדוּשָׁה* in the Old Testament. Barrett summarizes the meaning of in the Gospel according to St. John thus:

characteristically it means the Christian revelation brought by and revealed in Jesus. . . . This revelation arises out of the faithfulness of God to his own character, and to his promises, of which it is the fulfillment. It is saving truth; it is perceived only through the work of the Spirit, and by those who are predestined in conformity with it. Further, this truth is Jesus Himself, who being God is the fulfillment and revelation of God's purposes.⁵⁰

The truth, then, is the Christian revelation given in Jesus, who is Truth. The disciples are set apart for their ministry by *קדוּשָׁה*. This process of consecration is continuous, rather than an isolated event in the life of the disciples.⁵¹

As Jesus prays for the consecration of His disciples, which is theirs through God's word, He remembers their calling. Their person and their office cannot be divided; they belong completely and totally

⁴⁹Barrett, p. 426.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 139.

⁵¹Bernard, II, 574.

to Jesus, and so they are united in their high calling.⁵² But now Jesus prays specifically for their office in life: "As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (17:18). Both Jesus and the disciples have a ministry in the world (confer 20:21). After His departure they continue His ministry. The world is invited, through the witness of the Holy Spirit and the apostles, to enter the circle of God's chosen men.

The verb (*ἀποστέλλω*) used in 17:18 points to the apostolate. The word "apostle" designates not a fixed office, but an assigned function.⁵³ The apostle is sent out for ministry. The disciple is a man called by Jesus; the apostle is a disciple commissioned by Jesus to represent Him and to make disciples of other men.⁵⁴ The *μαθηταί* become *ἀπόστολοι* by the decision of Jesus.⁵⁵ Franzmann states the relationship in these terms: "Discipleship is the matrix of the apostolate, and the goal of the apostolate is the creation of disciples."⁵⁶ The apostolate is the will and commission

⁵²Schlatter, Erläuterungen, I, 794.

⁵³Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, "*ἀποστέλλω*," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964), I, 426-427.

⁵⁴Ibid., I, 431.

⁵⁵Ibid., I, 427.

⁵⁶Martin H. Franzmann, Follow Me: Discipleship According to Saint Matthew (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 82.

of the risen Lord. St. John emphasizes that Jesus sustains the apostles in their ministry. That is why the *παράκλητος* is fundamental in the commissioning of the disciples. Through the Spirit Jesus is present with the disciples and participates in their ministry. In the Spirit as the "Spirit of truth" (14:17), and in God's word which is truth (17:17), Jesus Himself, who is Truth in person, is with the disciples, though physically removed from them (14:5-6).⁵⁷

Jesus Prays for Future Believers

As Jesus comes to the close of His prayer for the disciples, He thinks of the fruit which the disciples will bear as they grow on the vine. He thinks now not only of His disciples but also of those who through their word will believe on Him.

The disciples' ministry will evoke faith (17:20). There is a continuity between the message of Jesus and the witness of the disciples through the Holy Spirit. As the faith of the disciples is itself the result of Jesus' ministry to the world, so their ministry will evoke faith. The disciples' "word" is the appointed means for the calling out of faith.⁵⁸ The order of the Greek emphasizes the fact that those who believe will believe through the disciples' word.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Rengstorf, I, 435.

⁵⁸Westcott, I, 255.

⁵⁹Barrett suggests that it might be more natural to take *εἰς ἐμέ* with *λόγου* rather than with *πιστευόντων*. The meaning would then be "their word of testimony to me." This seems forced, and the meaning probably is "believe in me through their word." Cf. 1:12. Barrett, p. 427.

Through their word others, who now still belong to the world, will come to believe on Him. There is no problem in the continued existence of an earthly society after Jesus' resurrection. The Church will accomplish the work of Jesus. It will make certain affirmations about Jesus.

It acknowledges him as Son of God and Messiah, as the Holy One of God, as the Resurrection and the Life. It affirms his heavenly origin, his divine mission, his essential relationship with the Father. This faith is the free response of man to the revelation of God in Christ.⁶⁰

The disciples are united with God and with Jesus in the Church. The unity of believers is described by Jesus as parallel to that of the Father and the Son (17:21,23a).⁶¹ Jesus has already prayed that His own disciples be one (17:11); now He prays that the whole community of disciples in the Church be one. The unity of the community of believers is strictly analogous to the unity of the Father and the Son: "that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us" (17:21). The binding principle of this unity is love (confer 17:23). Bultmann explains the implications of this unity:

⁶⁰Howard, p. 159.

