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GENRE, DISCOURSE, AND INTERACTION: AN EXEGETICAL CASE FOR THE  
STRUCTURE OF THE FAREWELL DISCOURSE

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## Introduction

Fernando F. Segovia's seminal work on the Gospel of John's Farewell Discourse (hereafter FD), *The Farewell of the Word*,<sup>1</sup> first appearing in 1991, has continued to prove itself to be a thorough source for the study of John 13–16.<sup>2</sup> Segovia considered the FD to be a unified, cohesive, and coherent discourse, and approached his study of it according to narrative-critical or literary-rhetorical principles.<sup>3</sup> By these means he concluded that the highest level of structure of the FD could be identified in four sections: 13:31–14:31; 15:1–17; 15:18–16:4a; 16:4b–33.<sup>4</sup>

The longevity of Segovia's work suggests that his literary and thematic observations and conclusions are fundamentally sound. Nevertheless, a study of *The Farewell of the Word* reveals some of his work was based upon the experienced, yet subjective intuitions of a narrative critic.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Segovia's literary study needs exegetical strengthening to substantiate or, if necessary, modify his structural conclusions. This paper seeks to provide the needed strengthening by arguing that the macro-structure<sup>6</sup> of the FD may be demarcated by a consideration of its delayed

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<sup>1</sup> Fernando F. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word: The Johannine Call to Abide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Parsenios calls Segovia's work "rich." George L. Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation: The Johannine Farewell Discourses in Light of Greco-Roman Literature*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 117 (Boston: Brill, 2005), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 1, 20, 48–49.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, v–vi.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., in setting forth his criteria for determining the outer boundaries of each division in the FD, two of the six include subjective terms (i.e., "sense" and "tone" of address) that are difficult to substantiate exegetically (*ibid.*, 50).

<sup>6</sup> Porter defines macro-structure as "the units of discourse which convey the large thematic ideas which help to govern the interpretation of the microstructures." He continues, "Macro-structures serve two vital functions. On the one hand, they are the highest level of interpretation of a given text. On the other hand, they are the points at which larger extra-textual issues such as time, place, audience, authorship and purpose (more traditional questions of biblical backgrounds) must be considered" (Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 300). See also Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 71–77. NB a full exegetical outline of the FD is

departure genre, observation of discourse features of the text, and attention to a regular order of interaction in the dialogue. Before exploring these elements a discussion of method is necessary.

### **Method**

In determining the structure of the FD, Segovia names four steps in his study. First, he identifies the major units of the whole discourse.<sup>7</sup> His criteria for identification include sensing a conclusion and an introduction, the occurrence of repetitive formulas (e.g., “These things I have said to you”), the appearance of “controlling and overarching themes,” a move from dialogue to monologue, differences in tone, and differences in Jesus’s “temporal standpoint.”<sup>8</sup> Second, Segovia searches for “the principles or patterns of organization and development, whether in terms of macrostructure or microstructure,” namely, “the frequent use of repetition.”<sup>9</sup> Adapting Robert Alter’s *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, Segovia observes two features of biblical narrative. On one hand, the feature of integrated repetition involves the same words, phrases, descriptions, metaphors, scenes, and patterns appearing in the narrative or picking up from antecedent Scripture.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the repetition appears in strategic variation, showing different verbal and conceptual perspectives.<sup>11</sup> Segovia’s third step utilizes literary-rhetorical analysis of the previously identified discourse units to discover local patterns within the units. Here “each

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offered in the Appendix. Space limitations prevent a full defense of the exegetical choices for the microstructure.

<sup>7</sup> Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 49.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 51–52.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

major section of the unit must also demonstrably display a system of organization encompassing all of the material within its own boundaries in an integrated whole.”<sup>12</sup> Finally, Segovia analyzes the discourse units for their specific concerns and aims. This provides “final confirmation for the formal delineation of the outermost boundaries of the various units undertaken in the first step.”<sup>13</sup> This step has two levels. First is “the literary level of the narrative plot itself,” which demonstrates how the FD fits within the theme of Jesus’s impending death.<sup>14</sup> Second “is the extraliterary level of author and intended audience,” which takes into account the historical reconstruction of the FD and its intended effect upon the disciples for whom the Gospel was written.<sup>15</sup>

Segovia’s four steps—identifying the major units, observing patterns of repetition, literary-rhetorical analysis, and each unit’s aims and concerns—produce four major sections in the FD: 13:31–14:31; 15:1–17; 15:18–16:4a; 16:4b–33. This study agrees that there are four major sections. However, this study breaks the sections differently (i.e., 13:31–14:14; 14:15–16:4c; 16:4d–24; 16:25–33). The reason for these differences are philosophical and methodological. Below the methodological differences between Segovia and this study are explained. Although commending Segovia’s work and affirming many of his observations of repetition and inclusion at the microstructure level,<sup>16</sup> his steps lead the exegete to rely on

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> E.g., the analysis of 13:33c–38 reveals three parts to the passage that together show a pattern of inclusion in the exchange between Jesus and Peter. See *ibid.*, 74–80.

subjective intuition, especially his criteria in the first step for determining macro-structure. While not outright rejecting a role for subjectivity, objective criteria that possess explanatory power are needed for determining the structure of the FD.

