

## Key Themes for the Upper Room Discourse

### I. Key Themes in the Upper Room Discourse

#### A. God the Father (πατ\*)

1. Jesus' descent from the Father and departure to the Father (13:1–4; 16:27–28)
  - a. Exposition in 1 John: Sent from the Father (1 John 1:2; 4:14)
2. Assurance that his departure to the Father is for their good (John 14:2–6, 28)
  - a. Exposition in 1 John: Establishment of *the Advocate* (1 John 2:1)
3. Christ as *the way* to the love of the Father (14:6, 21–23; cf. 15:23; 16:3)
  - a. Exposition in 1 John: Inseparable Union (1 John 2:22–24)
  - b. Exposition in 2 John: The Boundaries of Christology (2 John 9)
4. The Father as the Vinedresser for the Vine (15:1–2, 8–9)
  - a. Exposition in 2 John: The Father's Commands (John 15:10; 2 John 4)
5. The mission to secure greater intimacy with God the Father (15:15; 17:21)
  - a. In knowledge and revelation (15:15)
  - b. In unity, love, and glory (17:21–23)

#### B. God the Spirit (πνευ\*)

1. The departure of the *first Advocate* and the arrival of *another Advocate*
  - a. The Advocate who will *teach, testify, guide, and abide*
  - b. Word Study: *Paraclete* (John 14:16–18, 26; 15:26–27; 16:7; 1 John 2:1)
  - c. Exposition in 1 John: The Spirit of truth versus error (1 John 4:1–6, 13)
2. The assurance of the Spirit's arrival in the wake of Jesus' departure (16:5–7)
  - a. Exposition in 1 John: *The pledge of the Spirit*  
(1 John 3:23–24; cf. 2 Cor 1:20–22; 5:4–5; Eph 1:9–14\*)
3. Summation: The image of Christ as the focal point of the Trinity (16:13–15\*)
  - a. The imminent arrival of the Spirit reveals the fullness of the operation of the Trinity *in the hierarchy of their economic work* (16:13–15)
  - b. God sends Christ as *the Advocate*, who in turn sends the Spirit of God as *another Advocate* in the image and role of Christ (14:16; 1 John 2:1)

c. Even while Christ is the pre-eminent Son of God, the Upper Room Discourse does not focus on his identity as *Son of God* (only in John 17:1). Instead, Christ appears primarily as the “Father Figure” who reveals the image of God the Father to the children of God (14:6–10)

#### C. God’s Children (τεκ\* + γεv\*)

1. Lessons for “Little Children” from the Father Figure (13:31–33)
  - a. Preparing the children for the teacher’s departure (13:13, 33)
  - b. Establishing *house rules* for the Father’s Household (13:34–35; 14:2)
2. Word Study: “Little Children” (only in Johannine writings and Gal 4:19)
  - a. Forgiven members of God’s family (1 John 2:12)
  - b. Children with the right to abide in Christ (1 John 2:24, 28)
3. Children both like their Master *and disliked* like their Master (1 John 3:1–2)
  - a. The pattern of tribulation and perseverance until glory (John 15:20)
4. Exposition in 1 John: Family Resemblance for the Children of God
  - a. Family Resemblance (1 John 3:4–10, 17–19; 4:1–6; 5:18–21)
  - b. Litmus Tests for children ‘Born of God’ (1 John 2:28–29; 4:7–8; 5:1–5)

#### D. God’s Commandments (τηρ\* – εντ\*)

1. Obedience to God as an expression of love for God  
(14:15, 21; 15:10; 17:6, 11–12, 15; cf. 10:28–29)
2. Christ as the ultimate model of obedience (14:31; 17:4)
3. Exposition in 1 John: Knowing God through Obedience  
(1 John 2:3–6; 3:21–24; cf. 5:14)
4. Doing the will of God (13:12–17)
5. Exposition in 1–3 John: Signs of Life (1 John 2:17; 4:19–5:1; 3 John 11)
6. The Litmus Test of Love and Evidence for Obedience  
(1 John 5:1–3; 2 John 6; 1 John 3:18)
7. The Love Commandment (John 13:34; 1 John 2:5–7; 2 John 5–6)
  - a. Exposition of the Upper Room Ethic in John’s Epistles (*below*)