⁶¹T. Evan Pollard, "'That They All May Be One' (John xvii. 21)--and the Unity of the Church," The Expository Times, LXX, 5 (1959), 149, states that the Arians tried to change the comparison so that the unity of the Father and the Son was based on the unity of the disciples. Athanasius held this interpretation to be in error, and showed that in each place where Jesus prayed for the unity of His disciples the unity is compared with a higher unity, the unity of the Father and the Son. Athanasius, therefore, maintained that the unity of believers must be compared with the higher unity of Father and Son and not vice versa.

Die Einheit der Seinen soll der zwischen Vater und Sohn gleichen; d. h. also: wie das Sein des Sohnes ein Sein für den Vater ist und umgekehrt, so musz das Sein der einzelnen Glaubenden ein Sein für einander sein, --wie 13:34f. 15:12 sagen wird: in der Verbundenheit der ²⁸⁺⁷⁷. Und wie im Sohn der Vater begegnet, weil der Sohn nichts Individuelles für sich ist, so darf auch innerhalb der Gemeinde der Eine im Anderen nicht die Individualität sehen, schätzen oder kritisieren, sondern er darf in ihm nur das Glied der Gemeinde sehen. Nicht persönliche Sympathien oder gemeinsame Zwecke konstituieren die Einheit, sondern das in allen lebendige, die Gemeinde begründende Wort, dessen Anspruch und Gabe Jeder dem Anderen gegenüber vertritt, indem er für ihn ist.⁶²

There is no direct suggestion in these verses of organizational unity.⁶³ The unity here is much deeper than external, organizational union. St. John, through the words "for those who believe in me through their word" (17:20), indirectly says, "dasz die Einheit eine solche der Tradition des Wortes und des Glaubens ist."⁶⁴ The unity of the community of believers consists in an inward unity expressing itself in a common message and ministry. Unity is based on faith in the "name" of God, revealed to man by Jesus. The unity of disciple with disciple is a unity of faith as each disciple is in Jesus and Jesus in the disciple, and their unity is a unity of proclamation as each disciple is united in the on-going work of revelation.⁶⁵ This parallels the oneness of the Father and the Son.

⁶²Bultmann, p. 393.

⁶³Ibid., p. 392.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 394-395.

Even as Jesus worked in perfect harmony with the Father and fully revealed the Father on earth, so too, He now entrusts the work of revelation to the disciples. He prays that they might not work at cross purposes in this work but that even as there is unity of will between Himself and the Father, so now He prays that there might be this same unity of will among His followers, that the revelation of God might be made known in the world through proclamation. The disciples believe and know Jesus, and their discipleship is to bring the world to believe and know Him also.

Bultmann clearly states that since the unity of the believers is based on the unity of the Father and the Son, the basis of unity cannot be through organization, institution, or doctrinal teachings. The basis for unity can only be the "word" revealed by Jesus.⁶⁶ He says:

Geschaffen werden kann die Einheit nur durch das Wort der Verkündigung, in der der Offenbarer--in seiner Einheit mit dem Vater--jeweils gegenwärtig ist.⁶⁷

The unity of believers is to be a perfect unity (17:23a). The word *ἑνωσις* is used in the Fourth Gospel of carrying out, or

⁶⁶Werner Elert, Der Christliche Glaube, edited by Ernst Kinder (Dritte und erneut durchgesehene und ergänzte Auflage; Hamburg: Furche Verlag, c.1956), pp. 35-39, gives a needed corrective in this regard. On page thirty-nine he states: "Diese immer erneute Prüfung des Dogmas, d. h. des Sollgehalts der kirchlichen Verkündigung, bildet die Aufgabe der theologischen Dogmatik." Thus there is a relation between doctrine and the "word" which cannot be ignored or forgotten.

⁶⁷Bultmann, p. 393.

completing, a task (4:34; 5:36; 17:4). Barrett maintains that the idea of completeness is all that is involved in this term. True completion of this unity, he says, can only be reached at the end of time, but this does not exclude the thought that the Church may enjoy perfect unity at every stage of its growth.⁶⁸

Jesus' glory is a prerequisite for the unity of believers (17:22). Jesus is glorified. Even as Yahweh got Himself glory by the saving act of the conquest of Canaan, so Jesus got Himself glory by the saving act of redemption on the cross. Jesus communicates His glory to the disciples and to the whole community of believers.

