

John 16:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Analysis

I have yet many things to say unto you (ἔτι πολλὰ ἔχω ὑμῖν λέγειν, eti polla echō hymin legein)—Jesus acknowledges the incompleteness of His disciples' training. The **ye cannot bear them now** (ἀλλ᾽ οὐ δύνασθε βαστάζειν ἄρτι, all' ou dynasthe bastazein arti) uses bastazō, meaning to bear a burden or weight. The disciples lacked the spiritual capacity to endure fuller revelation.

This demonstrates Christ's pedagogical wisdom: truth must be given according to the learner's ability to receive it. The verb bastazō suggests more than intellectual understanding—it's the ability to carry the weight of revelation without collapsing under it. Before the Spirit's indwelling, certain truths would crush rather than strengthen them. This explains progressive revelation: God discloses truth in proportion to His people's readiness, building precept upon precept. The Spirit would later guide them into 'all truth' (verse 13).

Historical Context

Jesus spoke this Thursday night before crucifixion. The disciples still expected an earthly messianic kingdom and couldn't yet comprehend the necessity of the cross, the nature of the church, or the mystery of the Gentiles' inclusion. These truths would come later through the Spirit's illumination, particularly to Paul. The apostolic writings contain the 'many things' Jesus left unsaid but which the Spirit revealed (1 Corinthians 2:9-13).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What spiritual truths might God be withholding from you currently because you're not yet ready to 'bear' them?
2. How does Jesus's progressive revelation principle inform how you should disciple new believers?
3. In what ways has the Holy Spirit revealed truths to you that you couldn't have understood earlier in your Christian walk?

Interlinear Text

"Ἐτι πολλὰ ἔχω λέγειν ὑμῖν ἀλλ' οὐ δύνασθε
yet many things I have to say unto you but ye cannot G1410
G2089 G4183 G2192 G3004 G5213 G235 G3756

βαστάζειν ἄρτι·

bear them now
G941 G737

Additional Cross-References

Acts 1:3 (Parallel theme): To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Mark 4:33 (Parallel theme): And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

John 15:15 (Parallel theme): Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

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