

The Glory of Christ's Departure

by Russell DeLong

Jesus departed in order to send the Holy Spirit to His followers, so they could be comforted, taught, purified, and empowered.

Scripture: John 14:16, John 16:7, John 16:13, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:4, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 5:18

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

Russell DeLong preaches on the significance of Jesus' departure, explaining that His leaving was to send the Holy Spirit to His followers. Despite the initial confusion and resistance to His departure, Jesus knew it was necessary for the Comforter to come and fulfill vital roles in the lives of believers: to provide strength and comfort, to teach divine truths, to purify hearts from sin, and to endow with power. DeLong emphasizes the importance of welcoming the Holy Spirit into our lives through complete surrender and consecration, allowing His refining fire to transform us into victorious individuals.

Transcript

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (St. John 16:7)

The glory of anything is its ability to perform the function for which it is created.

The glory of an automobile is to get you from where you are to where you want to go without too much difficulty.

The glory of a cook is her ability to provide good and palatable food.

The glory of a hunter is his ability to take aim, pull the trigger, and bring down the game.

The glory of a radio is its ability to get the station you want without too much interference.

What was the glory of Christ's departure? What function was to be created by His departure? Let us meditate on four considerations:

I. The Preparation for the Departure.

Jesus called twelve men. They staked their all upon Him as the Messiah. He commissioned them as ministers. They saw Him heal the sick, cleanse the leper, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, and raise the dead. They sat at His feet and heard His matchless words. All of their hopes and fears, ambitions and desires were wrapped up in Him.

After a brief ministry of three years, Jesus decides to depart. Before He does so, He makes a final address to His disciples, which is recorded in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapter of St. John. Herein He gradually unfolds the shocking, startling news, namely, that He will depart. They were bewildered, astonished, and confounded. At the close of the address He prays for them. That prayer is found in the 17th chapter of St. John.

II. The Unreasonableness of His Departure.

There are five reasons why the departure of Jesus appears irrational.

1. He was only a young man of thirty-three, -- too young to die.
2. His ministry had been of very short duration -- only three and one-half years.
3. The disciples had brought upon themselves the hatred, ridicule, and ostracism of the world. Jesus had a moral obligation to them.
4. The disciples needed the quieting presence of the Master.
5. The early Church in its formative period needed the guiding genius of its founder to pilot it amidst the rocks of opposition.

In the light of the above five reasons which seem to make His departure from the world untimely and irrational --

III. What, Then, Was the Glory of His Departure?

What was the function to be performed? Why did He decide to leave in the face of so many pertinent, important demands to remain? The answer is found in the words of my text which is taken from the climax of His last address, St. John 16:7.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

There is the answer! Jesus departs in order to send the Holy Spirit to His followers.

IV. Why the Necessity of the Holy Spirit?

1. That He might be a Comforter. Jesus in His final address to His disciples said, "I will pray the Father that he may give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

The word "comforter" comes from the Latin prefix "cum," meaning "with," and the word

"fortis" meaning strength, power. It is the word from which we get "fort," "fortify," and in music, "fortissimo." Therefore, "Comforter" means "with power," "with strength."

Some years ago when my daughters Carolyn Jane and Marilyn Lou were 6 and 4 years of

age respectively, they were attending school across the boulevard from our home in Lowell, Massachusetts; Carolyn in the first grade, and Marilyn in Pre-Kindergarten. The boulevard was highly traveled, hundreds of automobiles and heavy trucks passing in both directions each hour. Crossing the street was indeed a difficult and dangerous undertaking.

One morning about eleven-thirty, I was busy in the back yard of our home and it occurred

to me that it was about time that the girls should be coming for lunch. I looked around the corner of the house and to the boulevard where cars and trucks were rushing in both directions and I thought if the girls do come out of the school now and see me, they'll rush across the boulevard and be killed. Just then, sure enough, little four-year-old Marilyn came toddling around the corner of the school and saw me.

My heart stood still. But just then, to my relief, the policeman on our beat walked out in the midst of the traffic and put up a white-gloved right hand in one direction and his left hand in the other; all the automobiles came to a quick stop, and the trucks, with screeching brakes, came to a trembling standstill. Then he beckoned to Marilyn and she came over and tugged at his pants leg while he patted her cheek and led her to me. She rolled up her big brown eyes and said, "Daddy, Mr. Dooley is a friend of mine." I should say, and why not?

Then I thought of the people of God. When all the cohorts of the damned press in on the

soul, the dark clouds gather, the heavy artillery of hell threatens our destruction, financial reverses come, sorrow and bereavement cause all the lights to go out -- just then, thank God the great policeman of the skies walks out into the earthly and hellish traffic and puts up one hand in one direction and the other hand in the opposite, and the hosts of earth and hell come to a standstill, for He says, "I have a child coming across this highway today. So far shalt thou come and no farther." Thank God, there is a "strong one" -- the Comforter.

2. We need the Holy Spirit as a Teacher.

In that final address Jesus said to His disciples, "I have yet many things to say to you, but

ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." He shall lead you forward into the great vistas of divine truth.

3. We need the Holy Spirit as a Purifier of the heart. John the Baptist cried out, "I indeed

baptize you with water, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." St. Peter testified that when the Holy Spirit came. "He purified their hearts by faith." Anger, jealousy, fear, covetousness, pride, and all other sinful manifestations will be gone when carnality is eradicated from the heart by the purging fire of the Holy Spirit.

4. We need the Holy Spirit as an Enduer with Power.

The last words Jesus said to His disciples before He ascended from Mt. Olivet into heaven were, "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

The greatest need of the Church is the power of the Holy Spirit. We have plenty of organizations, boards, committees -- wheels within wheels. What we need is the mighty, dynamic of the Holy Spirit to get the machinery functioning.

Your greatest individual need as a Christian is the power of the Holy Spirit to make you a triumphant, victorious person.

That is why Jesus departed -- that He might send the promise of the Father -- the coming of the Holy Spirit to His followers. That is the glory of His departure. Have you received Him? If not -- for you the departure of Jesus was in vain.

Open the door of your soul for the incoming of the Holy Spirit. Pray with Charles Wesley:

O that now from heav'n might fall,

And all my sins consume!

Come, Holy Ghost, for Thee I call;

Spirit of burning, come!

Refining fire, go through my heart;

Illuminate my soul;

Scatter Thy life through ev'ry part,

And sanctify the whole.

His holy fire can burn out the old nature of sin. However, the Holy Spirit will come to your heart only when you consecrate your entire personality. This means complete surrender. It means no longer self but Christ; no longer my desires, but His desire: not my will, but His.

Surrender yourself to Him just now.

All to Jesus I surrender,

All to Him I freely give;

I will ever love and trust Him,

In His presence daily live.

All to Jesus, I surrender

Lord, I give myself to Thee,

Fill me with Thy love and power,

Let Thy blessing fall on me.

As you read this beautiful verse of consecration yield yourself completely to God this very moment.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/russell-delong/the-glory-of-christs-departure/>

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