

DISPENSATIONALISM (39)

Doctrinal Theme #1 - A new relationship and union with God through Christ.

A key theme presented in this Upper Room Discourse is that Grace Age believers have a new union with God through Jesus Christ. What is stressed in this section was never seen before and would not be fully developed until Paul would unravel Grace Age doctrines. But Jesus said that He was the only way to having a relationship with God (John 14:6) and that one who believes in Him has a real union in a relationship with God (John 14:20; 17:21). Now the time when this new vital link to God would occur would be “in that day” (John 14:20), which refers to a time that will feature the Holy Spirit (John 15:26).

Now this new “in Christ” relationship is really developed by the Apostle Paul. Paul would teach that any in Christ is a new creation (II Cor. 5:17). Paul taught the Spirit of God baptized us into a union with Christ (Gal. 3:26-28). The seven words “you in Me and I in you” (John 14:20) describes the entire grace doctrines. To be in Christ requires the baptism of the Holy Spirit and to have Christ in us requires the indwelling and regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. No teaching of this kind was ever given to national Israel.

Doctrinal Theme #2 - A cleansing that could keep one in unbroken fellowship with God.

There is no question about the fact that the Upper Room Discourse begins with Jesus illustrating the important theme of cleansing needed for unbroken fellowship with God the Father and God the Son (John 13:3-11).

In the first Epistle of John, he develops the idea of having fellowship with God by being clean. John discusses the necessity for a believer to walk in the truth of the Word of God and confess sin when the believer sins (I John 1:5-9).

This was the basic theological truth that Jesus was illustrating in John 13. The truth was they were already believers, except Judas (John 13:11), and at times when walking through this world there will need to be a cleansing because we are not perfect. We do not need to be saved again; we need to get our feet cleaned by confession.

Now Jesus specifically said in John 13:7 that what He did then would not be realized until later. What those Apostles came to realize is that we don't need to be resaved once we have believed, but we do need personal cleansing when we get our feet dirty. If we want fellowship with God all through life, we need to have moments of confession in order to be clean. This was revolutionary teaching that Israel had never seen or heard.

DISPENSATIONALISM (40)

Doctrinal Theme #3 - A potential of abiding in Christ for the purpose of bearing fruit.

In John 15:1-16 a concept is presented by Jesus Christ to His disciples that was revolutionary. The concept was one of bearing fruit. This thought of bearing fruit for Jewish disciples was something they had never considered. They had been focused on the King and the Kingdom, so the idea of abiding in Christ to bear fruit was foreign to anything they had ever heard.

The ability to bear fruit is produced by the Holy Spirit and that point is fully developed by Paul in the Grace Age (i.e. Phil. 2:13). The spiritual life is not only measured by the evil that one does not do, but also by the fruit that one bears and by the good that one does.

In John 15:5, the idea of abiding in Christ is not the idea of abiding or remaining in a saved state. The idea is to have unbroken fellowship with Jesus Christ and have such a “spiritual vitality” that one bears fruit.

Now the branches that abide in fellowship with Christ are developed so they may even bear more fruit. But John 15:6 makes it clear that if one is “in Christ” (15:2) and does not bear any fruit, God reserves the right to remove the person from the earth and take him to heaven.

Now those listening to this had never heard anything like this. They did not know about a union with Jesus Christ that would be so vital that one could bear fruit.

Doctrinal Theme #4 - A new relationship with God and Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Chafer said in John 13-15, if there is one dominating theme that theme is the Holy Spirit. Certainly one cannot help but see that one of the main points Christ makes is that He was leaving and it was critical that He does leave so another member of the Godhead could be sent—The Holy Spirit.

For about 3 ½ years Jesus Christ had been everything about God to these disciples. Now He was about to leave them, but He would not leave them unattended. In fact, Christ said it was better that He should leave so that another member of the Godhead could come and actually take up residency in each one (**John 14:16-17**). Now I am sure that when Christ uttered the words in Luke 11:13 to His disciples, they had no clue as to what He was referring.

The Holy Spirit is the critical feature of the Church Age or Age of Grace. According to **John 14:16**, the Holy Spirit is in a person forever. That Holy Spirit means we are vitally and organically linked to God the Father and God the Son (**John 14:20**). That Holy Spirit enables us to understand God’s Word (**John 14:26**). The Holy Spirit would enable these disciples to teach accurately about Jesus Christ (**John 15:26-27**). The Holy Spirit would come and be used for conviction that brings to salvation or condemnation (**16:7-11**). The Holy Spirit would enable the Apostles to remember and record all truth concerning Jesus Christ (**16:13**). No Jew had ever heard anything like this. A key Grace Age feature is the Holy Spirit.