

John 16:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

Analysis

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him (ἔγνω ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤθελον αὐτὸν ἐρωτᾶν/egnō ho Iēsous hoti ēthelon auton erōtan)—the verb ἔγνω (egnō, "knew") indicates Jesus's divine omniscience. Without hearing their private conversation (verses 17-18), He perceived their desire to question Him. This echoes John 2:24-25: "Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men...he knew what was in man."

The verb θέλω (thelō, "to desire, will, want") reveals the disciples' internal struggle—they wanted to ask but hesitated, perhaps from confusion, reverence, or fear. Jesus's gracious initiative in addressing their unspoken question demonstrates divine compassion meeting human need.

Do ye enquire among yourselves...? (ζητεῖτε μετ' ἀλλήλων...;/zēteite met' allēlōn...?)—Jesus verbatim quotes His own words from verse 16, showing He heard their private discussion. The verb ζητέω (zēteō, "to seek, enquire, investigate") indicates earnest searching. Jesus doesn't rebuke their confusion but meets them where they are, patiently re-explaining truth they couldn't yet grasp.

Historical Context

Jesus's omniscience—knowing unspoken thoughts and private conversations—continually amazed and unnerved people. The Samaritan woman exclaimed, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did" (John 4:29). Nathanael marveled, "Whence knowest thou me?" (John 1:48). This divine attribute authenticated Jesus's messianic claims. In the Upper Room, as the disciples whispered among themselves, Jesus's knowledge of their confusion would have been both comforting (He understands our struggles) and sobering (nothing is hidden from Him). For the early church facing persecution, Christ's omniscience assured them that He knew their suffering and would sustain them.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's knowledge of your unspoken questions and struggles before you articulate them demonstrate His divine nature and personal care?
2. What does Jesus's gracious initiative in answering the disciples' unasked question teach about how God meets believers in their confusion?
3. When you struggle to understand Scripture or God's ways, do you bring your honest questions to Jesus (as the disciples eventually would) or keep them hidden?

Interlinear Text

ἔγνω οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἥθελον αὐτοῖς ἐρωτᾶν
knew Now G3588 Jesus that they were desirous him to ask
G1097 G3767 G2424 G3754 G2309 G846 G2065

καὶ εἶπον αὐτοῖς Περὶ τούτου ζητεῖτε μετ' ἀλλήλων
and I said him of that Do ye enquire among yourselves
G2532 G2036 G846 G4012 G5127 G2212 G3326 G240

ὅτι εἶπον μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με καὶ πάλιν
that I said A little while and not see me and again
G3754 G2036 G3397 G2532 G3756 G2334 G3165 G2532 G3825

μικρὸν καὶ ὅψεσθέ με
A little while and ye shall see me
G3397 G2532 G3700 G3165

Additional Cross-References

John 16:16 (Parallel theme): A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

John 16:30 (Parallel theme): Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

John 14:19 (Parallel theme): Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

John 7:33 (References Jesus): Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

John 13:33 (Parallel theme): Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.