

Jesus: I will give you Rest – Bro Paul Cresswell

The days are quickly flying and our Lord is near. We shall see him as he is. Now more than ever before, we must seek to truly know him.



To that end our studies during our week at Coffs Harbour will dwell upon those intimate occasions when the Lord was alone with his disciples. The gospel records permit us to enter into those unique times and circumstances and to learn much from the thoughts and words of our Master and his friends.

The Lord's three and a half years ministry was a gruelling program both emotionally and physically. Many hours of teaching and particularly healing the sick drained him of strength - often he was overcome with exhaustion. He would seek solace in prayer, and comfort and companionship with his disciples. His life is an inspiring example of dedication that should have a profound effect upon us all, so that in time to come "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

During our sessions we will meet many colourful characters and remarkable examples, including men such as Legion, sitting at the feet of Jesus "clothed and in his right mind." This is where we are spiritually inspired to "watch, and keep our garments, lest we walk naked and they see our shame" when our Lord comes to claim his own.

The Lord spoke often to his disciples of the need for forgiveness: "Take heed to yourselves." Why? Because it takes a lot of humility to forgive. But what is forgiveness? Who more appropriate to teach us that than Jesus Christ upon whose forgiveness our future lives depend. This is he who, whilst suffering the excruciating pain of crucifixion, could still say from his heart, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Incredibly, as our Lord's final day approached, his closest disciples were caught up with ambition, arguing over "Who will be the greatest?" As the day of his re-appearing draws nearer, there is the danger we can be caught up in the same spirit of selfish ambition. We need to continuously remind ourselves of the Lord's repeated statement: "the first shall be last, and the last first." In the upper room our Lord's example of loving humility and service approaches its climax in washing his disciples' feet. Ambition and rivalry don't make for happiness - service to others does. Let us learn the spirit of meekness that is seen in our Saviour, Yahweh's *servant*, who gave himself for us. After all, it is the faithful *servant* who the Lord will make ruler over all his goods when he comes.

It was after Judas went out into the night that our Lord gave a new commandment to his closest friends to love one another. This is the mark of a true disciple, for our Lord said "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." Whilst it is true that none of us fully live up to this love as we desire to do, and at times become downcast with our own failures, Jesus Christ is our Comforter who says to us: "Let not your heart be troubled." May we draw upon that same comfort and assurance from our Lord in these last days.