

Explore the Bible: March 26

Peace I Leave • John 14:16-29

By Clay Anthony



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They have felt comfort and joy while watching others be awakened to the greatness of grace and mercy. Their lives have never been so full and mapped out. They have Jesus. What else could they possibly need?

Then in one statement Jesus took a pin to their balloon. "I am leaving you," must have hung in the air like a lead cloud.

Now what? Who was going to guide and guard them on these paths of righteousness of which Jesus had spoken? Surely they felt inadequate to instruct people further in what God wanted for their lives. They were mere men who had very few answers.

Jesus had provided more than just miracles and truth. Living in His presence brought a sense of stillness and harmony. Jesus was their calm for the many storms they faced. Now the thought of Him leaving had wrecked all sense of the new normal to which they had become accustomed.

We know the rest of story. We know that while Jesus did depart from them, He promised to return – and He did not leave them in a dark vacuum. He made them complete for task He left them to carry out.

He left a helper (vv. 16-21). The word translated here is rarely used outside a courtroom. If you were in trouble with the law (which spiritually we are) you would need help. Better said, you would need a counselor in the legal sense to argue your case.

This is precisely the type of helper that Jesus sent back to us. We are not left alone in our fight (v. 18). That would be a horrible place to be, fighting for our spiritual lives all on our own while not knowing what recourse we have. That state

of being is simply not good enough for the ones that Jesus loves.

Can we know for sure we have such help in times of need? There is an easy way to answer that question. Do you have Jesus' commands (Bible)? Do you keep those commands? (v. 21) Answering yes to those questions guarantees the Helper stands at the ready to bless and protect just as Jesus did.

He left a teacher (vv. 22-26). Have you ever encountered a hard question in Sunday School? Have you ever wondered what to make of a messy family situation? Do you spend too much time contemplating our political landscape? All these questions cause you to realize you might not know as much as you think you do.

We all need answers. We have all mumbled the words, "I just don't know." Jesus understood we would face these moments. For Him to leave us filled with questions was not an option. Jesus would rather we be filled with the Holy Spirit and rely on His teaching (v. 26) to be reminded of all that He taught.

His words are the answer to messy situations and political strife and – most importantly – eternal life. Such answers can be found nowhere outside of Jesus. British author C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) wrote, "We knock on heaven's door looking for answers to earthly problems but that is not the sort of help they provide there."

We need heavenly answers, and that is what the Holy Spirit teaches us.

He left peace (vv. 27-29). Here is a test for you that you cannot fail. Watch your choice of evening news on television. Count the number of stories shared before the very first commercial break that seem to need a dose of heavenly peace. Chances are there will be many that do.

Yes, we celebrate heavenly peace and desire to share it, but

don't let this one facet of the promise escape you. The peace that Jesus leaves is nothing like the type of peace that the world gives (v. 27). We daily go from heartache to heartache and worry to worry. There is nothing that we can grasp with our five senses that brings Jesus-type peace.

Nothing of earth lasts, especially earth-promised peace. Hurts, wars, disasters, illness, fighting, crime, and such are parts of our day-to-day existence. If we waste our time looking around, we will see nothing but unpeaceful issues abounding.

It is only when we are looking inward to a Christ-filled heart and His peace-filled Word that we realize the stuff of earth indeed has an expiration date.

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