

John 16:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

Analysis

Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb (ἴδε νῦν παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖς καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις)—The disciples express relief that Jesus is finally speaking *parrēsia* (παρρησίᾳ), meaning openly, plainly, without figures or riddles. Earlier in the discourse (John 16:25), Jesus had acknowledged speaking in *paroimiai* (παροιμίαις)—proverbs, figures, veiled sayings. They believe the moment of clarity has arrived.

Yet their confidence proves premature. Within hours they would scatter in confusion (v.32), and even after resurrection they struggled to understand (Acts 1:6). Their claim to comprehension is sincere but shallow—they grasp Jesus's words intellectually but haven't yet experienced the Spirit's illumination that would come at Pentecost.

Historical Context

The disciples had been confused by Jesus's references to "a little while" (John 16:16-19), the woman in labor (16:21), and asking in His name (16:23-24). When He speaks directly about coming from the Father and returning to Him (16:28), they assume full understanding has arrived. This reflects the common human tendency to claim comprehension before truly possessing it—a tendency Jesus gently corrects in the following verses.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. When have you claimed to understand spiritual truth only to realize later your grasp was superficial?
2. What's the difference between intellectual comprehension of Jesus's words and Spirit-illuminated understanding?
3. How does the disciples' premature confidence warn us against overestimating our own spiritual insight?

Interlinear Text

λέγεις αὐτοῦ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ Ἰδε νῦν παρόησίᾳ
said His G3588 disciples His G1492 now G3568 plainly G3954
G3004 G846 G3101 G846 G3568 G3954

λαλεῖς καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις
speakest thou and proverb no said
G2980 G2532 G3942 G3762 G3004

Additional Cross-References

John 16:25 (Parallel theme): These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.