



Table Talk II

By Rev. Timothy J. Swenson • ILT Dean of Chapel

The Seventh Sunday of Easter | May 12, 2024



JOHN 15:26-16:4

"I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you." (Vs. 16:4)

Jesus is going away. In this portion of the Gospel of John, Jesus is preparing his disciples for his going to the Father (Jn. 14:28). He wants them to be well-prepared so that they don't fall away (Jn. 16:1). Four chapters of John's Gospel (14, 15, 16 & 17), comprise Jesus' Farewell Discourse. In his long good-bye to his disciples, Jesus further emphasizes the distinction between his followers (the disciples) who make up his "in-group" and the rest of the world (especially the Judeans) who make up the "out-group." The boundary between the in-group and the out-group... the dividing line between the disciples and the Judeans... is marked by love/hate. Within the in-group of the disciples, the rule is to love one another "as I have loved you" which is Jesus' new command that he gives in John 15:12. The Judeans, on the other hand, do not love but hate the disciples of Jesus. This hate has been expressed first in the killing of Jesus, then in the anticipated ejection of Jesus' followers from the synagogue and followed by their future execution as a "service to God" (vs. 16:2). Jesus provides the reason for all of this: those of the out-group, the Judeans, "have not known the Father nor me" (vs. 16:3).

You could say that the distinction between the in-group of Jesus' followers and the out-group of Judeans is that the latter did not know their God as a loving Father, nor did they acknowledge Jesus the Son as the expression of such Fatherly love. John makes note of this distinction in his first letter where he writes, "If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar..." (1 Jn. 4:20). For Jesus and his in-group, loving one another rather than hating is a consequence of having and knowing a loving Father. This God is one you can trust... have faith in... and receive his Son as the Father's love. Jesus gives this assurance to his followers—to you—so that, as persecution swirls around you, you will have Jesus' word on it.

Table Talk: Discuss the difference between having a loving God versus a wrathful God and what difference that makes in your loving or hating.

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for being a loving father to me and thank you for sending your Son as the embodiment of that love. Amen



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26 But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

16 I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. 3 And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4 But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.



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