Glory is

the final act of the living God in history, through the person and mission of Jesus, directed towards the bringing of all men into the family of God. Christ is said to give His disciples His own glory. That means not merely life after death, but life here and now.⁶⁹

The disciples share in the glory of Jesus because they are united with Him. His glory makes possible the unity of His new people.

The disciples' unity makes manifest to the world the divine mission of Jesus (17:21b,23b). The unity of all believers in the fellowship with the Father and the Son brings home to the unbelieving world that Jesus, the grand central point and support of this unity, is none other than the One Sent of God.⁷⁰ That the community of

⁶⁸Barrett, p. 428.

⁶⁹Strachan, p. 106.

⁷⁰Franz Muszner, Die Anschauung vom "Leben" im vierten Evangelium, in Münchener Theologische Studien, edited by Franz Xaver Seppelt, Joseph Pascher, and Klaus Mörsdorf (München: Karl Zink Verlag, 1952), p. 153.

believers is united with Jesus is the highest testimony to the truth of the claim that Jesus is God's sent One. The Father sends the Son, and through the works of the Son the love of the Father for man is revealed. The Son always lives in the unity of love with the Father (17:23b). In the love that exists between members of the community united with Jesus the life of the Father and the Son is manifested.

The comments of Theodor Jänicke further emphasize what has been said about the unity of believers and may serve as a concluding statement.

Wenn nun von der Gemeinde erbeten wird "daz sie eins seien, wie ich in dir und du in mir", so geht es um weit mehr als nur "der Glieder Einigkeit" (die vom Neuen Testament auch im Allgemeinen mit den Ausdrücken "Gemeinschaft" und "eines Sinnes sein" bezeichnet wird). Es geht um die Vollmacht der Offerbarung im Zeugnis der Jünger. Wie die ganze Herrlichkeit Gottes über dem Sohn ist, so soll sie nun auch über der Gemeinde sein. "Und die Herrlichkeit, die du mir gabst, gab ich ihnen, damit sie eines seien, wie wir eins sind (d. h. damit die Offenbarungseinheit auch bei ihnen verwirklicht werde), ich in ihnen und du in mir, daz sie seien vollendet in eins, damit die Welt erkenne, daz du mich gesandt hast und liebst sie, wie du mich liebst" (22 u. 23). Gott und Christus sind so eins, daz im Christus Gott zu finden ist. So wird die Gemeinde eins im Vater und Sohn, daz in ihr die Herrlichkeit des Sohnes zu finden ist. "Damit die Welt erkenne. . ." Die Welt "erkennt" nicht auf Grund der Einigkeit der Glieder der Gemeinde. Die Glaubwürdigkeit der Gemeinde hat eine andere Garantie. Sie liegt in der "Einheit", die als Verheissung über ihr steht, in der Offenbarungsvollmacht des Zeugnisses von Christus. Die Gemeinde gründet in der Einheit Jesu mit dem Vater.⁷¹

Jesus prays for the unity of the disciples in the world, but He

⁷¹Theodor Jänicke, Die Herrlichkeit des Gottessohnes (Berlin-Bielefeld: Verlag Haus und Schule, 1949), pp. 180-181.

also prays the Father for their final union with Him in glory (17:24). Jesus said earlier: "If any one serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him" (12:26). Jesus now prays that the disciples might not always be in the world, but that they may be where He is and that they may behold His glory. Jesus here contemplates the time when it is possible for the disciples to follow Him in glory. Jesus goes to the Father through death. The disciples must remain in the world (17:11), but the time will come when they will follow Jesus.

The Summation of Jesus' Prayer

In the last verses (17:25-26) of Jesus' prayer, He summarizes the prayer and brings the present and the future together for the disciples. The unbelieving world does not know God and stands apart from God's righteousness, but Jesus knows the Father and can address Him as *ἰσχυρός* (17:25). Nowhere else in the Gospel according to St. John is this descriptive word applied to God. It has significance here because it is by the righteous judgment of God that the world is shown to be wrong, and Jesus and the disciples in the right, in their knowledge of God (confer 16:9-10). The world does not know God: "the world has not known thee, but I have known thee" (17:25). A mutual knowledge exists between the Father and the Son. Only the Son knows the Father, who has been with Him from the beginning: "All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and

any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (St. Matthew 11:27). The disciples do not know God as Jesus knows Him, but they know Him as the One who sent Jesus, and they know that Jesus is the authorized agent and revealer of God. Their knowledge of God's name comes through Jesus, and this is the only saving knowledge that is accessible to man. Jesus reveals the "name" of God to the disciples (17:26a) through His teachings, deeds, and person.

