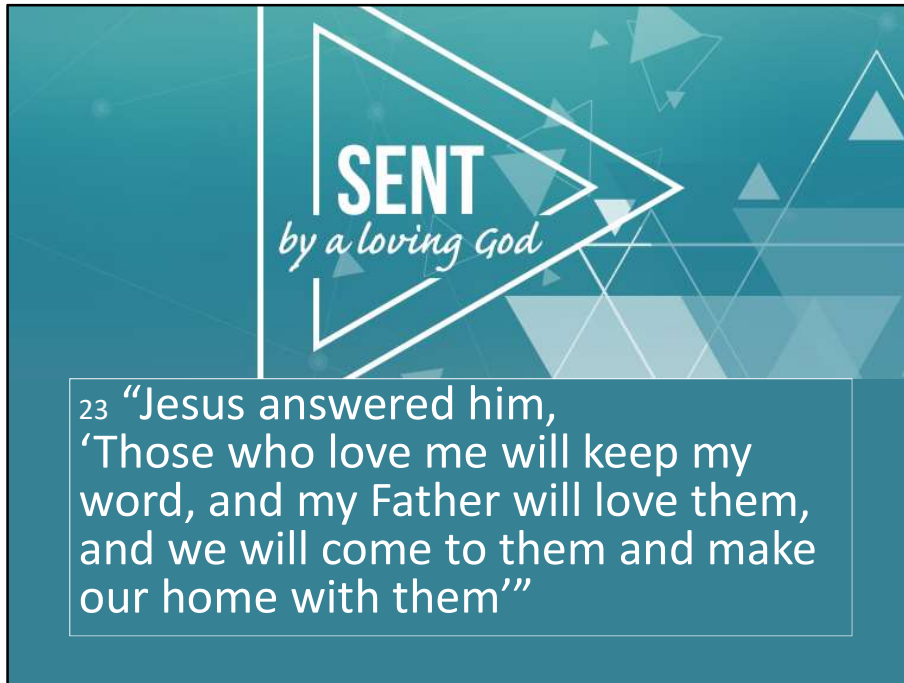
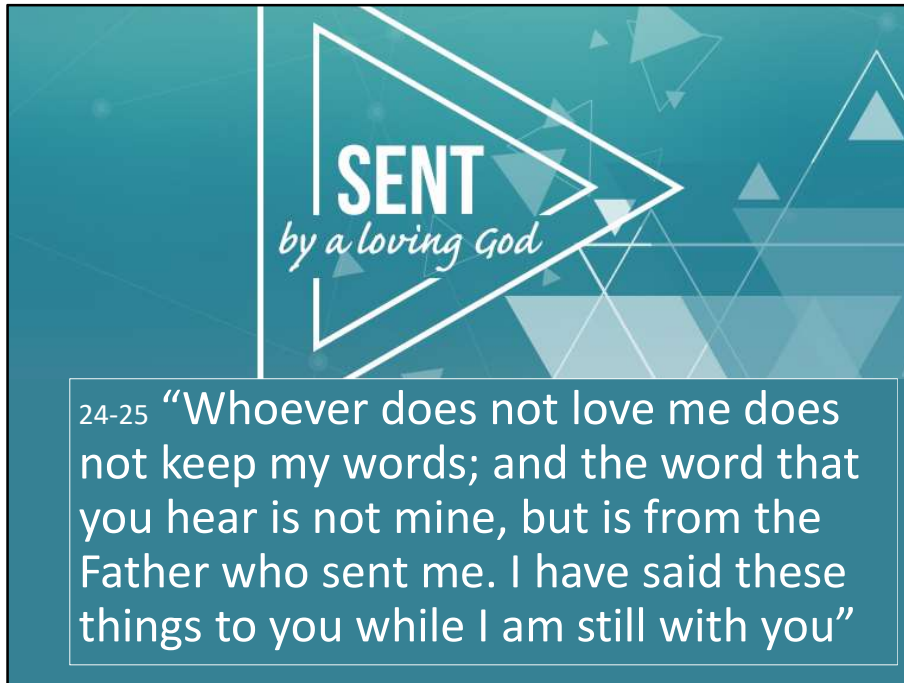




Think of your heart as having an extra room, a B&B – posted on Craig’s list or AirBnB ...Whom do you allow to share your space?

