

Chappaqua Lent '78 Evening #3 Scripture, commentary on, for Conveners only: Jn.15.1-18

[To be used in the 3rd Preparation Session for Conveners, 12 Mar 78. The numbering here follows the episode divisions on "Evening #3 Sheet. Also take with you paper and pencils, and a Notetaker's Sheet. Please have the Notetaker finish before leaving, so that you may have the sheet to give to Mr. Ryder or put in his box.]

THE PICTURE [paradigm] is familiar in that world, in which both Jews and Greeks saw God as the world's gardener--the Jews, esp. of Israel as vine (e.g., Isaiah 5.1-7), often disappointing because of scanty produce --on which compare these Synoptic parables: Mark 12.1-9; Matthew 20.1-16 and 21.33-41; Luke 13.6-9. John changes the vine from Israel to Christ, and changes the futuric ["eschatological"] note in the Synoptics to the note of the continuous life of the Church, which is to dwell continuously in Christ as Christ dwelt and dwells continuously in God. Thus begins the last discourse in John--and the Gospel's longest monolog (typically following on a dialog).

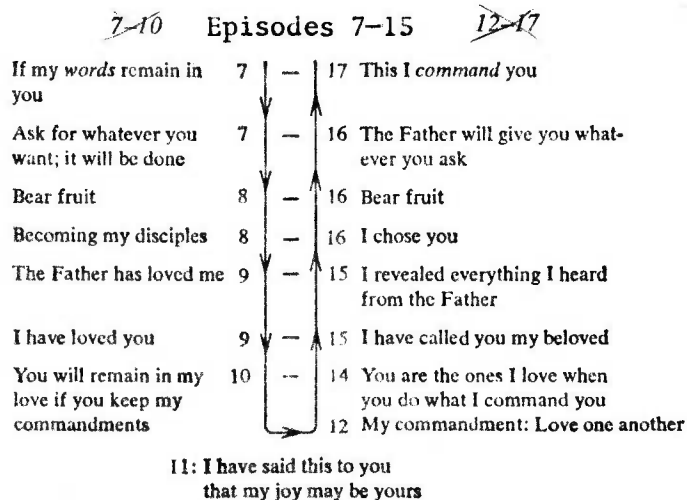
THE WIDER CONTEXT: Whereas the themes of chaps.1-12 are "light" and "life," the theme of the present section (chaps.13-17) is "love." Now, there are many forms of "love": ludic, manic, erotic, pragmatic, storgic, and agapaic. Toronto U.'s Jn. Alan Lee, in studying love, found no agapaic love in the Canadian populace (see #487)--but it's the kind John of the Gospel is concerned with: love-centering-on-the-other-and-so-making-for-organic-community.

THIS KIND OF LOVE has its archetype or model in Christ's relation to God; therefore, the Church is to model this kind of love for the world--by the style and quality of life between Christians. Christ's self-offering for us dynamically exhibits *ethically* the relation *eternally* existent between the Father and the Son--on which compare Albert Schweitzer's "ethical mysticism." The Church's response is to be trust and obedience toward Christ, and relationship originating in and deepening and intensifying "love." The love-one-another of 13.34 and I John here, in 15.1-17, is driven home through the plant image of the mutual indwelling of vine and branches (on which compare 17.20-26).

THE CHURCH thus is viewed as the intimate-ultimate community, model for world peace (shalom, perfect fulfilment of God's design of justice and joy-- wine being a biblical symbol of joy, and therefore of thanksgiving, as in the Lord's Supper, called "Eucharist," i.e. "Thanksgiving").

1. Christ crucified and risen speaks another "I am...."

- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.



Brown.2.667