

# JESUS' LAST WILL & TESTAMENT

## The Covenant Resources for Fulfilling the Great Commission

On the last evening Jesus spent with His disciples before His crucifixion, He told them about the covenant benefits He was making available to them to do His work. No rational person would give you a work assignment without also telling you about the tools and resources to help you do the job. In John 13:30 -17:26 Jesus tells us about some specific and practical ways in which He is “with us” (Matthew 28:20) to the end of the world. The covenant is like a “last will and testament” through which the testators (the Father and the Son) pledged to release certain benefits to the rightfully designated heirs on basis of the faithfulness of the Testators to one another. Before the foundation of the world the Father and the Son clasped hands in a covenant agreement to save the lost, regardless of the high personal cost to Themselves. In these chapters [John 13 – 17] tell us about the covenant resources and benefits available to us now as we join Him in carrying out the gospel commission of Matthew 28:18-20.

**1. Jesus gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit as His personal Representative.** *“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup>And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup>of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup>of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup>of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. <sup>12</sup>“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup>However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup>He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you” (John 16:7-15). “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13).*

- We may prevent the outpouring of the Holy Spirit through our preoccupation with “minor matters” (Acts of Apostles, p. 51).
- The gift of the Holy Spirit comes not by reason of human activity, but through the preaching of salvation through the cross of Christ (Galatians 3:1-3).
- “This promised blessing [of the Holy Spirit] claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive’ (Desire of Ages, p. 672). The presence of the Holy Spirit assures us of success, as He through us will do God’s work.

**2. We are gifts from God the Father to Jesus the Son.** *“...that He should give eternal life to as many as you have given Him” (17:2), “they are yours, You gave them to Me...” (17:6), “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am...” (17:24).*

- Consider yourself as a gift from the Father to the Son; God does not give His Son any bad gifts. The Son, in His work on Calvary’s cross, gives these gifts back to the Father. *“All that the Father gives me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.” (John 6:37,39).*
- “The worth of man is known only by going to Calvary. In the mystery of the cross of Christ we can place an estimate upon man” (God’s Amazing Grace, p. 175).

**3. Jesus promises that His resources are available to us through prayer.** *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatsoever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:12-14).*

- Pray! Pray! Pray! Praise, adore, and depend on your great Creator God. Through Him all things are possible. “Prayer is not just preparation for the work; it is the work!” (Oswald Chambers).
- Enter into covenant praying: *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things” (Romans 8:32).*

**4. The success of our work depends on abiding in Christ** – having a living relationship with Him. *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:5-8).*

- Have a regular daily time of worship, prayer, praise and meditation during which you just soak yourself in the love of God, letting Him love you.
- *“Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:6).*

**5. Our primary motive is that the Father may be glorified through the Son.** *“And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them” (John:10). “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13). “Fear God and give glory to Him” (Revelation 14:7). “...to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6). “God forbid that I should glory in anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Galatians 6:14).*

- “God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him” (John Piper).
- God can only receive glory when we do not try to save ourselves (Ephesians 2:8,9).

**6. Jesus wants us to experience fullness of joy as we work with Him.** *“Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24). But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (John 17:13). “These things I have spoken to you that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:11). “In your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).*

- The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy (Galatians 5:22). The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10).
- Genuine lasting joy only comes to those who have solid assurance of salvation. When we have such joy, we will contagiously attract other to Christ through our witness.

**7. God wants our witness to be powerfully attractive through our practice of love and unity.** *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34,35). “And I have declared to them our name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26). “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him” (John 14:19). “This is My commandment that You love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:10). “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one. I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:20-24).*

- “The most convincing argument we can give to the world of Christ's mission is to be found in perfect unity...In proportion to our unity with Christ will be our power to save souls (*Our High Calling*, p. 170).
- “Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit” (*Ministry of Healing*, pp. 143,144).
- “Our success in any religious effort depends upon our simplicity in Christ Jesus and unity and love for one another.” (*Letter 56, 1894, p. 2*).
- “Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand” (Philippians 2:1-3, Message Bible).
- “There is a vast amount of rubbish brought forward by professed believers in Christ, which blocks up the way to the cross.” (4T68).
- “The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.” (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 470).
- “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one.” (9T189)

#### **Practical Ways to Achieve Unity:**

- See others as Jesus sees them. Intercede for others in prayer.
- Do not confuse uniformity with unity.
- Discard all religious 'hobby horses.' A religious 'hobby horse' is the adherence to a standard for the purpose of exalting oneself.
- Practice the Matthew 18 rule at all times with no exceptions.
- Avoid all gossip and talebearing. Refuse to listen to it. Don't go to the phone – go to the Throne.
- Forgive others for their offenses. Seek forgiveness from others for your own offenses.
- In essentials – unity; in non-essentials - liberty; in all things – charity.