### In Search of Objectivity

Delineating the structure of any biblical text pursues an objectivity in analysis for explanatory power in interpretation. Different genre-types lead to different kinds of observations about structure. For example, epistles generally follow a macro-structure pattern of Introduction–Body–Conclusion. However, analysis of those sections may reveal a second level structure of specified topics (e.g., 1 Corinthians), ordered argumentation utilizing conjunctions (e.g., Romans), command clusters (e.g., 1 Peter), or thematic development of a few core issues connected by tail-head linkage (e.g., 1 John) that expose a coherent structure to the main body of the letter.<sup>17</sup> Other genre-types call for observation of other structuring features of the text. For example, in an historical narrative like the Gospel of John, the setting and plot line of the story may be revealed by time references (e.g., John 1:29), internal thematic development, and cohesion (e.g., 9:1, 40–41; 10:21), or overarching thematic development (e.g., the use of ὥρα in 2:4; 7:30; 12:27; 13:1 to anticipate Jesus’ glorification through death).

The main challenge to determining the structure of the FD is due to its dialogue/monologue form along with the absence of the regular use of conjunctions for logical order. That is, the FD begins with a dialogue (13:31–14:22), transitions to an extended monologue (14:23–16:17), and concludes with a dialogue (16:18–33). As will be argued below,

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<sup>17</sup> For an example of a recent examination of many of these features in Romans 12 see Martin M. Culy, “Romans 12:9–13: Greek Grammar and How to Worship God,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 65, no. 4 (2022): 719–32.

the dialogue helps to order the structure. Yet, the absence of conjunctions for most of the extended monologue leaves the interpreter few obvious clues as to its organization. Nevertheless, there are still clues in the discourse that allow for discerning a coherent and meaningful structure.

Observing these clues reflect an objective and explanatory power for making exegetical decisions in identifying the structure of the FD. Objectively, the grammar of the text reflects the authorial choices made for organizing the material to accomplish the meaning the apostle John wanted to convey. Furthermore, observing the order of Jesus's interaction with His disciples also provides an objective basis from which to argue for a specific structure. Finally, the features of the text and their function possess an explanatory power in exegetically determining the boundaries within the FD. With these methodological advantages in mind, a consideration of genre and two structural clues—discourse features and ordered interaction—are discussed and utilized in this study.

### Delayed Departure Genre

Identifying a text's genre is an important aspect of exegesis and interpretation.<sup>18</sup> On one hand, genre sets forth the ground rules for proper reading and understanding because it serves as a framework or type of speech that is shared between an author and reader.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, authors are in control of the genre type chosen to convey meaning in their writings.<sup>20</sup> The Gospel

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<sup>18</sup> Edward W. Klink III., *John*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 48; Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1–11*, vol. 25A, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 25–30; E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale Press, 1967), 70–71. Hirsch identifies genre as a type of utterance: “Coming to understand the meaning of an utterance is like learning the rules of a game. To play the game properly you must have learned the rules. . . . The game, therefore, must be associated not with just one utterance, but with a type of utterance” (ibid., 70).

<sup>19</sup> Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 70–71; Klink, *John*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Gentry observes how the prophets used “an extremely wide variety of speech types to communicate” (Peter J. Gentry, *How to Read and Understand the Biblical Prophets* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 13. This

of John's overarching genre "share a family resemblance with the wide-ranging form of Greco-Roman biographies from the Hellenistic period both before and after the life and ministry of Jesus."<sup>21</sup> This marks the Gospel as both biographical and historical in form. At the same time, the Gospel shows intentional choice and organization of the material for communicating a specific message, which is a general feature of historical narrative (cf. John 20:30–31).<sup>22</sup>

In accordance with historical narrative, several dialogues and monologues are used to develop the story and provide meaning to the Gospel.<sup>23</sup> The difference between a dialogue and monologue is that a dialogue engages respective characters in a "point for point" engagement while a monologue "allows for a lengthy argument."<sup>24</sup> While the FD can be identified as a monologue, it also shares other genre types that aid in interpretation.<sup>25</sup> One of these is especially

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observation also applies to authors' use of genre in general.

<sup>21</sup> Klink, *John*, 48. Here Klink approvingly draws from the work of Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, 2nd ed., vol. 70, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004). See also Parsenius, *Departure and Consolation*, 18–19.

<sup>22</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*, Invitation to Theological Studies Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011), 372. The features of historical narrative include reporting events, dramatic presentation (i.e., setting, plot, characterization), pure description, and authorial commentary. See *ibid.*, 373, 239–54. See also Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. and Moisés Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 122–37.

<sup>23</sup> Klink, *John*, 52–58.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>25</sup> Segovia categorizes the FD as a Farewell, or Testament, Type-Scene, that shares features with Greco-Roman, Hebrew Bible, and extra-biblical literature. Parsenius expands this category to include elements of dramatic, consolation, and literary symposium literature. See Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 2–5, 19–20. Bammel makes a case that the FD is written in the Testament genre in Ernst Bammel, "The Farewell Discourse of the Evangelist John and Its Jewish Heritage," *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 1 (1993): 103–16. See also representative Patristic observations of the role of the consolation genre for interpreting the FD in George L. Parsenius, *Departure and Consolation: The Johannine Farewell Discourses in Light of Greco-Roman Literature*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 117 (Boston: Brill, 2005), 35–36; George Parsenius, "'Paramythetikos Christos': St. John Chrysostom Interprets John 13–17," in *Sacred Text and Interpretation: Perspectives in Orthodox Biblical Studies: Papers in Honor of Professor Savas Agourides*, ed. Theodore G. Stylianopoulos (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 221–32; John Chrysostom, *St. John Chrysostom Commentary on Saint John, the Apostle and Evangelist: Homilies 1–47*, trans. Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin, vol. 33, The Fathers of the Church (Washington, D.C.: The



helpful for identifying the structure of the FD: the dramatic announcement and delay of a character's departure to death.

