

The Gospel of John

Trust Brings Joy

John 16:16-22

INTRODUCTION:

For many weeks now, we have been experiencing the night before Jesus died on the cross for our sins. In our scripture text this morning, Christ and His disciples are still on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. Scholars estimate that it was a little over a mile from the upper room to the Garden, and by this point in John 16, Jesus and His disciples have nearly arrived. One of the main things on the Lord's mind that night was His Holy Spirit, and how God's Spirit would come in a new way after Jesus returned back to His Father in Heaven.

You know, lack of hope is the ultimate agony in suffering. We all suffer. We all go through dark times in our life, disappointments, and distress. We have disturbances, things that are completely unlike what we had hoped for or planned for. We live with challenges that are seemingly insurmountable. We are always looking for some light at the end of the tunnel. People can actually endure almost any trial if they could see an end that is good. Without that hope, life becomes overwhelmingly bleak and they do not know if there is a way out.

In our passage this morning Jesus turned His thoughts back to His death, His resurrection, and His return home to be with His Father in Heaven. This is how the Lord continued to prepare His disciples for the cross. And as He did, Jesus gives us some great reasons why we should always trust in the Lord and how that trust can produce joy and peace in our lives. This should be a source of hope for us because here we find the Lord Jesus Christ desiring with all His heart to give to His disciples, and us, hope and joy in the midst of a horrific trial. What is so amazing about our Lord's concern here is that He knows the eleven disciples are troubled. They cannot see light at the end of the tunnel.

Stand and Read Scripture

John 16:16-22 (NASB)

¹⁶ "A little while, and you no longer *are going to* see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me." ¹⁷ So some of His disciples said to one another, "What is this that He is telling us, 'A little while, and you are not *going to* see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" ¹⁸ So they were saying, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is talking *about*." ¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to question Him, and He said to them, "Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, 'A little while, and you are not *going to* see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me'?" ²⁰ Truly, truly I say to you that you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy! ²¹ Whenever a

woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. ²² Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one *is going to take your joy away from you.*

Prayer

BODY:

I. JESUS CARES ABOUT OUR CONFUSION.

Jesus Christ cares about our confusion.

The disciples were confused. So they were pondering among themselves what Jesus meant when He said *“What is this that He is telling us, ‘A little while, and you are not going to see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father?’”*

It is true that Jesus will die and will be buried. Even when they arrive at the tomb the next morning, they will not see Him. But Jesus says that they will not see Him *“because I am going to the Father”*. That will be after His ascension. There will be a short period of time that they will not **“see”** Jesus. But they will see Him again when He comes in the form of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Look at what Jesus told them back in John 14:17-18:

John 14:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you.

*¹⁸ “I will not leave you as orphans; **I am coming to you.**”*

Jesus has told the disciples that He is going to come back to them in the form of the Holy Spirit. He is telling them so that when it happens they will understand and no longer be confused.

Jesus has been talking now for a very long time about dying to His disciples. You have to understand that before Jesus came into their lives, they had been taught by the Jewish leaders that the Messiah would establish His kingdom on earth, reign in Jerusalem, destroy their enemies, and bring salvation to Israel. But He began talking in detail about dying. He told them He would be arrested, He would be beaten, He would be spit on, and even lifted up on a cross and be crucified. He also told them He would rise again. But it was so counter to their expectations that they just did not understand.

As a result of this, the closer they got to the actual time of the cross, the deeper their sorrow and confusion grew. Now they are within a couple of hours, at the most, from His arrest in the garden. And immediately after that, the mock trial in the darkness of the morning, and then His crucifixion on Friday. Their sorrow and confusion was now at the ultimate level. It has become very real to them that Jesus is actually going to die.

Several times in the upper room, Jesus had repeated His promises. They heard Him talk about resurrection. They heard Him talk about the coming of the Holy Spirit. All that

should have been **hopeful**, but they were too focused on Him talking about His death to believe His promises. They are literally completely engulfed in personal sorrow. They are so wrapped up in their own sorrow that when our Lord talks to them about, “I go to the Father,” which is His own glory, leaving this sin-cursed earth, they could not even respond by saying, “We are really happy for you.” They could not get beyond their own grief.

So as that night draws to a close, in the last couple of hours, our Lord has a burden in His heart. He has told them everything they need to know. They cannot process it, so they are engulfed in sorrow. And here we see a most amazing illustration of the sympathy and compassion of our Lord, who wants to give **joy** to these men in the midst of their sorrow.

Jesus knew all about their confusion, and He knows about ours too. Many times in life we will not understand what's going on. Other times we will not know what to do. But the Lord knows all about our confusion, and we can trust Him to help us even when we do not understand.

Jesus could help His disciples and us through their confusion because He knew the end result of all that was to happen.

II. JESUS KNOWS THE FUTURE.

John 16:16, 19 (NASB)

*¹⁶ “A little while, and you no longer *are going to see Me*; and again a little while, and you will see Me.”...¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to question Him, and He said to them, “Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, ‘A little while, and you are not *going to see Me*, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?”*

Six times in those verses, Jesus told His disciples about things that would definitely happen in the future. Jesus has a firm grip on the future. He sees it all.

Jesus knows all about the past, present and future. He knows our thoughts, and He sees the deepest parts of our hearts.

As an example, here in John 16, Jesus saw the terrible sadness His disciples had as the cross closed in on the Lord. And Jesus sees our sadness today.

