

GOSPEL OF JOHN 14 D (14:22-31)

²²Judas, not the Iscariote, said to Him, “Lord, then what has come to pass that you are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone love Me (*keep on loving me*), he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him. ²⁴“The *one* who loves Me not keeps not My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but of the Father Who sent Me.

- ❖ Jesus keeps the word or will of His Father by being obedient unto death on the Cross – it is only through our own *death to self* that we come to *know* God by voluntarily participating in the same self-offering of our lives in service to Him and others.

Fr. Behr: “By his most human action, an action which expresses all the weakness and impotence of our created nature, Christ shows himself to be God...The transforming power of God (transforming something perceived as *weakness* i.e. suffering on a Cross, being made human etc. into a manifestation of the power and glory of God) is demonstrated...by his voluntary death, going to the Cross in obedience to his Father...we cannot look anywhere else to understand who and what God is; there is no other means to come to know God. (Fr. Behr, *The Mystery of Christ: Life in Death*, pg. 32-33.)

The fruit of living in the communion of God’s Grace

Saint Gregory the Great: “The proof of love is its manifestation in deeds. This is why John says in his Epistle: ‘*The one who said, “I have come to know Him,” and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in this one. ⁵But whosoever may keep His word, truly in this one the love of God has been perfected. In this we know that we are in Him. [1 Jn. 2:4,5]*’ Our love is true if we keep our self-will (free-will - self-determination, governing of oneself) in check according to His commandments. One who is wandering here and there through his unlawful desires does not really love God, because he is opposing Him, in his self-will.” [Hom. 30, *Forty Gospel Homilies*, 236, 237; cf. Hom. 30, *P.L.* 76 (col. 1220).]

²⁵“I have spoken these things to you, abiding with you; ²⁶“but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, that One shall teach you all things, and shall remind you of what I said to you.

Christ ascends the Cross and from the Cross bestows the Spirit

“When the Spirit is finally bestowed, to ‘bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you’, this is done precisely by remembering what had been written: the disciples did not, at the time, understand Jesus’ action of entering Jerusalem upon an ass, ‘but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and done to him’. The coming of the Spirit corresponds with the departure of Christ himself, cannot be understood until his glorification, ‘for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7:39, transl. Fr. John). (Fr. Behr, *The Paschal Gospel*, pg. 120).”

²⁷“Peace I leave to you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, give I to you. Let not your heart continue being troubled, nor being fearful.

Bp. Gerasimos: “This peace...is the blessing of Christ, the ‘peace of God, which passes all understanding (Philp 4:7). It is the perfect love in Christ, which casts out fear and makes us into sons of freedom. The peace of Christ is founded upon the love of Christ and is not disturbed by external conditions...I will be with you and you with me, and with my peace you will prevail over fears, temptations and dangers.”

Chrysostom: “For they who now trembled and feared, after they had received the Spirit sprang into the midst of dangers and stripped themselves for the contest against steel, and fire, and wild beasts, and seas, and every kind of punishment. And they, the unlettered and ignorant, spoke so boldly as to astonish their hearers. For the Spirit made them men of iron instead of clay, gave them wings and allowed them to be cast down by nothing human. For such is that grace: if it finds despondency, it disperses it; if evil desires, it consumes them; of cowardice, it casts it out and does not allow one who has partaken of it to be afterward a mere person but, as it were removing him to heaven itself, causes him to imagine to himself all that is there.”

²⁸“You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away’ and ‘I come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, ‘I am going to the Father’; for My Father is greater than I.

Saint Leo: “It is as if Christ is saying, ‘It is for you the ascension is given; it is your lowliness that is exalted in Me above all the heavens, and placed at the right hand of God!...For I have united you to Myself; and become a Son of man that you may be children of God.’” [“Sermon 77, Pentecost III: The Redemption, the Work of the Trinity,” *P.L.* 54 (col. 411), in *Toal*, III:47, 48.]

The Passion of Christ – the self-emptying of God - Life is given through death

“In saying this, He is not saying that God is ‘higher’ metaphysically than He is, as a human being would be higher than a dog. Rather, Jesus relates to the Father as a Son, and as a Son, He obeys His Father. He prays to His Father, does His Father’s will, does His works, speaks His words. As such, He is subordinate to His Father, not in His divinity, but in the way He relates to Him. (Fr. Hopko, *The Names of Jesus*, pg. 31).”

Saint John of Damascus: “If we say that the Father is the origin of the Son and greater than the Son ... we mean by this, that the Son is begotten of the Father and not the Father of the Son, and that the Father naturally is the cause of the Son. So then, whenever we hear it said that the Father is the origin of the Son and greater than the Son, let us understand it to mean in respect of causation.” [*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Bk. I, Ch. VIII, in *Nicene*, 2nd Ser., IX:8.]

²⁹“And now I have told you before it should come to pass, in order that whenever it should come to pass, you might believe. ³⁰“No longer will I talk much with you; for the ruler of this world is coming, and has nothing in Me. ³¹“But that the world might know that I love the Father, and even as the Father enjoined Me, thus I do. Arise, let us be going from this place.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “The term *world* here means the evil people who willingly accept this ruler to control and direct their lives. But the ruler of this world, the devil, finds nothing sinful in the sinless Christ, and therefore has no power or authority over him whatsoever.”