In Greco-Roman tragedy, main characters went to their deaths in typical fashion. The conflict of the plot would indicate an ominous end for a character and thus progressively lead him to his death, usually out of the sight of the audience.<sup>26</sup> In an increasing fashion, both Jesus and John—the author of the Gospel—speak of Jesus' impending death, usually with reference to His "hour."<sup>27</sup> Alongside this threatening expectation, Greco-Roman tragedies sometimes delayed the character's impending death and allow the character to make a speech, thus separating the speaker from the action of the plot and give meaning to its events.<sup>28</sup> It also functions to give the character control over the events of his approaching death.

This delayed departure is the point of contact for Jesus in the Gospel of John. The author and Jesus have already announced the time for departure has come (13:1, 33). Jesus confirms His departure with a command to depart in 14:31b. But the departure is not accomplished in the narrative until 18:1. Instead, Jesus continues to speak to His disciples in chapters 15 and 16, and prays to God the Father in chapter 17. Only after these monologues does John inform the reader that Jesus departs (18:1). Rather than reveal careless editing,<sup>29</sup> this paper argues that the delayed departure functions as a key structural device for the FD. It highlights a transition from dialogue

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Catholic University of America Press, 1969), 256, 332; Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John: Cyril of Alexandria*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, trans. David R. Maxwell, vol. 2, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 145, 198–99.

<sup>26</sup> Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation*, 50–51.

<sup>27</sup> See John 2:24; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1.

<sup>28</sup> Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation*, 67.

<sup>29</sup> Parsenios writes, "The aborted exit of Jesus at 14:31 need not be considered the result of sloppy editing" (*ibid.*, 70).

to monologue, serving as the point where Jesus’s response and clarification to Judas (not Iscariot) in 14:23–31a becomes an elaboration on the topic introduced at 14:15–21.<sup>30</sup>

### Discourse Features

The FD contains language features that aid in determining its structure. Although the discipline of discourse analysis is notorious for its diversity in terminology and methodology,<sup>31</sup> it offers value for observing and evaluating proposals for the structure of a discourse due to its attention to features within the discourse itself.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, these features utilize exegetical observations at the clause or sentence level for attending to the overall context.<sup>33</sup> This serves the

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<sup>30</sup> Klink observes that the delayed exit provides “Jesus with the opportunity to include ‘consolatory discourse’ that is both therapeutic and facilitates his presence” (Klink, *John*, 644).

<sup>31</sup> Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 3–4; Köstenberger and Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation*, 594; Jeremy Thompson and Wendy Widder, “Major Approaches to Linguistics,” in *Linguistics and Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Douglas Mangum and Josh Westbury, Lexham Methods Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 121–22; David L. Mathewson and Elodie Ballantine Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar: Syntax for Students of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 270.

<sup>32</sup> Köstenberger and Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation*, 594; Michael Aubrey, “The Value of Linguistically Informed Exegesis,” in *Linguistics & Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Douglas Mangum and Josh Westbury, Lexham Methods Series 2 (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 195–98; L. Scott Kellum, *Preaching the Farewell Discourse: An Expository Walk-through of John 13:31–17:26* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2014), 41–42; Andreas J. Köstenberger, Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer, *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament*, Revised. (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2020), 464–67; Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 270–90; Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*, Second. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2000), viii–ix. On the appearance and use of discourse features in the biblical text Chou writes, “Grammar can deal with how an entire text coheres together, and the biblical authors read and wrote their Bible with that in mind. The prophets and apostles recounted past revelation in light of its overall organization . . . and organized their own writings by using discourse markers and other linguistic indicators . . .” (Abner Chou, “The Hermeneutics of the Pastor-Theologian,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 34, no. 1 [2023]: 67). Thomas comments similarly, “The use of conjunctions in the New Testament is particularly strategic in cultivating a sensitivity to movement of thought in the text” (Robert L. Thomas, “Exegesis and Expository Preaching,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 34, no. 1 [2023]: 100).

<sup>33</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, viii; Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 271. Busenitz comments on the general value of the original languages for this level of exegesis, “Learning the original languages is far more than merely doing word studies. Subtle nuances of understanding are easily missed if studying the Scriptures solely from vernacular sources. Having a working knowledge of the biblical languages opens the door to greater clarity, depth, and insight into the biblical text” (Irvin A. Busenitz, “Lifting the

exegete with suggestions for marking the boundaries within a discourse and thus exposing the overarching order of its message. In the FD, observing the appearances of four discourse features assists with determining its overall structure.

