

**Class outline for John 16**  
**Saint Luke's, Baton Rouge**  
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A few general remarks about the "Farewell Discourse"

- a. The order of the chapters may be "jumbled" or perhaps collected from various sources, with the inconsistencies simply accepted by the original compilers and readers.
- b. There are three main themes that interweave in chapters 14-16: peace (primarily chapter 14), love (chapter 15), and the Spirit (chapter 16)
- c. There is a sense of reassurance, grounding, and permanence. For example, the word "abide" (or "abode") is found sixteen times in chapters 14 & 15.

Chapter 15

1. Jesus' use of the imagery of "the vine" may have been suggested by several things:
  - a. If they were on the path to the Garden of Gethsemane, it might have been what they were seeing
  - b. It might have been suggested by the vine that was part of the decorative motif over the entrance of the Temple, or
  - c. It could have been suggested by the wine that had been part of the supper.
2. For the hearers, the image might have brought to mind a familiar Old Testament usage:
  - a. Isaiah 5
  - b. Psalm 80
  - c. The nation had been the vine, now
  - d. Jesus, God himself, has become the vine—
  - e. Related to other images like "the Door" and "The Way, the Truth, and the Life."
  - f. Apart from Jesus, there is nothing; only through Jesus can we "abide" with the Father. Not good to be the cut off branch, which withers.
3. Toward the end, there is a return to the idea of witnesses whose testimony will provide convincing and unmistakable evidence of Jesus' identity and mission. You may recall this from the opening classes in this series. Here there are four "witnesses" mentioned:
  - a. Jesus' own words, verse 22
  - b. Jesus' works (the miracles in the first part of the Gospel), verse 24
  - c. The Spirit, verse 26
  - d. The disciples, soon to be Apostles, verse 27