

Preparatory promises

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

John 16:27

This last discourse that Jesus shared with His remaining disciples in that upper room, after Judas had departed to betray Him, is filled with precious words of comfort, command, encouragement, warning, and promise, as He prepared them for both His near-term departure in His passion and death, as well as His permanent bodily departure after His resurrection and ascension. As He returns to describing the promise of the Comforter, connected to the necessity of His going away, a number of parting promises are added in this final chapter of the discourse.

He first prepares them for the near-term loss in verses 20-22, with the promise that “I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” This was a necessary anchor point for them as they were launched into the incredible scene of His passion and crucifixion, so that when He actually did see them again, the connection could be made in their disheveled minds and hearts, though it took some time to bring them around, even as “they believed not for joy.”

Then He follows with the long-term promise of the precious privilege of prayer in verses 23-24, continuing the theme from John 14:13-14. He describes their access by faith to the Father in His name: “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” Through His procurement of the gift of righteousness for those who believe on His name, that name becomes the authority of the disciple’s access to the Father by a new and living way. The description of that new relationship is found in our text, which explains that the connection of faith and love which is in Christ Jesus is the basis upon which the Father loves each disciple. What a glorious privilege we have to enter in to the throne of grace for mercy and help!

His final contrasting promise is peace, compared to the tribulation that would and will come to the disciple from the world, which He has overcome. He concludes that all that He has shared in this upper room discourse is so that they might have peace. This is not a state of peace that is absent of trouble. It is a peace that remains even in the midst of tribulation, through our connection to the love of the Father and the Son by faith.