

John 13–17 mini-review

Introduction

- Jesus's hour has been coming (2:4, 7:6, 8, 30, 8:20, 12:23, 27), but now it has arrived (13:1).
- **13:1–30**: Jesus washes his disciples' feet as a picture of what his hour will achieve.

Question: How is it better that Jesus has gone away?

- How is it better for us during the coronavirus crisis?
- How was it better for Jesus's new creation work?

1. Jesus's departure was better for our relationship with God (13:31–14:31)

- The disciples didn't really know Jesus when he was here (2:22, 12:16, 14:7, 14:9, 16:18, 16:29–31), but when he goes:
 - a. They will know him when he comes to take them to his Father's house (13:31–14:7).
 - Jesus will come back to take his disciples to be with him (14:1–4).
 - He is the only way for them to get there (14:6).
 - b. They will know him when he comes to them through the Holy Spirit (14:8–31).
 - Jesus will ask the Father to send the apostles the Spirit (14:16).

- The Spirit will remind the apostles of Jesus's words (14:25–26).
- Jesus will make his home with anyone who keeps those words (14:23–24).

2. Jesus's departure was better for his mission to the world (15:1–16:33).

- Jesus's mission was not very successful when he was here (6:61, 66, 8:31, 59), but when he goes:

a. The world's rejection will be reversed by Jesus, the true vine (15:1–17).

- Jesus is the true vine (15:1–2).
- He will fill the world with fruit as his disciples abide in him (15:3–11).
- He sends them out to go and do so (15:12–17).

b. The world's hatred will be overcome by the Spirit's witness (15:18–16:33).

- The world will hate the disciples as it hated Jesus (15:18–25).
- The world's hatred will be overcome by the witness of the Spirit through the apostles (15:26–16:15).
- The world's rejoicing will be undone by the relationship enabled by the Spirit through the resurrection (16:16–33).
- **17:1–26:** Jesus's final prayer gives us confidence that he is now asking the Father for all these things.

Discussion

1. How has Jesus's teaching about his absence in this section surprised you?

You might want to think about:

- Why we might think it'd be better for our relationship with God or Jesus's mission to the world if he was here?
- When in life might you be particularly prone to feeling this way?
- How does Jesus's teaching in this section answer these questions?

Or you could discuss one of the following case studies:

'Alex is a student in your IGC group. He knows that Jesus says it's better for his mission that he's gone away. But he can't help thinking that more of his friends would become Christians if they could just meet Jesus in person, see one of his miracles, and hear his teaching. How would you help him see that Jesus's absence really is better?'

'Tony is a Christian friend of yours. He often finds it hard when you talk about your "relationship with God". He says God just feels distant to him. He's been invited to join a church where they say the music will help him feel closer to God. How would this section help him understand his relationship with God better?'

2. How does this section give us confidence in spite of the coronavirus pandemic?

You might want to think about:

- How the relationship with God that Jesus enables encourages us when we feel isolated?
- How the fruitfulness of Jesus's mission helps us when we can't do normal ministry?

3. How might this section shape your priorities over the coming months?

You might want to think about:

- How we can use the coming months to grow the relationship with God that Jesus's absence enables? How might his teaching in this section shape that relationship?
- How we can use the coming months to advance Jesus's mission to the world? How might his teaching in this section shape the way we engage in that mission?

4. How might this shape your priorities after life returns to normal

You might want to discuss the following case study:

'Bob has been living in the London, but next year he's moving back to Hong Kong. He's worried about leaving his Bible teaching church in the UK. He's not sure how he'll be able to keep growing as a Christian or sharing the gospel at work without it. How might this section encourage him? How might it help him work out what to do?