

Promises Made - Promises Kept

John 16:13

13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The corresponding verses:

John 14:16-18

16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17) *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.

18) I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

THE FOG

In John 16, Jesus is prophetically revealing to the disciples His forthcoming crucifixion or death, burial, and resurrection. He realizes their sorrow (v.6) and later their confused astonishment at this announcement (17-18).

What is John 16:13 teaching us?

We should first examine verse 12, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.”

Verse 13 then begins with the word “Howbeit.” Jesus was, in essence, saying, even though I have many revelations and spiritual insights to share with you, because of your lack of understanding and your inability to grasp the deeper concepts of who I am and exactly what the kingdom’s future is about, I will only drop a seed-thought in your minds for now. He then gives them a redemptive glimpse of His sacrifice on the cross, along with the post-Calvary encounters He will enjoy later with these very disciples. He is, in essence, preparing them for what lies ahead regarding the cross, knowing they won’t understand it all. But He leaves them assurances that soon, He will open their understanding more fully. They could not at that time, however, “bear them now.”

He attempts to reassure them in the rest of the chapter that these things must be. Even though you will initially experience sorrow, your sorrow will ultimately turn into joy in the end. As a woman travails initially to bring forth life unto joy, so shall your sorrow turn into joy (20-22).

In verse 25, He once again points them forward prophetically,
25) These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

So, when did Jesus show them all these things? In 16:13, He promised that - He would shew you these things. And in verse 14... "and shall shew it unto you." And again, in verse 25, "I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

Jesus kept the promise He made to them in John 16.

Acts 1:3

3) To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

In Acts 1:3, Luke reflects on the many personal appearances of Jesus after Calvary as proof of promises kept, "he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking" to them.

What the disciples could not grasp in John 16 or pre-Calvary, Jesus could now, in His resurrected and glorified body, plainly reveal the deeper aspects of the kingdom. The evidence was standing before them all, beginning first with women going to the tomb, then to the disciples in John 20:20, "...he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side..." Here in Acts 1:3 is further fulfillment of His promise made in John 16:13-14 & 25:

13) ...and he will shew you things to come.

14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

25) ...but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

How did Christ glorify the Father? By His obedience. By enduring the shame of the cross. By keeping the promises made. The disciples realized after the cross the bigger picture of redemption as Christ unveiled more plainly who He was and the work of the kingdom before their very eyes. This new spiritual discovery and the preponderance of irrefutable evidence that Jesus Christ was indeed Emmanuel or God with us would be the revelation and vision that in no small part led to their willingness to ultimately die for the cause of Christ and His kingdom program. No longer in a spiritual fog, they went forth in faith.

John 14:19-20 which are the corresponding verses to John 16:12-14 is also subsequently and initially fulfilled in Acts 1:3.

19) Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20) At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

“At that day...” Jesus was revealing that He would die and be buried, and the world would no longer see Him as they had. But because He appeared unto them, after “that day” in Acts 1, they would never doubt again.

He taught them in John 14:19-20 “but ye see me: because I live” and “because I live, ye shall live also.” Christ’s words were fully realized: “At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father...” Acts 1:3 was the unveiling of a deeper revelation of both the authenticity of the identity of Christ along with the future church’s role in the kingdom. From His initial personal appearances to the disciples after the resurrection to one of His last in-person Bible classes, Christ was making good on the promises He made.

FROM FOG TO FREEDOM

John 14 and 16 are prophetic teachings of the deity of Christ, the cross, along with the deeper purpose of redemption and the work of the kingdom, that were still hidden in mystery form to His disciples in John’s gospel. After Calvary, however, Jesus was able to fully reveal in Acts 1, with much obvious and tangible evidence before them, of God in Christ through the power of His death, burial, and resurrection. Armed with this miraculous revelation, Christ was then able to open their understanding even more so than before of the church and the things “pertaining to the kingdom.”

Christ kept His promise to plainly show them the Father. It would still be here a little and there a little in their progressive revelation of the intricate aspects of the kingdom, but they had enough proof to have the faith to obey His commands and go to Jerusalem and tarry. Wait for more spiritual understanding. Wait for spiritual power. No more sorrow. No more doubting who Christ was—no more disobedience to His mission and His commands regarding the work of the kingdom.

They descended upon Jerusalem, holding to a promise to be filled with spiritual power from on high. Promise made; promise kept. Peter, in Acts 2, proclaimed that the promise was unto you, your children, and all those afar off and as many as the Lord our God would ever call.

Promises made. Promises kept.

Bill Pitman