

BECKY COMBEE MINISTRIES, INC.

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LAST WORDS

My precious grandmother usually had LAST WORDS for us before we left her house to travel home. LAST WORDS can be very revealing. Between our homes, there was an elevated railroad crossing. This track sparked fear in her, so she always warned us, "Be careful across the railroad tracks." I still have her LAST WORDS deeply embedded in my heart. Today when we cross those same tracks, I can hear her words of warning, "Be careful, Becky. Be careful."

Recently, as I was reading the Epistle of First John, I noted John's LAST WORDS of warning. He said, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."¹ In contrast to his earlier emphases, these LAST WORDS of caution appear almost as a postscript. Through many of the preceding verses, the apostle John had emphasized the path of fellowship with God. He said, "Walk in the light,"² and with equal impact, he directed every Christian to keep God's commandments, do what is right, and love the brethren. He assured us that eternal life was in God's Son, that the anointing of God would teach us, and through faith we could overcome the world, then he uttered his LAST WORDS. "Keep yourself from idols."

At this Easter season, there are probably no LAST WORDS more interesting or important

than the LAST WORDS Jesus spoke to His disciples before His death. These LAST WORDS cover almost four chapters in the gospel of John.

One highlight of Jesus' LAST WORDS was His instructions to the disciples about their future work in God's kingdom. They were not to be "lords over God's heritage," but servants.³ He demonstrated this service to others by washing their feet and told them to wash one another's feet.

Yet frequently, we ignore Jesus' example of service. Instead, we are more interested in "Do for me. Bring to me. Give to me." I am

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sure this was the routine of many of the religious leaders in Jerusalem as well. However, the ministry of the disciples was not to follow their pattern. The counsel of Jesus to His disciples was, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."⁴ The apostle Paul opens our hearts to this principle when he writes, "[Christ] gave up everything and became a slave."⁵ He also says, "You must think and act like Christ Jesus."⁶ These are profitable LAST WORDS.

A second revelation given by our Lord before His death is God's new commandment of love. The breadth, length, depth, and height of these LAST WORDS are captured in the phrase "as I have loved you."⁷ What dynamics these five words give to God's command.

I like the explanation of God's supernatural love given by Jesus in the gospel of Matthew. He said, "Love your enemies. Bless them. Do good to them, and pray for them."⁸ This kind of love goes far beyond a smile, a pat on the back, or a listening ear. It surpasses kind words to a dear friend or running an errand for a sick neighbor. This love compassionately considers its enemies and chooses to overcome their evil ways with good works. This is the way of God's new law of love. They are necessary LAST WORDS.

When Jesus spoke these LAST WORDS to His disciples, He told them about the persecution they would encounter after His resurrection. He warned them of hatred and even death. Yet He said they should not be offended. This Greek word, "offended," means to entrap or trip up.⁹ How is it possible to stand successfully, to stand without stumbling, when the world despises you and plots against you?

Jesus gave the answer when He said, 'I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter.'¹⁰ Perhaps, the disciples did not understand these words. Yet soon, God the Holy Spirit, would come from heaven to be their helper, teacher, and guide. He would be the power of God in their lives. Oh what essential LAST WORDS! I am so glad the Comforter has come!

The final LAST WORD that captures my attention is the instruction Jesus gave His disciples on prayer. As His time on earth drew to a close, He spoke of a new day when,

OUTLINES THAT TEACH The LAST WORDS of Jesus

I. A Word For Servants

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. (Jn 13:14)

II. The Law Of Love

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (Jn 15:12)

III. The Comforter

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. (Jn 16:7)

IV. The Way Of Prayer

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. (Jn 16:24)

"Whatever you ask the Father in my name He will give you."¹¹ He declared, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."¹² These promises are magnificent LAST WORDS! We can pray to the Father, and He will answer our prayer!

We are so grateful for Jesus' LAST WORDS. With all our heart, we covenant to be His servants who obey His commandment of love. We depend on the Holy Spirit to help us and trust God, our Father, to answer our prayer. These important LAST WORDS guide us because WE TOO ARE HIS DISCIPLES.

¹ 1Jn 5:21 ² 1Jn 1:7 ³ 1Pe 5:3 ⁴ Mt 20:27 ⁵ Php 2:7 CEV ⁶ Php 2:6 NCV ⁷ Jn 13:34; Jn 15:12 ⁸ Mt 5:44 ⁹ G4624 Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible ¹⁰ Jn 14:16 ¹¹ Jn 16:23 NKJ ¹² Jn 15:7