He also sees the coming joy for everyone who believes in Him. The disciples are going to be overwhelmed with joy when Jesus appears before them after the resurrection. We will be filled with joy when we are saved. That is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Jesus also sees the joy we will share with Him forever in Heaven. So again in verse 20, the Lord was able to tell His disciples:

John 16:20 (NASB)

²⁰ Truly, truly I say to you that you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy!

So He tells them that they are going to weep and lament while the world rejoices, because that is exactly what is going to happen. The world rejoiced when Jesus was crucified and the disciples were full of sorrow. But that sorrow was turned into joy on the first Easter morning when Jesus rose again from the dead and conquered death forever! Sorrow was

also turned into joy on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came to live in the hearts of all believers. And right now we can see Jesus, -- not with our eyes, -- but with our hearts.

That is our greatest joy today! But there are greater days coming when Jesus will return and gather His children unto Himself and take us to our new home to Heaven. If we know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, then someday we will have a perfect future forever!

Since Jesus fully knows the future, we must put our trust in Him. We may think we have a good idea about the future, but we really do not. Did you ever expect anything like the Corona virus shutdown that we are going through? Is this what you expected when 2020 rolled in? No way!

We certainly cannot control the future. We cannot even see what is coming at us even one minute ahead, so we must keep trusting in the Lord, and put our future in His mighty Hands!

III. JESUS GUIDES YOU THROUGH YOUR TROUBLES.

Jesus knows all about our troubles, just as He knew His disciple's troubled hearts so long ago. The Lord first mentioned this to them in John 14:1-3, where Jesus said:

John 14:1-3 (NASB)

14 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many rooms; if *that* were not so, I would have told you, because I am going *there* to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will take you to Myself, so that where I am, *there* you also will be.

Then in John 14:27, Jesus said:

John 14:27 (NASB)

²⁷ Peace I leave you, My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, nor fearful.

Now here it is again in verse 20,

John 16:20 (NASB)

²⁰ Truly, truly I say to you that you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy!

ILLUSTRATION:

The direction that Christ gives in our lives is like driving home at night. You get into your car and turn on the lights. The lights shine a few hundred feet ahead. But you cannot see your house. You can just see a few hundred feet ahead.

What would happen if you said, "I turned the lights on, but I could see my house, so I am not going to go home. No!. You have to use the light that is available to you. You start moving the car in the right direction, and the light keeps shining a few hundred feet ahead of you. As you drive the car, the light gives you what you need at that moment to continue on your journey.

It is the same way in our Christian life. When we put our trust in Jesus, He gives us the light we need for the moment, so we can keep moving ahead. And we can **trust** Him to get us safely home, because He can see the future!

Jesus knew all about their troubled hearts. There in the shadow of the cross, the disciples were deeply troubled. They were burdened down because the Lord was going away.

Now here in John 16, Jesus told them again that He was going away, and it was breaking their hearts. It was the last thing they expected, and the last thing they wanted: To be left alone in the world without Jesus.

It is fair to say that the three days between the Lord's cross and His resurrection were the worst three days of their lives. Nothing that came before or after could have possibly been worse.

Jesus had warned them that they were going to go through a most difficult test.

Mark 14:27-31 (NASB)

27 And Jesus *said to them, "You will all fall away, because it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'" *28* But after I am raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." *29* But Peter said to Him, "Even if they all fall away, yet I *will* not!" *30* And Jesus *said to him, "Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times." *31* But Peter *repeatedly* said insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing as well.

The disciples were troubled. They were troubled to the point of exhaustion. We see this in the Garden of Gethsemane. When Jesus asked them to pray, they fell asleep, not once, not twice, but three times.

Luke 22:45 NASB)

45 When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping **from sorrow**,

The disciples were exhausted from their grief. They were just completely worn out.

Do you ever feel like that? Well, Jesus knew all about their troubled hearts. He knows our troubles too. And that is good, because no one can help us more than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

IV. JESUS CAN TOTALLY TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE.

John 16:20 (NASB)

20 Truly, truly I say to you that you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy!

In this verse, Jesus reminds us that He can totally transform our lives. He gave us an example in verse 21.

John 16:21 (NASB)

²¹ Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

Talk about a total transformation!. Childbirth is a great example. Moms will tell you that giving birth to a child is an incredibly painful experience.

Natural childbirth is very painful, but God turns that pain around in an instant when the child is born. And Jesus Christ can turn your whole life around as well. Over time, Jesus can totally transform your life.

CONCLUSION:

Verse 22 reminds us that Jesus can fix our pain and troubles forever.

John 16:22 (NASB)

²² Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one is going to take your joy away from you.

Jesus can totally transform your life. He can save your soul forever. And one day, He will take away your **pain** forever and replace it with **peace and joy**, **IF** you will put your trust in Him.

But it never could have happened without the cross. That is why Jesus was going away here in John 16. That is why He came to this world in the first place.

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.

Jesus loves us so much that He was willing to take the punishment for our sins. And that is what He did when He died on the cross for us. Now through his Holy Spirit, our Risen Savior will be here to help us through every trouble in our life. And He will give us perfection forever in Heaven free from all sin, pain, and trials, if we will only trust in Him.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus wanted His disciples to know they could keep trusting in Him. And tonight, Jesus wants us to know the very same thing. So keep trusting in the Him through every confusing and troubled time of your life. He can replace your troubles with peace and joy. You will no longer fear death because you will know that when you die, you will be crossing over into an eternal experience that is beyond your wildest imaginations. You will be in the presence of God in all His glory!

Go Tell it on the Mountain.