

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 10-28-12 AM NOTES
"THE JOURNEY TO JOY AND PEACE"
JOHN 16:16-33
#65 in Series, "Verse-by-Verse Through John"

John 16:33b (HCSB) "You will have suffering in this world."

- I. The Journey from Sorrow to Joy (vv. 16-24)
 - A. The Lord's Prediction (v. 16)

John 14:16-18 (NKJV) "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

Philippians 3:10a (NKJV) "that I may know Him..."

John 16:7 (NKJV) "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."

- B. The Disciples' Perplexity (vv. 17-19)
- C. The Illustrative Parable (vv. 20-22)
- D. The Joy Promised (vv. 23-24)

John 16:13 (NKJV) "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Why Pray?

1. Because there is a devil and because prayer is the God-appointed means of resisting him
2. Because prayer is God's way for us to obtain what we need from Him
3. Because the apostles, whom God set forth to be a pattern for us, considered prayer to be the most important business of their lives
4. Because prayer occupied a prominent place and played a very important part in the earthly life of our Lord
5. Because prayer is the most important part of the present ministry of our Lord, since he is now interceding for us (Hebrews 7:25)
6. Because prayer is the means God has appointed for our receiving mercy from Him and of obtaining grace to help in time of need
7. Because prayer is the means of obtaining the fullness of God's joy
8. Because prayer with thanksgiving is the means of obtaining freedom from anxiety and, in anxiety's place, that peace that passes understanding
9. Because prayer is the method appointed for our obtaining the fullness of God's Holy Spirit
10. Because prayer is the means by which we are to keep watchful and alert at Christ's return
11. Because prayer is used by God to promote our spiritual growth, bring power into our work, lead others to faith in Christ, and bring all other blessings to God's church

—R. A. Torrey

2 Corinthians 5:20a (NKJV) “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ...”

1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV) “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”

Romans 12:2b (NKJV) “...that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

II. The Journey From Tribulation to Peace (vv. 25-33)

A. The Personal Knowledge of the Father’s Love (vv. 25-28)

Ephesians 1:4-5 (ESV) “even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love** ⁵ **he predestined us for adoption** as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”

John 3:16a (NKJV) “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”

B. The Proudful Overconfidence of the Disciples (vv. 29-32)

C. The Prevailing of the Savior (v. 33)

“Here our Lord winds up all by bidding the disciples take courage, cheer up, be confident, and go forward without fear. The world in which they lived was a vanquished enemy. He, their master, had ‘overcome the world.’ This means, I believe, not merely that He had given them an example of successful fighting by overcoming the fear of the world and the flattery of the world, but something far more important. He has overcome the prince of this world, and was just about to win His final victory over him on the cross. Hence His disciples must remember that they were contending with an enemy sorely beaten.”

—Dr. J. C. Ryle

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JOHN 16:16-33

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Many ministries send out every year a little book of Bible promises as a way to thank those who have contributed during the year. I personally have been blessed by some of these little books. However, not all the promises in the Bible are pleasant to hear. An example would be the last verse in our text. John 16:33 is a promise. Jesus said in **John 16:33b (HCSB)** “You will have suffering in this world.” Do you see why this one so seldom makes it into the promise books? Yet, suffering or tribulation (NKJV) or trouble (NIV) is a part of God’s plan for us in our journey with Him on planet earth.

Jesus starts out **John 16:33a (NKJV)** by saying “These things I have spoken to you...” What are “these things”? It is everything that He has told them in that upper room on the night before His crucifixion. The “these things” are John 13-16. John 13-16 is often called “The upper room discourse” since most, if not all, of chapters 13-16 was spoken by Jesus to His disciples in the upper room where He instituted the Lord’s Supper the night before His crucifixion. The purpose of these chapters was to prepare the disciples for the crisis in their lives when Jesus leaves them. In this conclusion to the upper room discourse, Jesus assures His disciples that their journey after He is gone will lead them through sorrow to joy and through tribulation to peace.

I. The Journey from Sorrow to Joy (V16-24)

Jesus’ disciples were going to go through unimaginable sorrow, and He wanted them to see the joy that awaited them.

