

The Lord's Departure

by John Nelson Darby

The Lord's departure is a reminder of His spiritual presence with us, and the importance of leaning on Him, demonstrating our love through servanthood and partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Scripture: Luke 22:28

Topics: "God's Love", "Servanthood"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the dual principles of God's love and man's hatred as he reflects on the circumstances surrounding Jesus' departure. He explains that while Jesus is physically absent, He remains spiritually present, urging believers to rely on Him despite their weaknesses. The sermon highlights the importance of humility and servanthood, illustrating that true strength comes from recognizing our dependence on God's grace. Darby also discusses the significance of the Lord's Supper as a testament of Christ's love, reminding believers of their unity in Him and the necessity of communion with one another. Ultimately, he encourages Christians to cherish their relationship with the absent yet ever-present Christ.

Transcript

All the circumstances of the death of Jesus sum up for us these two great principles; the love of God, and the hatred of man. Here the Lord makes preparations for His departure, but, though absent now, He is ever present spiritually with His own, and His desire is that the children of God should all lean on Him. Our strength comes from our weakness, but we easily overlook the sense of our weakness when God's grace acts, because we attribute to ourselves something of its effects. It is then that we need to be sifted, for the flesh has come in, and evil with it.

The Church is a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men, to show them and to make them know the power of God, the power of the Holy Ghost prevailing over the power of evil, and that even in the weakness of man. But if we abandon the support of the Spirit, the flesh re-appears, regains its strength, leads us into temptation, and does not shelter us from the effects of this last. This was what happened to Peter; the strength of the flesh suffices to lead him into temptation, but not to draw him out of it. Jesus in this way allowed Peter to be sifted, and to make experience of the weakness of the flesh, in order that he should, by this knowledge, be fitted to strengthen his brethren. The Lord says, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations" (v. 28), and yet often they had neither understood Him nor followed Him faithfully.

By the Lord's departure, He leaves His disciples to themselves, as sheep in the midst of wolves; hence the instruction of verse 36. He gives them also the example of His deep humility. From the moment that we think ourselves to be the benefactors of anyone (vv. 25, 26) we take God's place; man is glorified at God's expense in the presence of his fellows. We lose our character as children of God when we lose our place as servants. Jesus was the Servant of all (v. 27); the more we are servants, the more we shall be like Him. Love makes us the servants of others, because of their miseries. A mother is servant to her child, although she is above him.

With regard to the Lord's Supper, the Lord wished to give His disciples a testimony of His love. But there also He was Servant. (vv. 14, 15.) The Lord was going to take His place in heaven, to become the Nazarite there, separated from the joys of His disciples, and separated outwardly from sinners. Love cannot be happy without those that are loved sharing what it has. Jesus cannot be satisfied until the Church is gathered with Him in glory. But before He departs, He leaves us a token of love. He had much desired to eat that passover with them before He should suffer. He made Himself man and servant that our hearts might have an object for our love, at the same time human and divine. The link of love is perfect; it is the most intimate communion of Him with us, and us with Him. Jesus is the first-born among many brethren, and takes that character as the object of our affections. He does not command love, but He produces it by the manifestation of His love for us. Jesus is not changed. He places us in the same position as Himself; He produces in us the desire for communion with Him. Taking a meal together is a sign of love and fellowship; the joy which accompanies it is not at its height, because now the Lord is separated from us, and does not eat with us in person any longer; He has left us together in love. The Christian is separated from the world by his love for the One who is far away from it.

How can a Christian stay away from the Lord's Supper? It is to excommunicate oneself. The Lord's Supper is a token of pardon; the memorial of the love of Jesus. Christ is spiritually present with His own, but He is also absent, and we wait for Him. By partaking of one loaf, we show that we are one body, and I cannot cut myself off, excommunicate myself from the body of Christ. In the Lord's Supper Christ desired to express His love, to remind us of His love; it is a necessity of His heart. The token of the love of Christ - the Friend who has died for us - the absent Friend - must be precious to us. He deigns to be one of us, separated from us for a little while, but finding His joy in making us happy.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-nelson-darby/the-lords-departure/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net