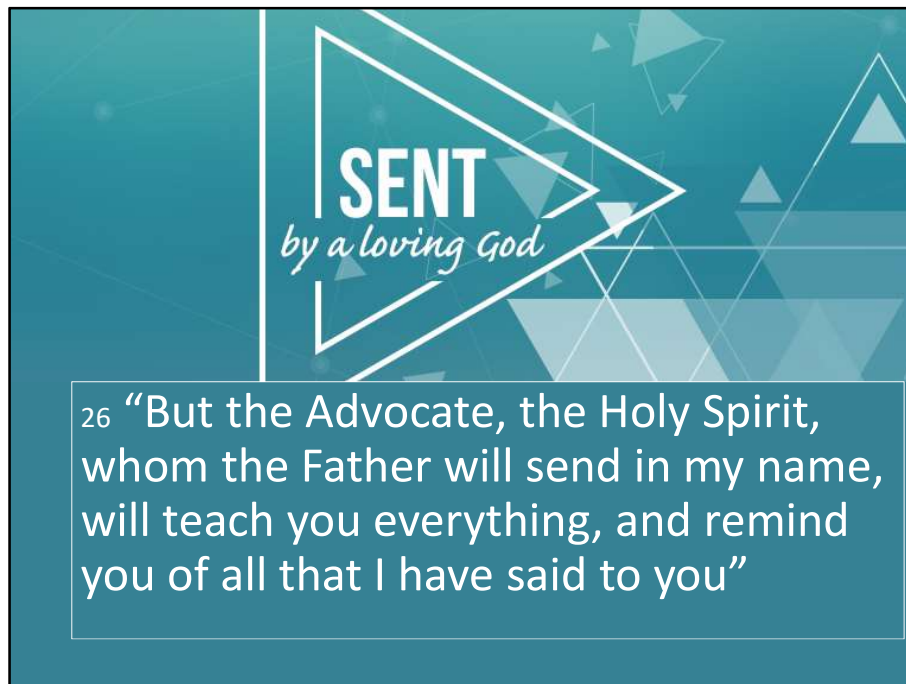


This process of making a home is a communal experience with God, which is “available to those who love and keep God’s commandments.”



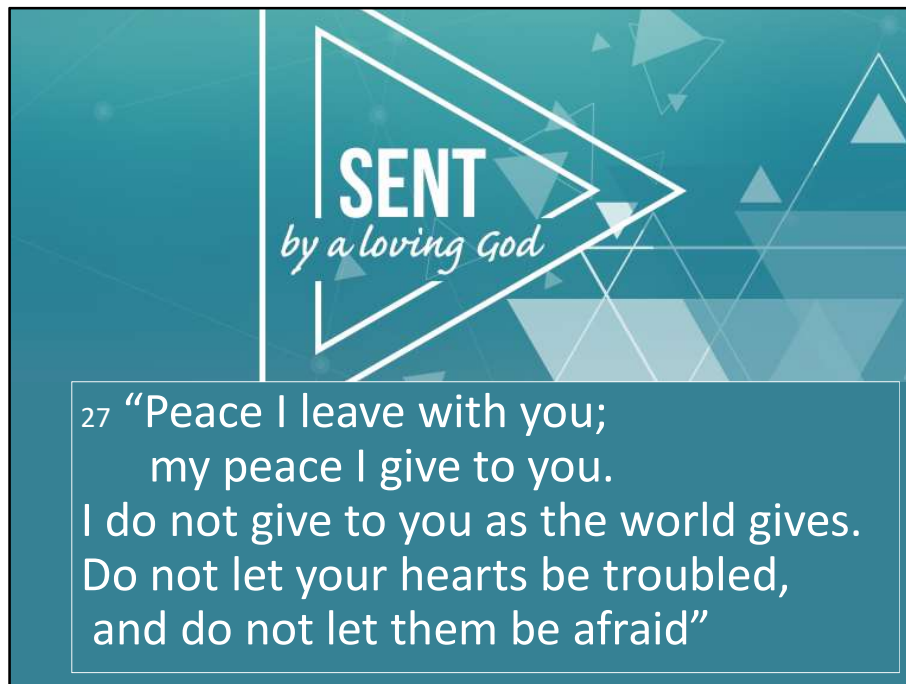
Jesus is using some of his precious remaining time to be explicit about what he hopes for his disciples then and now – that we will trust and obey. A literal reading of these verses might imply that those who do not keep God’s words are therefore not loved by God. That is taking it one step too far. Jesus only says those who do not love him, do not listen. God still loves those who do not yet love and trust him; trying hard to have them choose life!

Yet the focus here for John is consistent with his message throughout the gospel: *love necessitates action*. Love enables us to be sent into the world. Knowing our home in Christ is with us wherever we are – and allows us to be foolish in the sight of the world; doing things because Jesus loves us.