A. The Lord’s Prediction (V16)

Bible scholars don’t agree on the specifics of what Jesus was saying to His disciples here. Some say that He was simply saying, “A little while, and you will not see Me because I am going to die on the cross and be buried, but in three days you will see me before I go to the Father”. That could be, but I don’t think that fits the context of chapter 13-16. Others say that Jesus was saying, “A little while and you will not see Me because I am going to ascend to the Father after I am raised from the dead and then you will see me again when I come again the second time.” That is certainly true that He ascended to the Father and that He is coming again, but that doesn’t seem to me to fit the context here. These disciples didn’t see His second coming before their deaths. Let’s dig deep and see if we can understand what Jesus was saying to His disciples. The phrase “little while” in Greek is much like it is in English. It is a flexible term that can mean hours, days, or longer. There are two “little whiles” here. The first one I believe refers to the events that are set in motion by His death and would culminate with His ascension back to the Father. The second “little while” refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ whom Jesus sent after He had ascended to the Father. The reason I am interpreting it this way is because it fits the context. Jesus has told them several times that when He went to the Father, He would send His Spirit to not just be with them, but to dwell in them. He described this One who would come in **John 14:16-18 (NKJV)** “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another [literally, “another of exactly the same kind] Helper [one who comes alongside and enables you to obey Me], that He may abide with you forever--¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” Here the coming of the Spirit is equated to Christ coming to us. Jesus is saying that He will leave them but when He goes to the Father, He will send His Spirit to indwell them.

Another reason that I believe that this is what Jesus is saying is because there are two different words translated “see” in verse 16. The first Greek word translated “see” in verse 16 is the word that we get “theatre” from (theoreo) and it means to be a spectator, to see face to face. Jesus is describing the ascension where He was taken up out of their physical sight. The second Greek word that is translated “see” (“orao”) means to comprehend. This second “see” refers to the coming of the Spirit of Christ to indwell His disciples. We see Jesus a much different way than the disciples saw Him before His ascension. We don’t see Him as in a theatre face to face, but through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we comprehend Jesus as the Holy Spirit reveals Him to us. Our desire is to deepen in that “knowing” as the Apostle Paul expressed in **Philippians 3:10a (NKJV)** “that I may know Him...” Through His Spirit in us we deepen in this experiential knowledge of Him and treasure Him more and more and see Him as our supreme treasure. That is why Jesus said that it was to our advantage that He left in **John 16:7 (NKJV)** “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.”

B. The Disciples’ Perplexity (V17-19)

The disciples had been quiet since back in John 14:22. Jesus’ statement in verse 16 startled them out of their silence. They began to respond like children in school when the algebra teacher introduces a

mathematical concept that is beyond their present stage of learning. They began to talk among themselves, “did you understand that? No did you understand it?” The disciples’ focus was on the phrase “a little while”. They have finally gotten it that Jesus is leaving them, but they didn’t understand all of His returns – His return in the resurrection, His return in the person of the Holy Spirit, and His return in the second coming. They just didn’t understand. Jesus gives them a parable.

C. The Illustrative Parable (V20-22)

Jesus’ disciples would soon weep and mourn over His death on the cross, but those who are of this world would rejoice along with Satan, the prince and ruler of this world when His body was in the tomb. For Jesus’ disciples, the cross would also be the means of their rejoicing. Jesus then illustrated how their weeping and lamenting would turn to joy. Jesus used the illustration of childbirth. In childbirth, the one who initially causes the pain is the same one that ultimately brings the joy. A woman giving birth has much pain but she forgets the anguish of labor and delivery because of her joy when she sees the baby. Jesus uses childbirth as an illustration of the cross. The cross which was the cause of their sorrow became the reason for their joy when they understood the accomplishments of the cross. As we grow to understand the cross we continually rejoice in it. As we continue to reckon on the cross and our death with Christ and our freedom from the slavery of sin that was bought there we are filled with joy for the cross and the great victory our Savior won there. The instrument of sorrow becomes the reason for rejoicing.

