

# Mornings: The Upper Room discourse (John 13-17)

1/6: The cross and serving God

John 13:1-30

Introduction

a) The Upper Room discourse

b) The foot washing and the cross

c) The foot washing and the Bible

1. The cross and qualification for discipleship

2. The cross and sufficiency for discipleship

3. The cross and model for discipleship

4. The cross and challenge in discipleship

Conclusion

## Personal study questions

v1-5

How does it change the way we read the foot washing as we realise that it is an 'enacted parable'?

What do v1-5 tell us about Jesus?

How does this cause you to love Jesus more?

v6-11

What has Peter failed to grasp about discipleship?

Why are these lessons so hard for us to learn?

What difference would it make to our relationship with Jesus (and others) if we really understood these lessons?

How does this passage help us when we feel we have let Jesus down badly?

v12-20

v14 suggests that the disciples are to 'wash one another's feet'. What does this mean, practically?

v16 suggests that the lesson Jesus has to teach His disciples is a lesson for them as they are 'sent' as 'messengers'. What difference does this make, practically?

How will these verses change our relationships with Christians/non Christians in our workplaces?

How will these verses change our big decisions regarding work/'career'?

## Questions for group discussion

On Jesus: there are lessons in this section about the sovereignty of Jesus, the love of Jesus and the humility of Jesus.

How does each of these lessons make you admire Jesus more?

How do they compare/contrast with the power-structures of the world?

How might you speak to unbelieving colleagues and friends about each of these?

On discipleship: Jesus speaks very bluntly to Peter, twice.

Why does Peter need this strong word?

Why is it so important we grasp these two lessons both for ourselves and for those we seek to minister to—Christian and non-Christian?

On ministry: what does true 'foot-washing' look like when applied to a ministry life-style and ministry choices? Try to find both big-picture life-shaping answers and more detailed every-day examples.

## 2/6: The cross and seeing God

### John 13:31-14:31

#### Introduction

v31-35      The cross and the glory of God

Question one: the cross and assurance - v36-14:4

Question two: the cross and salvation 14:5-7

Question three: the cross and 'seeing' the Father - 14:8-21

Question Four: the cross and the world

Philip: The 'if only' question

→ look at Jesus

- listen to Jesus

- speak to Jesus

- trust and obey Jesus

Conclusion

## Questions for personal study

v31-34

In what ways is God 'glorified' in and through the cross?

What will it look like for you to 'love one another as I have loved you'?

v36-14:4

How does Jesus' answer in 14:1-4 deal with Peter's concerns in 13:36 and 38?

What difference does it make to you to know this?

14:5-7

What does Jesus mean when He says that He is 'the way', the truth' and 'the life'?

How key is the cross in all of this?

Why do we/others find the negatives in this verse so difficult?

Why do they have to be true?

What do they show us about our understanding of ourselves if we find them impossibly offensive?

14:8-21

In what ways do you find yourself echoing Philip's question?

What does Jesus' answer to Philip show that you have failed to grasp about Jesus?

What are you going to change in order to ensure that you 'see' the Father?

## Questions for group discussion

v31-35      How can we be better at living out 13:34 in our dispersed 'City' contexts? Why does it matter that we do?

v36-14:4    What big differences does 14:1-4 make to you?

v5-7        Why is it so important that we are clear on 14:6b? Why does it have to be true?

v8 – 21

In what ways do we find ourselves expressing Philip's statement (v8)?

What does it show us about our understanding of Jesus when we speak as Philip does?

What needs to happen if we are to 'see the Father'?

What aspects of your own experience of discipleship and expectation of ministry does Jesus' answer to Philip correct/challenge?

Do you think there are things we need to change or think differently about in the City ministry if we are to 'see the Father'?

# 3/6: The cross and bearing fruit for God

## John 15:1-17

### Introduction

#### 1 Jesus, the true vine, and how we bear fruit

v1-3 Fruit-bearing, the vine and the vinedresser

v4-6 Fruit-bearing, remaining, and apostasy

v7-8 Fruit-bearing, the word and prayer

#### 2 Jesus, the true vine, and what the fruit is

v9-11 where does the fruit come from?

v12-15 what is the fruit?

v16-17 where should we bear fruit?

### Conclusion

A vision of fruit-bearing

## Questions for personal study

v1-8

How does the Old Testament use of the vine imagery (Isaiah 5:1 – 7; 27:2-6) add weight to the claims Jesus makes in these verses?

There are great promises and great warnings in these verses.

What are they?

Why are these great promises so reassuring/liberating?

Why are the warnings so serious?

There appears to be only two (one?) things necessary if we are to benefit from being in the vine. What are they?

What are the implications for you personally? For your family? For your church? For the Christians in your workplace?

v9-15

How has the Father loved the Son? (v9) (see 5:20-23)

How has Jesus loved the disciples? (v12-13)

What are the further consequences of 'remaining' outlined in these verses?

How does this help to explain Christian experience?

v16-17

How do these verses help us to understand what the fruit of the vine is?

How do you see this outworking in the specific 'limb' of the vine in which you find yourself? (think both of the work you are involved with in the City and at home)



## Questions for group discussion

What has encouraged you from these verses?

What has challenged you?

How has this changed your general understanding of Jesus and His work?

