

– Additional Notes –  
John 16:26 vs. *Desire of Ages* p. 667.3

February 2, 2005

Hi Bob,

In John 16, Jesus is walking with His disciples from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane and He's telling them a few last things about His crucifixion and resurrection, as well as a few things about the Father. In verse 22 He assures them that He will see them again. He fulfilled this after the resurrection. In verse 23, He tells them to ask the Father in His name. In verse 24, He tells them that if they ask, they will receive to make their joy complete. In verse 25, He tells them that He has spoken in figures of speech, but will no longer use figures of speech, but will tell them plainly about the Father. In verse 26, He tells them that they are to pray directly to the Father, that He will NOT make requests on their behalf to the Father because the Father loves them Himself. All of this addresses the character of the Father in comparison with the character of the Son.

The message Jesus is trying to teach us is that, so far as the holiness and love of God is concerned, there is no difference between Jesus and the Father. The Father is not holier than Jesus. The Father is just as approachable as Jesus. The Father is not more reserved than Jesus. The Father knows us just as thoroughly as Jesus and is just as gracious toward us as Jesus. The Father does not need to be persuaded by Jesus to grant favors to suppliants contrary to His better judgment.

The Catholic church has long promoted the concept that God the Father is not approachable -- that He is too holy for common people. Even Jesus is not very approachable except through His Mother Mary. The Catholic church teaches that the faithful are to pray to Mother Mary, that she will take the prayer to Jesus to petition His favor. Jesus, in turn, may take the prayer request to the Father to beg the Father to grant the request. This makes the Father more distant and less interested in our lives. The implication is that the Father must be talked into granting favors for our lives, that He wouldn't ordinarily grant these requests unless they are presented by Jesus with the claim that His blood and death are the basis for the request.

Even among Protestant churches who don't pray to Mother Mary, language developed long ago among religious people that revealed this bias that somehow the prayers of

the penitent would ascend to Jesus when prayed in His name, and He would present them to the Father who is too reserved for mere mortals. This Catholic bias is contrary to the very words of Jesus in John 16:26 that we are to pray directly to the Father because the Father loves us Himself. But Jesus does not present any prayers to the Father to get Him to do something against His better judgment.

About this time I imagine you're going to quote 1 John 2:1 which states "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Please notice that this verse does NOT say that Jesus is petitioning the Father, but that He and the Father are working together on behalf of the penitent. The key word is "with". "With" does not mean "against" or "contrary to." If you are walking down the sidewalk with someone, that does not mean nor even imply that you are walking against that person. "With" means to be in unison. Jesus and the Father are working together to advocate on our behalf for our protection against Satan who seeks to destroy us. See Zechariah 3:1-2 to see that the Lord rebukes Satan. The Father and Jesus work together to set limitations on Satan as he desires to destroy people. Moreover the Greek word for "advocate" is *paraklētos* (par-ak'-lay-tos) which is often translated to be "An intercessor, consoler", but which is the word for "medic." A medic is one who brings healing to an injured person. In this sense, God offers healing from the damage caused by sin when we turn to Him for guidance in our lives.

Take a look at another verse along these lines. Hebrews 7:25 which states that "He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them." The intercession has a double meaning here. First, Jesus and the Father intercede with us to get us to live our lives without sin. We need Their counsel, advice, encouragement, nurture, etc., to live to a high standard. This is what scripture is all about. Second, Jesus and the Father intercede against Satan on our behalf setting limitations on what he can do. We know from the story of Job that Satanic attacks are allowed against God's people, but not above what one can withstand. But Jesus does not take the words of our prayers and go to the Father on our behalf to present a different set of words to the Father than what we ourselves use.

In Jonah 1, God had compassion on the people of Nineveh because of the great wickedness of the people of that city. Where there is great wickedness, there will be many victims and God heard the cries of each of these. These were pagan people who had no interest in knowing Elohim, the God of creation. How much more does the

Father hear the cries of those who do love Him? It is contrary to all of scripture that the Father loves us less than Jesus.

Unfortunately, the Catholic bias against the gracious character of both Jesus and the Father lingers in most Christian denominations and we see it reflected in EG White's description on page 667.3 of DA. She writes:

“He would be present before the Father to make request for them. The prayer of the humble suppliant He presents as His own desire in that soul's behalf. Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection.”

This statement is full of Catholic sentiment and is clearly contrary to the words of Jesus Himself in John 16:26. Too often people skip over the word NOT in this verse and fall into the rut of promoting Catholic theology. Neither Jesus nor the Father are offended by any awkward, stammering words of their children. They both know the heart and the desire of an individual and are more than willing to accept their prayers. Jesus does not beg the Father to be more gracious than He is already naturally inclined to be. The Father is just as interested in our lives and just as accepting of us as is Jesus. 1 John 1:3 reminds us that our fellowship is with both the Father and Jesus.

This is how I see it. Hope this helps.  
Jerry

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----- Original Message -----

John 16:26

Hi again Jerry,

I was studying these texts and comparing with what you wrote regarding Matthew's Mistake.

But as I look at the quories in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 667 and compare them to John

16:26...I don't see a connection, instead I see her elaborating on Christ's words in verses 23-24. Then it appears that in verses 25-26 Christ is pointing to a future time, different than in verses 23-24. Could they be referring to the time after Probation closes??

Please look at it again and see what you think on this.

Thanks so much, I appreciate so much the depth and scope that you have gone into to open these issues up.

Bob