First, according to Levinsohn, “The term POINT OF DEPARTURE designates an element that is placed at the beginning of a clause or sentence with a dual function.”<sup>34</sup> This dual function includes serving as the starting point of the communication and cohesively anchoring the text to its surrounding context. For example, the FD proper begins at 13:31 with *δτε οὖν ἐξῆλθεν*, which shows a contextual connection to Judas Iscariot’s exit in 13:30 by way of the verb *ἐξῆλθεν* and a temporal reference by means of the conjunction *δτε*. The conclusion of the FD is also marked by reference to the speech of the previous chapters (*Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν*) followed by Jesus’s raising His eyes to address God the Father (17:1). Within the FD, another example is found in 16:4d–5 where a number of textual and contextual factors highlight a point of departure. The combination of the double use of the conjunction *δὲ*, plus the appearance of the aorist tense-form *εἶπον* and imperfect tense-form *ἤμην*, the temporal adverb *νῦν*, and the reappearance of Jesus’s departure language from chapters 13 and 14 (*ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐρωτᾷ με· ποῦ ὑπάγεις;*) all indicate a new starting point of the discourse that is anchored to its context. Furthermore, because of the use of departure language and its tie to the overall discourse, its appearance here with the other textual features demonstrate that 16:4d begins a macro-level break in the FD.

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Veil: Original Languages and the Pastor-Theologian,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 34, no. 1 [2023]: 81).

<sup>34</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 8 (emphasis in original).

Second, as noted in the examples above, conjunctions serve as a way to show how clauses and propositions are logically related with its surrounding context.<sup>35</sup> The examples above demonstrate the use of conjunctions for temporal orientation and development in the discourse, respectively. However, the default use of connectives in the Gospel and in the FD is asyndeton, which refers to the absence of a conjunction.<sup>36</sup> Asyndeton is used in two ways in the Gospel.<sup>37</sup> First, it typically suggests a relationship of discontinuity when it is used with a clause that contains a point of departure. For example, in 14:30, after reminding the disciples about His imminent departure and informing them of His destination in 14:28–29, Jesus reiterates He is running out of time to talk to them because of the coming of the ruler of the world. The first clause of verse 30 reads οὐκέτι πολλὰ λαλήσω μεθ' ὑμῶν. Note the use of asyndeton with a quantitative point of departure, understood in context as referring to time. This example shows a relationship of discontinuity with its previous context, suggesting there is at least a minor boundary marker in the discourse. A second way asyndeton is used in the Gospel is when a verb initiates the clause. This use shows continuity in the discourse. An example of this kind is found in 14:28 where the verb ἠκούσατε begins the clause and sets up an explanation of how the disciples ought to respond to Jesus' departure. This example shows continuity with the preceding discourse while also marking another boundary.

Third, when a character in a discourse is introduced or reactivated, there is a noticeable

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<sup>35</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 18.

<sup>36</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 81; Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 20; Vern S. Poythress, "The Use of the Intersentence Conjunctions De, Oun, Kai, and Asyndeton in the Gospel of John," *Novum Testamentum* 26, no. 4 (1984): 324; Heinrich von Siebenthal, *Ancient Greek Grammar for the Study of the New Testament* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019), 594; Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 259.

<sup>37</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 82.

pattern for the appearance or non-appearance of the article. When a person is introduced or activated in the scene, the name is usually anarthrous. If the person has already been introduced or activated, then the name is usually preceded by the article.<sup>38</sup> In the FD, each individual disciple is introduced without the article, showing that he is being activated in the discourse (13:36; 14:5, 8, 22). However, when Peter speaks again in 13:37, his name is preceded by the article. The same articular reference holds true for Jesus at 14:6, 9 and 16:19. When an already activated person has an anarthrous reference, the person is “in a position to take a significant initiative or make a significant speech.”<sup>39</sup> Noteworthy in the FD is how Jesus is anarthrous at different points: 13:31, 36, 38; 14:23; and 16:31. This suggests that the speeches that follow are not merely responses to what is said immediately before, but that they possess significance for the plot as a whole (i.e., the arrival of Jesus’s “hour,” the prediction of Peter’s denials, and the prediction of disciples’ scattering at Jesus’s arrest) or function as a boundary marker in the FD (Jesus’s response to Judas—not Iscariot—in 14:23).

Finally, the verb choice used to introduce a speech is a significant discourse feature. Levinsohn highlights three distinct usages are exegetically notable. First, when λέγω is used, it not only shows prominence in the discourse as an historical present (unless the article is present) but is also cataphoric, meaning it points forward to the speech that follows.<sup>40</sup> The FD begins with

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<sup>38</sup> Jenny Read-Heimerdinger, “The Function of the Article with Proper Names: The New Testament Book of Acts as a Case Study,” in *The Article in Post-Classical Greek*, ed. Daniel King, SIL International in Publications and Textlinguistics 10 (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2019), 157; Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 159–60; von Siebenthal, *Ancient Greek Grammar*, 190; Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 74; Köstenberger, Merkle, and Plummer, *Going Deeper*, 158; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 217–18.

<sup>39</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 159; Read-Heimerdinger, “Function of the Article with Proper Names,” 165. Read-Heimerdinger notes that this feature of anarthrous usage introducing a significant speech holds true in other books such as Acts 10:34 and 11:4.

<sup>40</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 247, 248; Wallace, *GGBB*, 527; Köstenberger, Merkle, and Plummer, *Going Deeper*, 262–63; Mathewson and Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar*, 126–27; von

this usage in 13:31. Second, when a form of ἀποκρίνομαι appears by itself, it reflects a close continuity in the dialogue, serving as a direct response to a question (e.g., 13:36b). Third, when reported speech is introduced by ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν there may be a break in the “tight-knit nature” of the discourse.<sup>41</sup> While a break is not always evident (e.g., the redundant response in 6:29), it nevertheless effectively “highlights the response” because of the speech’s significance.<sup>42</sup> Notably, this third usage is how Jesus’s response to Judas (not Iscariot) is introduced in 14:23.