For the disciples the righteousness of God means love, not judgment. God abides in love with the disciples (17:26b). The Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father. An inward love exists in the Godhead, and this love inspires the community of believers and gives it life.⁷² Love is the active, divine principle which is at work in the heart of every disciple ("in them"), and therefore it serves as the basis of relationship between each disciple. Barrett explains: "Because the love of God is in them it must needs be among them; and vice versa."⁷³ "I in them" (17:26b) expresses the relationship of Jesus and the disciples. The Father loves the Son, and it is because the Son is in the disciples that they have this love. Jesus is leaving the world and going to the Father in order that He may dwell in the disciples and among them. For when the love of God moves the heart and forms the will of a man, then Jesus lives in him.

⁷²Barrett, p. 430.

⁷³Ibid.

The disciples know the love of God because it is revealed to them by Jesus. The love which exists between the Father and the Son is the love which is given to the community of believers. Jesus says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13). Jesus shows this love to His disciples now as He goes to be crucified for them on the cross.

In the high-priestly prayer Jesus prays for Himself. He asks the Father to glorify Him, to restore Him to the glory He had before the foundation of the world. Jesus' glory comes through His final act on the cross. He glorifies the Father by His perfect love and obedience. His obedience on the cross brings eternal life for His disciples. They know God and Jesus whom He sent. Their discipleship is His gift, resting upon His completed work.

Jesus not only prays for Himself, but also for the disciples who are united with Him. He manifested the name of God to the disciples. They have kept the Father's word which Jesus gave them, and thus glorified Him. The disciples are the common possession of the Father and the Son. As Jesus departs from the disciples He remembers their needs and prays the Father to keep them in His name so that they may be one, even as He and the Father are one. Only one disciple fell from the circle of disciples with Jesus; so closely has He watched over them. And now He asks the Father to keep them. The disciples are in a world of hate, and they need the Father's protection from the world's hatred and the Evil One. Now Jesus consecrates Himself as the Lamb of God, and He asks the Father to consecrate the disciples in truth, in

the Word of God. Jesus also remembers their calling; He sends them out as the Father sent Him.

Jesus looks beyond the disciples and sees their fruits in others who will believe in Him through their word. By their word they shall bring men to see God's grace. Jesus prays that these may all be one, just as He and the Father are one. Their unity is a unity of faith and a unity of proclamation. Together they know and believe that Jesus is God's Sent One. The basis for their unity is the word revealed by Jesus. Their unity testifies to the world the truth of God.

Lastly, Jesus summarizes His prayer. He knows the Father and the disciples know the Father through Him. The world stands apart from God's righteousness in Jesus. But for the disciples God's righteousness means love. God abides in love with the disciples. The Father loves the Son, and because the Son is in the disciples they have this love. And this is the love of God, that He sent Jesus to give His life on the cross. Jesus now goes to that cross.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Jesus prepares the disciples for their discipleship by open and continued association with Himself. Their capability for their calling rests completely in knowing Him. He gives them their communion with God. He equips them for their ministry.

Jesus prepares the disciples for their ministry before He departs to go to the Father. He prepares them, first of all, by example. He loves His disciples, whom He calls to Himself out of the world to be His in the world, *εἰς τέλος*. He shows His love for them in His example of service in washing the disciples' feet. He cleanses them through His love, and He commands them to live out this love among themselves. The love of Jesus for His disciples unites them with Him in a perfect bond. As they go forth in ministry bringing this love to their fellowmen, they bring these men into union with Jesus. Judas is Jesus' only "lost love" among the circle of disciples. He breaks loose from the bond of love with Jesus and the other disciples. He chooses not to be a disciple. Love is the only way in which the disciple can carry out his discipleship. Jesus prepares the disciples by example as to the meaning of love and how it affects them. In giving their lives up to love, in submitting their wills to love, and in giving love to God and to one another, they begin their discipleship.

The disciples cannot begin their ministry of love by themselves.

Their only strength is in Jesus, who prepares them through His instruction as to the meaning of His death for them. He interprets His death for them, showing them that His death is not a defeat but the glorification of the Father through the Son and the glorification of the Son by the Father. His death is not a defeat but is the basis for the disciples' ministry. They share in His glorification. Jesus' departure in death means that His ministry is complete, but His going to the Father means at the same time that the disciples' ministry begins. He came into the world to unite Himself with the disciples, and by His going to the Father He unites the disciples with the Father. Now the disciples can begin their ministry united with the Father and the Son. They can carry on the work of the Father through the Son who sends them and equips them for their ministry.

