

John 14: Jesus' "Father" Theology

The Doctrine of Revealing

John 14.22-26

²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

²³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

²² Then one of the disciples named Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “Lord, why is it you will only reveal your identity to us and not to everyone?”

²³ Jesus replied, “Loving me empowers you to obey my word. And my Father will love you so deeply that we will come to you and make you our dwelling place.

²⁴ But those who don't love me will not obey my words. The Father did not send me to speak my own revelation, but the words of my Father. ²⁵ I am telling you this while I am still with you. ²⁶ But when the Father sends the Spirit of Holiness, the One like me who sets you free, he will teach you all things in my name. And he will inspire you to remember every word that I've told you.

PASSION TRANSLATION

Discretionary Revelation

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

"For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man."

JOHN 5.21, 27

"This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them."

JOHN 6.65

- ❖ Who gets to know Jesus and how does one come to believe in him? Judas' question is about discretionary revelation: why us and not others? Although a general revelation of God is given to all people, it is also clear from Scripture that people cannot believe if they have not heard the gospel. Why some get to hear and others don't will remain, in part, a mystery until eternity when all things are revealed.

- ❖ While it may not be clear to us why some are privileged to hear the gospel while others die without having heard, there are certain things about which the Scriptures give complete clarity and which we need to understand—
 - ▶ God has taken the initiative for my salvation and therefore I am utterly dependent on His mercy.
 - ▶ My faith is based on Christ's merit and apart from his worth (i.e. righteousness), I am utterly worthless.
 - ▶ I have believed, not because I possess the faith to believe, but because someone spoke the Word to me and the Word produced faith in my heart.
 - ▶ Because I *do know* the good news, much more will be required of me.
 - ▶ The living proof of my love for Christ is my obedience to his commands:
"My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you." (15.12)

How Does God Reveal Himself?

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

- ❖ In response to Judas' question of "discretionary revelation," Jesus answered by reiterating points that he had previously stated in response to Philip's revelation request: "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." The fact that Jesus repeats himself does not diminish the importance of his words; instead, we find that Jesus does not give an explanation "why" but of "how" revelation is imparted. The reiteration of Jesus' previously expressed words magnify the truth that ⁽¹⁾ spiritual revelation is beyond human initiative and is ⁽²⁾ subject to and intended by God for His eternal purposes. In his reply, there are critical principles, sober warning, and extraordinary calling. In the end we understand that revelation is not as discretionary as Judas thought. May we have ears to hear.

The “Obedience” Principle of Revelation

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” 14.21

- ❖ This is the third time in this conversation that Jesus links love and obedience to his commands. What commands?
 - ▶ Everything he taught in the Gospels through his ministry;
 - ▶ everything, especially, that he taught in his Kingdom Sermon;
 - ▶ specifically, the commands that he had given this evening.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

- ❖ Jesus has taught that the first work that God requires is to believe in His Son (John 6.29); he has told us, his sheep, that the reason that the Father loves him is because he lays down his life (10.17); shortly, he will tell his disciples that he has obeyed his Father's commands and so remains in the Father's love. Earlier this evening, Jesus said to his disciples: *"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him."* 13.15-16
- ❖ Jesus was not controlled by self-love or self-preservation, nor was he motivated by duty to obey. In love, the Father gave his Son for the world, and the Son in love, obeys the Father. "Perfect love casts out all fear," therefore, love makes cost irrelevant and sacrifice acceptable. Love does not debate the merits of obedience or fear the cost of obedience; love has only the worth of the other in view. Love does not ask "Why did God let this happen to me?" but rather, "How can I please Him?" It is through the example of Jesus that we understand that love compels "worth-obedience."

- ❖ To those motivated to obey because of love-compelled-by-worth, Jesus has made an extraordinary promise: *“My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”* This promise follows his previous *“presence-revelation”* promise: *“The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”* *“Love-obedience”* enables us in turn to experience *“love-presence”* and *“presence-revelation.”* This is not just a play on words; when one is too fearful to obey, they cannot experience the love-presence of the Father and the Son: *“The one who fears is not made perfect in love”* (1 John 4.18). Self-concern elevates my presence and diminishes the presence of Another. In contrast, obedience obliterates the barrier of self, making intimacy possible and revealing the Other.
- ❖ How does God reveal himself? Through disciples who are loving as they are being loved by the Father and Son (cf. Ephesians 5.1-2), who are walking in the revelation of Christ’s love, truth, and example (1 John 2.3-6). *“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* 13.35

The “Exclusiveness” Principle of Revelation

“Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work.

JOHN 14.10

- ❖ To reject or neglect the commands of Jesus is a compounded transgression: it is also to reject the authority of God; it is a rejection of His revelation and leads ultimately to judgment—

“There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.” 12.48-50

❖ Revelation is exclusive to light and to spiritual life—

The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. P5

“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you— they are full of the Spirit and life.” 6.63

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” 8.12

Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light. 12.35-36

I know that his command leads to eternal life. 14.50

❖ How does God reveal himself? Through disciples who are receiving His life-giving words and walking in His life-giving way— *so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.* (Philippians 2.15-16)

The “Spirit Taught” Principle of Revelation

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.

1 CORINTHIANS 2.13-14

- ❖ In this third principle of revealing, Jesus declared that the Spirit would teach the disciples all things and remind them of everything he had told them. Those who do not have the Spirit are *“darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God due to the ignorance that is in them”* (Ephesians 4.18). Only those born of the Spirit (John 3.6-7), and who are taught by the Spirit can reveal spiritual realities.

- ❖ How did Peter know what to say on the Day of Pentecost? How did he gain such insight of Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah? How was he able to explain in such a clear and convincing manner so that three thousand heard, believed and were baptized?

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

- ❖ How does God reveal himself? Through disciples who are Spirit-alive, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-taught—

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- ❖ Jesus' *Doctrine of Revealing* is not a “why” as Judas supposed, but a “how”— if Jesus is to be revealed to the world, it will be through, his disciples.