These four discourse features serve to mark the outer boundaries of the FD and within the FD, assisting exegetes with determining the structure of the discourse. Points of departure show the beginning of a new element while maintaining cohesion with its context. Conjunctions, especially asyndeton, stitch the discourse together, suggesting logical or temporal orientation with its context. The presence or absence of the article in reference to a character can mark a significant speech to follow. The choice of verb may point to the speech immediately proceeding, while also showing the tight correlation with what came before or highlighting the importance of the response. Each of these features play a role in the macro-structure of the FD.

### Ordered Interaction

A second overall structural clue is the ordered interaction within the FD. First, Jesus introduces a topic. Second, the disciples respond with a question—whether due to a misunderstanding or a request for more information. Finally, Jesus responds with a correction, clarification, or elaboration. This paper argues that interactions following this general pattern can

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Siebenthal, *Ancient Greek Grammar*, 319–20. See also Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 128–33.

<sup>41</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 247.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

be observed throughout the FD. Each major section begins with a topic, followed by a disciple's question, which is responded to by Jesus. A significant difference to this pattern coincides with Jesus's command to depart in 14:31b, followed by a call for the disciples to abide in Him in 15:1–17 and the announcement for the disciples to expect rejection from the world in 15:18–16:4c. This difference is identified as an elaboration of Jesus's answer to Judas (not Iscariot) begun in 14:23 and explained by appeal to the genre considerations and discourse features identified above, as well as thematic observations from 14:31b–16:4c, making 14:15–16:4c a focal point for the FD. Overall, this ordering of the interaction keeps Jesus as the tone-setter for the discourse and allows the misunderstandings and questions from the disciples to possess valuable content in the discourse. In other words, this order of interaction demonstrates that Jesus and the disciples are working together toward achieving an understanding of Jesus's message.

### **Structure of the Farewell Discourse**

Noting these grammatically objective discourse markers along with observations about the order of interaction between Jesus and the disciples, and the considerations of genre produce a fourfold division at the macro-structure level. These divisions include 13:31–14:14; 14:15–16:4c; 16:4d–24; and 16:25–33.<sup>43</sup> Each of these divisions are defended below.

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<sup>43</sup> Segovia divides the FD in four major sections: 13:31–14:31; 15:1–17; 15:18–16:4a; 16:4b–33. For his observations on the “thematic flow,” “strategic flow,” and “rhetorical situation” of the FD, which offers a synchronically layered justification of his structure proposal, see Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 284–308. Brouwer sets forth a chiasmic structure to the FD with the center of the chiasm being the call to abide in 15:1–17. See Wayne A. Brouwer, “The Chiasmic Structure of the Farewell Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, Part 1,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 175 (June 2018): 195–214; Wayne A. Brouwer, “The Chiasmic Structure of the Farewell Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, Part 2,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 175 (September 2018): 304–22; Wayne Brouwer, “Rethinking the Structure of the ‘Farewell Discourse’ (John 13–17) through a Chiasmic Lens,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 59, no. 5 (2020): 207–30. For an argument against a chiasmic structure, see L. Scott Kellum, *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse: The Literary Integrity of John 13:31–16:33*, JSNTSup 256 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 63–72.

## Declaration of Departure (13:31–14:14)

A transition occurs at 13:31–14:14 from the Passover meal and Jesus’s washing of His disciples’ feet (13:1–30) to the FD proper.<sup>44</sup> Several discourse features are present to warrant a boundary marker at 13:31. First, the use of the conjunction  $\delta\tau\epsilon$  signals a temporal clause relative to Judas Iscariot’s departure from the scene in 13:30.<sup>45</sup> Second, the conjunction  $\sigma\upsilon\tilde{\nu}$  in John’s Gospel regularly highlights a transition in the plotline.<sup>46</sup> Third, the verb choice of the historical present  $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota$  points to the speech to come as prominent in the plotline.<sup>47</sup> Finally, the already activated proper noun  $\text{Ἰησοῦς}$  is anarthrous (see  $\delta\ \text{Ἰησοῦς}$  in 13:1), suggesting that this previously activated participant is marked as taking significant action, in this case a noteworthy speech.<sup>48</sup>

A pattern of ordered interaction between Jesus and His disciples begins at 13:31–38.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 62; Kellum, *Preaching the Farewell Discourse*, 70–71; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, Revised., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 558; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 476; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 29A, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 608; Jan van der Watt, *An Introduction to the Johannine Gospel and Letters*, T & T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 17. Contra. those who see a division occurring somewhere within 13:31–38. See Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 96; Michael Rudolph, “John,” in *Discourse Analysis of the New Testament Writings*, ed. Todd A. Scacewater (Dallas, TX: Fontes Press, 2020), 145; Wayne Brouwer, “Rethinking the Structure of the ‘Farewell Discourse’ (John 13–17) through a Chiastic Lens,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 59, no. 5 (2020): 207; Wayne A. Brouwer, “The Chiastic Structure of the Farewell Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, Part 1,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 175 (June 2018): 196–98; Wayne A. Brouwer, “The Chiastic Structure of the Farewell Discourse in the Fourth Gospel, Part 2,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 175 (September 2018): 305–07.

<sup>45</sup> Lidija Novakovic, *John 11–21: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2020), 106.