The disciples have the best equipment. First of all, Jesus equips them by going the way of love for them. He goes this way for them alone. Jesus' obedience to the Father's will in going this way becomes a direction for the life of the disciples. He establishes for them the commandment of love. He also equips them by bestowing on them the privilege of prayer in His name. They have the promise that their prayers will be heard and answered. Jesus, furthermore, equips the disciples by binding them to His word. Their obedience to His commandments comes from Jesus' love for them. He also promises them the presence and the power of the Spirit and His own presence and the presence of the Father. They are not orphaned men in their ministry. Even though Jesus leaves them to go to the Father, yet they are united

with Him in their ministry.

The disciples are united with Him in their ministry as branches are united to the vine. He is the genuine Vine, and they are the branches. They depend on Him for everything; He is their Life. The Father is the husbandman who cares for the vine and the branches. He prunes the fruitful and casts out the dead. To be fruitful the disciple must abide in Jesus, and He in him. Their mutual indwelling means that they must bear fruit. As fruit-bearers they receive a blessing, the blessing of being one with the Father and the Son. Their union with Jesus is a very personal union. They are His friends. Jesus pours out His love upon His friends in His death to the end that among them and in them love in turn might grow. The disciples are to love one another. To be in the circle of the love and friendship of Jesus is not one's own doing. Jesus chooses His friends and appoints them for His representatives. They are to bring the grace of God to men through the effectual call to repentance. But this ministry the world hates, and it will persecute the disciples. The disciples are united with Jesus in their ministry as partners in persecution. First the world hated Jesus. It condemned Him and rejected Him. The disciples likewise fall under the condemnation of the world. They are not of this world, and the selfish love of the world rejects them and persecutes them. Their ministry is in contradiction to the world. This is not a condition for despair and fear, however, because Jesus Himself sends them the Counselor, even the Spirit of truth, to declare to them the things of Himself. The Spirit

is a permanent power for them in proclaiming the Word in the world. Jesus leaves the disciples and they are sorrowful. Their sorrow becomes joy, however, as Jesus Himself comes again and is seen by them. The world rejoices only for a little while, while Jesus is gone, but when He returns the joy of the disciples is full. Their joy is in His victory and in His gift of peace. Even though their ministry in the world means tribulation and sorrow for them, yet they will see God and rejoice. United with Jesus in their ministry, they go prepared to proclaim the Word of God with the power of the Spirit.

The disciples' union with Jesus becomes complete by the fact that He prays for them. Jesus prepares the disciples for their discipleship by His intercession for them to the Father. Their discipleship is based on Jesus' glorification, and Jesus now prays for this glorification by the Father. He asks the Father to restore Him to the glory He had before the foundation of the world. His glory comes through His death on the cross. His obedience brings eternal life for His disciples. They know God and Jesus whom He sent. Jesus does not, however, in these last moments, pray only for Himself, but also for the disciples who are united with Him. He has made known the name of God to the disciples, and they have kept the Father's word. The winning of these disciples, the common possession of the Father and the Son, has brought glory to Jesus. Jesus thanks the Father for the disciples, but He also remembers their needs now that He is leaving them. He asks the Father to keep them in the Father's name so that they may be one, even as He and the Father are one. Now the disciples

will be without His physical presence in the world of hate, and they need the Father's protection from this hate and the Evil One. Jesus, as the Lamb of God, goes to consecrate Himself, and He asks the Father to consecrate the disciples in truth, the Word of God. Their calling is to proclaim this truth to the world. Thus Jesus looks beyond the present state of His disciples, and He sees their fruits in others who will believe in Him through their word. By their word they shall bring men to see the grace of God. Jesus prays that these may all be one, just as He and the Father are one. The unity of the community of believers is a unity of faith and a unity of proclamation. Together they know and believe that Jesus is God's Sent One, and their unity testifies to the truth of this claim. The basis for their unity is the word revealed by Jesus.

United with the Father and the Son, the disciples can live out their discipleship until they follow Jesus to be with Him in glory. But even now the disciples abide in God's love. The Father loves the Son, and because the Son is in the disciples, they have this love. Jesus shows this love to the disciples now as He goes to be crucified for them on the cross.

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