How do the lessons on 'being a branch' change the way you understand God's purpose for you at work and at home?

How does the big picture of the Old Testament context expand your vision?

Why is it so important that we understand how the Father has loved the Son (v9; see 5:20-23) and how the Son has loved His disciples (v12-13)?

What will it look like for us to put these two things into practise personally, in our work setting, and in our churches both at work and home? Be practical, but remember – no two 'branches' are the same!

## 4/6: The cross and suffering

John 15:18-16:4

Introduction

The 'normal' Christian life

1. Do not be surprised at the source and intensity of persecution

2. Do not be naïve about the reasons for hostility

a)

b)

c)

3. Do not be blind to the consequences of persecution

4. Do not be ignorant about the necessity of persecution

Conclusion

## Questions for personal study

v18-25

What are the different reasons for the world's hatred of Jesus' followers?

In what ways have/do you or your family members or Christians generally experience what Jesus describes here?

What does the world's hatred of Jesus tell us about the world?

How does exposure to the gospel impact the world?

Jesus quotes from Psalm 69:4. Why is this significant?

v26-27

Why will the coming of the Spirit only serve to multiply what Jesus describes in v18-25?

How does this help to explain the world's response to the Bible?

What do you deduce from this about a person's experience of having the Spirit?

v1-4

How does Jesus' teaching in this section of the discourse serve His stated purpose for you?

What should we expect of the normal Christian life?

## Questions for group discussion

How has Jesus' teaching achieved His stated aim for you?

Jesus tells us many things about how and why the world will relate to His people. Why is it important that we understand the world?

Jesus tells us much about the world and Himself. Why is this helpful?

Why is it inevitable that the Spirit-filled person will experience these things?

Look up 1 Peter 4:14 and 1 Peter 5:1-2. How does Peter show himself to have grasped Jesus' teaching in the Upper Room?

In what ways is/is not your experience of the Christian life 'normal'?

# 5/6: The cross, the Spirit the word and the world

## John 16:4b-33

### Introduction

It is good that He is gone—is it?

1. Jesus' 'going', the Spirit and the world v4b-11

2. Jesus' 'going', the Spirit and the word v12-15

3. Jesus' 'going', sorrow and joy v16-28

4. Jesus' 'going', triumph and victory v29-33

### Conclusion

## Questions for personal study

Do you ever wish that Jesus were here with us in person?

v4b-11

Why is it good for the world that Jesus has gone?

What does it mean for the Spirit to 'convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgement'?  
Be specific.

How does this help us to understand our colleagues and friends' reactions as they experience the work of the Spirit?

v12-15

Why is it important that we remember to whom Jesus is saying these words?

How does what Jesus says give us confidence in the content of Scripture?

How does what Jesus says give us confidence in the sufficiency of Scripture?

How should we respond when a person suggests that the Spirit has given them something new to say?

v16-28

What is the source of a disciple's joy?

Why is it good that Jesus has 'gone'?

## Questions for group discussion

v4b-15

How do the two sections, v4b-11 and 12-15 work together?

How then should we expect the world to be convicted of sin, righteousness and judgement?

How does what Jesus says in 15:26–27 tie into this equation?

How does all of this help us as we consider our own witness?

In what ways do you find yourself tempted not to believe what Jesus teaches in v12-15?

How do these verses help you to trust and value the Bible?

What will be the dangers to which we are exposed if we do not believe what Jesus teaches in v12-15?

v16-28

How do these verses help you to understand what true Christian joy looks like? How does this compare/contrast to other experiences of joy?

In what ways have you been helped to have peace by what Jesus teaches here?

Can you see how v16-28 connect to v4b-15?

## 6/6: The cross and the glory of God

### John 17:1-26

#### Introduction

1. God is glorified in eternity through the finished work of Christ on the cross: v1-5

2. God is glorified on earth through the Apostolic witness in the world: v6-19

3. God is glorified today through the united witness of his people: v20-26

#### Conclusion



## Questions for personal study

v1-5

What is Jesus' main desire in these verses?

What has Jesus done that enables Him to make such a request?

What do we learn here about the source and the nature of eternal life?

Pause and give thanks!

v6-19

What does Jesus tell us about those for whom He prays in this section?

Why is it important that we know these things about those for whom Jesus prays?

How does this give you confidence in the truths you read of in the Bible?

v20-26

Who is Jesus praying for in these verses? In v20-21 and then 22-23 Jesus appears to pray essentially the same thing twice. What does He pray? What differences do you see between 20-21 and 22-23?

What does this tell us about the source of Christian unity?

What does this tell us about the importance of our unity?

From v24-26 what is Jesus' ultimate desire for all whom the Father has given Him?

How does Jesus' prayer reassure you?

## Questions for group discussion

What does this chapter teach us about how Jesus has been and is going to be glorified? (spend time on each of the main sections in the chapter)

From v1-5, complete this sentence:

Jesus purpose in coming to earth was to

by

Why is it so important that we understand whom Jesus is praying for in v6-19?

How do v6-11 increase your confidence in the apostles and their words?

How were the apostles kept both before Jesus departed, and after?

What do v20-26 teach us about Christian unity?

How should this impact our interactions with other Christians and churches?

What do they teach us about Jesus' ultimate concern?