<sup>46</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 85; Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 47.

<sup>47</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 248–49; Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 130.

<sup>48</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 159.

<sup>49</sup> Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 62.



The order commences with Jesus's introduction of His topic in 13:33–35 about His departure and the commandment to love one another.<sup>50</sup> Next, a disciple misunderstands Jesus, in this case Peter asks Jesus where He is going and why he cannot come with Him (13:36a).<sup>51</sup> Then Jesus clarifies that Peter cannot come now but he will come later (13:36b), which is followed by Peter's assertion of his commitment to follow Jesus anywhere at any cost and Jesus's prediction of Peter's denials (13:37–38).<sup>52</sup> This pattern of (1) topic, (2) misunderstanding, (3) clarification or correction appears in every macro-structure division of the FD.<sup>53</sup>

The concluding boundary of 13:31–14:14 is justified by three features. First, in 14:1–14 there are two topics introduced around two misunderstandings from the disciples. Jesus announces the goal of His departure (14:1–4), followed by Thomas's misunderstanding (14:5), and concludes with Jesus's clarification (14:6). Next, Jesus announces the outcome of His departure (14:7), preceding Philip's misunderstanding (14:8), and Jesus's correction (14:9–14). This correction utilizes the repetition of a form of *πιστεύω* four times in 14:10–12 after it was used as a command in 14:1. Second, the outcome of Jesus's departure results in Jesus answering the disciples' requests, which is correlated with the greater works of the disciples (14:12–14; NB the use of *καὶ* in 14:13). Finally, the switch in subject matter from *πιστεύω* and *ποιέω* to *ἀγαπάω*

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<sup>50</sup> NB 13:31–32 introduce the FD proper in announcing the long awaited arrival of Jesus's "hour." See *Ibid.*, 69–73; Brown, *John*, 2:609–11.

<sup>51</sup> Carson notes that the Jews responded in a similar way to Peter when Jesus announces His departure to them in 7:35 (see Carson, *John*, 486). NB that Jesus's first interaction with His disciples concerned His location: *ποῦ μένεις*; (1:38). These questions demonstrate cohesion to the entire Gospel.

<sup>52</sup> This prediction of denial serves an important function in the Gospel since it shows cohesion between the FD and the rest of the Gospel and the prediction's fulfillment demonstrates the reliability of the rest of the content of the FD. See Klink, *John*, 607, 751–52. On the role of predictive prophecy relative to confirming authoritative teaching, see also Kaiser and Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, 199; John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 102.

<sup>53</sup> See Appendix for a full listing of this pattern in the FD.

at 14:15 suggests a boundary to the preceding unit has been crossed.<sup>54</sup> These three features distinguish the two units and suggest a macro-structure division at 14:14.<sup>55</sup>

#### Distinction Established Because of Departure (14:15–16:4c)

As noted above, the boundary between the first and second macro-units in the FD falls at 14:15. In addition to the faith-theme flowing into a point of departure regarding love and obedience in 14:15 (and picking up on the command in 13:34–35), this section introduces to the dialogue ἄλλον παράκλητον, the world, the disciples relationship to the world, and the indwelling of the Paraclete and Jesus in the disciples (14:15–21). Each of these are tied to the giving of the Paraclete (14:15–17) and the return of Jesus (14:18–21).<sup>56</sup> These themes are found throughout the second unit as the main topics of the dialogue/monologue.

Having introduced these themes, Judas (not Iscariot) asks what has happened that a distinction is about to exist between the disciples and the world (14:22). Jesus's response is marked by three discourse features. First, the absence of a conjunction plus an initial verb in the word order shows that the following is in continuity with the preceeding.<sup>57</sup> Second, the proper noun Ἰησοῦς is anarthrous, suggesting that the previously activated participant is about to act in a significant way.<sup>58</sup> Finally, the verb choice ἀπεκρίθη ... καὶ εἶπεν suggests that the response is

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 94.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 80–81. Although Segovia's second major section is 14:1–27, he ends a subsection at verse 14.

<sup>56</sup> Brown, *John*, 2:644–45; Parsenius, *Departure and Consolation*, 82. Cf. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 94–100.

<sup>57</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 82.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

highlighted for attention.<sup>59</sup> These three features and the thematic point of departure signaling a refresh of the ordered interaction justifies a major break in the discourse at 14:15.

Jesus's response to Judas is sustained at least through 14:27, but arguably continues through 14:31a. In these verses Jesus highlights distinctions in the disciples' love and obedience, the Paraclete's teaching ministry, and Jesus's peace (14:23–27). Moreover, Jesus clarifies that the destination of His departure is the Father (14:28–29), which reveals a distinction between Jesus and the world based upon His love and obedience to the Father and is thematically tied to the disciples' love and obedience (14:30–31a). This identification of a destination develops the departure theme from 14:1–6, further justifying a break at the point of departure in 14:15.

At this point (14:31b), Jesus transitions into a monologue that elaborates on elements of the preceding topic, response, and clarification (14:15–14:31a). As noted above under the discussion on departure genre, it is typical for a main character to give a speech before he goes off to his death. At times an announced departure is delayed to give the character control over the scene.<sup>60</sup> Significantly in the FD, Jesus announces the time for departure subsequent to His declaration that He has limited time and the ruler of the world is coming for Him (14:30). This reminds His disciples of His approaching "hour" (cf. 13:1, 31–32) and indicates another distinction between the world and Jesus and His disciples (14:22). These ominous themes suggest that His death is imminent. However, the text continues with more speech from Jesus rather than the events leading to His death. Any mention of His departure is withheld until 16:4d. This suggests that the second macro-structure unit extends through chapter 15 and into chapter

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 255–56.