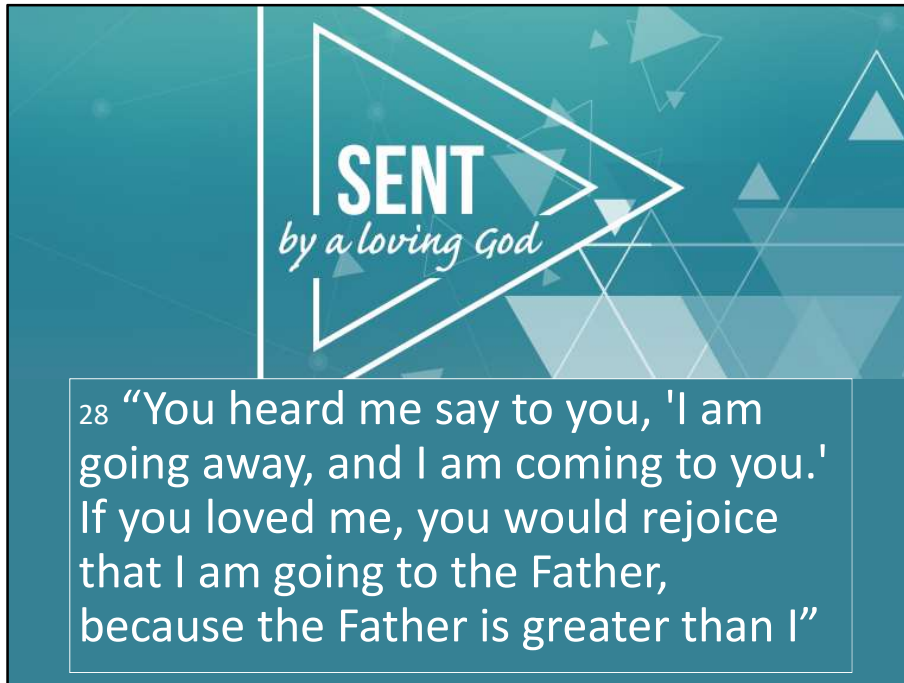
The Holy Spirit here serves a greater function than simply to remind us of appointments. As one of my seminary professors once quipped, “God is not your holy secretary!”

Lest we think the Spirit is just dwelling in us for our comfort, remember, the Holy Spirit helps every disciple truly understand and live out the understanding we are blessed to be a blessing – “*to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.*” (Micah 6:8) God’s Spirit serves as a teacher, encourager, and conscience. The grace of God is abundantly present in a multitude of Spirit experiences – but only if we allow the Spirit a room in our B&B Heart! Have you yet perceived the value of the gift we have been given? The disciples hadn’t yet – and that’s why God made Pentecost!

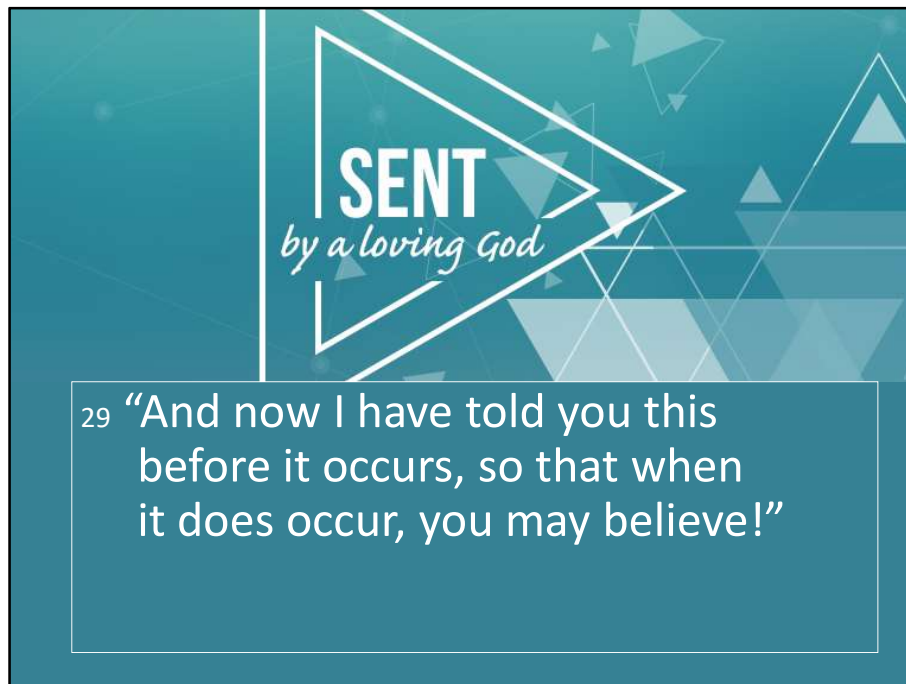


Our hearts and minds and bodies will be troubled. It is a reality we all face. Only the sad trickster promises otherwise, but the devil won't be able to deliver!! We will all crumble and return to the dust. We will fear some things, and we will trust in things of the world that will fall through.

However, we are to trust not in empty things, but the fullness of God – and react in returned love. As disciples, we are all *sent* into the world to live out the love we have experienced. Embracing the reality that we are all “sent” in some way helps us keep perspective when are tempted to let our hearts be troubled or when we are tempted to give in to fear. There needs to be intentionality in our efforts to keep God's commandments to love our neighbor as ourselves and love God with our whole being.



I believe here, Jesus is trying to draw out the parts of the disciples that are able to rejoice despite their confusion or sadness. Jesus is drawing out the truest parts of the disciples, so that they are able to claim the love of God on their lives and willingly be sent into the world. Do you go willingly when your B&B guest, the Holy Spirit, urges you to?



John is making the connection between Jesus' words and the admonition to believe. The disciples are being called to look past their own emotions in the moment before Jesus leaves and be reminded of the promises of God. Believing is not just arranging to be in church on Sunday or to attend at other times that feed your soul or confirm your ideas about God. Believing means praying, witnessing, giving, and serving!