<sup>60</sup> Parsenios, *Departure and Consolation*, 50–51, 67.

16, making 14:31b–16:4c a monologue elaboration of Jesus’s response to Judas.<sup>61</sup>

This elaboration is divided into two sections (15:1–17; 15:18–16:4c). The first section deals with the relationship between the Father, Jesus, and the disciples (15:1–17), which is further divided into two subsections that follow the pattern of (1) describing the relationship (15:1–2, 9a–b), (2) focusing the relationship (15:3–7, 9c–11), and (3) developing the relationship (15:8, 12–17).<sup>62</sup> The second section prepares the disciples to expect rejection and hostility from the world (15:18–16:4c).<sup>63</sup> The transition is highlighted by a point of departure that reintroduces the world to the discourse (cf. 14:22, 30–31). The second section ends with an evident boundary marker that includes the twofold summarizing phrase *ταῦτα λελάληκα* (16:1, 4a), a developmental conjunction (*δὲ*) matched with a temporal reference to the speech (16:4d), and a second developmental conjunction (*δὲ*) preceding temporal (*νῦν*) and thematic references (*ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐρωτᾷ με· ποῦ ὑπάγεις*; 16:5). These features justify a macro-structure boundary at 16:4c.

#### Distress Because of Departure (16:4d–24)

The features noted immediately above open a new division in the FD at 16:4d. This opening reintroduces Jesus’s imminent departure (14:30–31) and recalls the disciples’ misunderstanding about His destination in 13:36–14:6. This means the ordered interaction is refreshed at 16:4d with the development of the established topic of departure (16:4d–16). Here the topic concerns the disciples’ distress and grief over the consequences they will experience

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<sup>61</sup> Contra. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 116–17.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 130–31.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 170–74.

because of Jesus's departure (16:4d–6). Jesus consoles them with the assertion that His departure is to their advantage because of the role the Paraclete will fulfill in His absence—both toward the world (16:7–11) and the disciples (16:12–15). This leads to the disciples' misunderstanding of the departure (16:17–18), Jesus's knowledge of their misunderstanding (16:19a),<sup>64</sup> and His consolatory clarification (16:19b–24).<sup>65</sup>

Jesus's consolation in 16:19–24 conveys key themes and references that clarify how the disciples' grief will turn to joy, which suggests this clarification serves as the conclusion to a macro-structure division. Throughout the passage Jesus refers to grief replaced by abiding joy. This replacement is illustrated by the grief of a mother in labor turned to joy at the birth of her son (16:21). Subsequent to this is a time reference to the coming joy and the reappearance of the theme of making requests of the Son and the Father (cf. 14:13, 20; 15:11). Taken together, these indicate a boundary marker.

#### Aftermath of Departure (16:25–33)

The fourth and final macro-structure division begins with a phrase that summarizes the communicative nature of the preceding (Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λελάληκα ὑμῖν) and promises clarity to come (16:25–28). This serves as the topic of this division. Ironically, the disciples reveal their misunderstanding about their level of clarity at this point during the FD (16:29–30). In its content, this response is distinguished from the disciples' previous responses. Nevertheless, it

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<sup>64</sup> The manuscript evidence for an articular or anarthrous reference to Jesus at 16:19 is divided. However, in this case the conjunction οὖν has already appeared at 16:17 along with an explanation of the reintroduced disciples' misunderstanding. These features justify observing an ordered interaction similar to 13:31–14:14 and 14:15–16:4c.

<sup>65</sup> Although Segovia's fourth unit extends through 16:33, he recognizes structural breaks at verses 11, 15, and 24. See Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word*, 215–17, 219.

shows that an ordered interaction has been refreshed and, thus, a new section has begun.<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, discourse features appear in 16:31 that also suggest a distinct section. The clause begins with an initial verb and without a conjunction, showing continuity with the disciples' previous assertion.<sup>67</sup> The anarthrous proper noun Ἰησοῦς shows a previously activated participant is about to take significant action in the dialogue.<sup>68</sup> The verb choice ἀπεκρίθη keeps the dialogue in close connection to the disciples' assertion by offering a direct response to them.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, Jesus's comments about the immediate future for the disciples and the outcome of His departure from them in 16:32–33 establish a firm conclusion to the content of the FD and the appropriate response to its message (cf. 14:1–3). The discourse point of departure in 16:25, the refreshed order of interaction, and the thematic and discourse features suggest that 16:25–33 mark the boundaries of the fourth and final division of the FD's macro-structure.<sup>70</sup>

### Conclusion

This paper sought to strengthen Fernando Segovia's study of the FD by marking the boundaries of the discourse according to certain discourse features and a regular order of interaction in the dialogue. The discourse features include points of departure, the use of

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<sup>66</sup> Segovia recognizes the same basic structure of 16:25–33 within his fourth macro-section: 16:25–28; 16:29–30; 16:31–33. See *ibid.*, 260.

<sup>67</sup> Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 82.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>70</sup> That 16:33 concludes the FD proper and 17:1 begins a section distinct from the the FD, yet still within the overall macro-division begun at 13:1, consider the summarizing phrase ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν, the anarthrous proper noun Ἰησοῦς, the lifting of Jesus's eyes to heaven, and the Father as the new recipient of His speech. These features indicate that Jesus's prayers should not be considered as a part of the FD but a distinct section within 13:1–17:26.

conjunctions, articular or anarthrous references by name to a speaker, especially Jesus, and the verb choice for introducing Jesus's speech. The order of interaction between Jesus and His disciples consists of Jesus's introduction of a topic, a misunderstanding from a single disciple or the whole group, and Jesus's response of correction, clarification, and, in one case, elaboration.

The result of this study has found an emphasis on the meaning and consequences of Jesus's departure developed through a fourfold division of the FD at 13:31–14:14; 14:15–16:4c; 16:4d–24; and 16:25–33. Attention to the discourse features and ordered interaction offers exegetes a degree of objectivity and explanatory power to their exegetical conclusions. This suggests that interpreters may build upon this grammatical objectivity with insights into the more literary observations of repetitive themes and content in the FD. Although this study has sought to identify the boundaries of the macro-structure of the FD, not addressed is the potential to further strengthen the grammatical and literary features that Segovia observed. Thus, these discourse features can further strengthen Segovia's literary observations with exegetical data.

## APPENDIX: EXEGETICAL OUTLINE OF THE FAREWELL DISCOURSE

- I. (13:31–14:14) Declaration of Departure
  - A. (13:31–32) Introduction: Time for Glory
  - B. (13:33–38) Announcement of Departure
    - i. (13:33–35) Jesus’s Topic: Exclusivity of Departure and Commandment to Love
    - ii. (13:36a) Peter’s Misunderstanding: Why Can I Not Come?
    - iii. (13:36b) Jesus’s Clarification: Not Now, But Later
    - iv. (13:37–38) Disagreement and Prediction
  - C. (14:1–6) Goal of Departure
    - i. (14:1–4) Jesus’s Topic: Believe Me When I Tell You I Am Departing To Do an Eschatological Work
    - ii. (14:5) Thomas’s Misunderstanding: How Do We Know the Way Where You Are Going?
    - iii. (14:6) Jesus’s Clarification: I Am the Way
  - D. (14:7–14) Outcome of Departure
    - i. (14:7) Jesus’s Topic: Knowing Me is Knowing the Father
    - ii. (14:8) Philip’s Misunderstanding: Show Us the Father
    - iii. (14:9–14) Jesus’s Correction: I Have Shown You the Father
- II. (14:15–16:4c) Distinction Established Because of Departure
  - A. (14:15–31a) Jesus’s Topic: The Paraclete and Jesus
    - i. (14:15–21) Promises Drawing a Parallel Between the Paraclete and Jesus
      - 1. (14:15–17) The Paraclete’s Ministry
      - 2. (14:18–21) Jesus’s Ministry



ii. (14:22) Judas's Misunderstanding: What Has Happened to Manifest this Distinction Between Us and the World?

iii. (14:23–31a) Jesus's Response to Judas

1. (14:23–27) Introductory Distinctions: Disciples' Love and Obedience, Paraclete's Teaching Ministry, and Jesus' Peace

2. (14:28–29) Clarification about Departure: Jesus's Destination is the Father

3. (14:30–31a) Distinction Revealed in the Departure: Jesus Loves and Obeys the Father

B. (14:31b–16:4c) Jesus's Elaboration on the Topic

i. (14:31b) Transition to Elaboration

ii. (15:1–17) Abide in this Relationship

1. (15:1–8) Abide in Jesus

a. (15:1–2) Describing the Relationship: True Vine, Farmer, and Branches

b. (15:3–7) Relationship Focus: Abide in Jesus as Branches to the Vine

c. (15:8) Developing the Relationship: Honor the Father by Bearing the Vine's Fruit

2. (15:9–17) Abide in Jesus's Love

a. (15:9a–b) Describing the Relationship: The Father's Love for the Son, the Son's Love for Disciples

b. (15:9c–11) Relationship Focus: Abide in Jesus's Love

c. (15:12–17) Developing the Relationship: Abide in Jesus's Love by Loving One Another

iii. (15:18–16:4c) Explanation of the Manifest Distinction Between the Disciples and the World

1. (15:18–21) The World Will Reject You Because of Me

2. (15:22–25) The World Is Condemned Because It Rejects Me
  3. (15:26–27) The Paraclete and the Disciples Will Testify Against the World
  4. (16:1–4c) These Things Are Spoken for Your Protection and Focus
- III. (16:4d–24) Distress Because of Departure
- A. (16:4d–16) Jesus’s Topic: Departure Is Not for Grief but Advantage
    - i. (16:4d–6) Disciples’ Grief Because of Departure
    - ii. (16:7–11) For the Disciples’ Advantage Because of Departure
    - iii. (16:12–15) Disclosure to the Disciples’ Because of Departure
  - B. (16:17–18) Disciples’ Misunderstanding of Departure
  - C. (16:19–24) Jesus’s Clarification: Consolation Despite Departure
- IV. (16:25–33) Aftermath of Departure
- A. (16:25–28) Jesus’s Topic: Clarity Will Come
  - B. (16:29–30) Disciples’ Misunderstanding: We Have Clarity Now
  - C. (16:31–33) Jesus’s Correction: You Do Not Have Clarity, Yet

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