D. The Joy Promised (V23-24)

The phrase “in that day” refers to the time after the Holy Spirit has come. When the Holy Spirit comes, they would not question the Lord Jesus about anything. Obviously Jesus would not be beside them in His bodily presence, but it is also because they would have indwelling them the Spirit of truth who would lead them into all truth. **John 16:13 (NKJV)** “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” The Lord has provided for every need that His disciples could have. For guiding us into all truth, He has given us the indwelling Spirit, and for anything that we need to carry out the direction the Holy Spirit gives us, Jesus has given us the use of His name to go before the Father for the supply to follow the direction of the Spirit of Christ in us. Yes, the Lord Jesus was going away, but it truly was to our advantage that He goes. Now we have the indwelling truth teacher, the Spirit of Christ and we have the use of Jesus’ name to go before the Father and ask for whatever we need. The whole Trinity is involved in supplying our need!

Let’s focus in on prayer for a moment. These two verses are among the greatest verses in Scripture on Prayer. Let me share something that immensely blessed me that I read as I was preparing this message. In a little book by Dr. R. A. Torrey entitled *How to Pray* he gives eleven reasons that prayer is important. They are short and simple. Let me give them to you without comment:

1. Because there is a devil and because prayer is the God-appointed means of resisting him
2. Because prayer is God’s way for us to obtain what we need from Him
3. Because the apostles, whom God set forth to be a pattern for us, considered prayer to be the most important business of their lives
4. Because prayer occupied a prominent place and played a very important part in the earthly life of our Lord
5. Because prayer is the most important part of the present ministry of our Lord, since he is now interceding for us (Hebrews 7:25)
6. Because prayer is the means God has appointed for our receiving mercy from Him and of obtaining grace to help in time of need
7. Because prayer is the means of obtaining the fullness of God’s joy
8. Because prayer with thanksgiving is the means of obtaining freedom from anxiety and, in anxiety’s place, that peace that passes understanding
9. Because prayer is the method appointed for our obtaining the fullness of God’s Holy Spirit
10. Because prayer is the means by which we are to keep watchful and alert at Christ’s return

11. Because prayer is used by God to promote our spiritual growth, bring power into our work, lead others to faith in Christ, and bring all other blessings to God's church

[R. A. Torrey quoted in James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John, Volume IV*, Page 1228]

That is simple, but if you spend some time meditating on it, you will see how helpful and motivating it is.

Jesus tells us that the key to powerful prayer is to come before the Father in His name. Let's review what it means to pray to the Father in Jesus' name (we went over this in our study of John 14:13-14, but if Jesus taught this to His disciples twice, we need to hear it twice). First, praying in Jesus' name means that we renounce our own name (who we are and what we have done) as a basis for God answering our prayers. We confess that our name is bankrupt when it comes to merit at the Throne of Grace. It is amazing how the enemy in his subtlety deceives us in this. When we have sinned and genuinely been broken over our sin and have repented, the enemy tells us that we have no right to go to the Throne of Grace after what we have done. On the other extreme, when we have obeyed God in a hard area and we have walked faithfully in His will, we often have a confidence that we can go before the Throne of Grace because we have been obedient. Both of those opposite seeming scenarios reveal the same thing in a person's life. They both reveal that we are praying in our own name. No matter how good we think that we have been, we have no merit to go before the Throne of Grace to make petition. No matter how badly we have messed up, if there has been genuine repentance, we can come in the name of Jesus and receive a welcome because we don't come in our own merit but in His perfect merit.

Second, when I come before the Throne of Grace in Jesus' Name, I come representing Him as His ambassador (**2 Corinthians 5:20a (NKJV)** "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ..."). As His Ambassador, I must ask what He desires; I must ask according to His will. **1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV)** ¹⁴ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." To know that God answers only that which I ask which is in agreement with what Jesus wants is not an irritating limitation to my prayer; it is a liberating protection for my prayer. If we could see the whole picture from an eternal perspective, we would only want His will. The Bible describes His will in **Romans 12:2b (NKJV)** "...that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Who would not want what is good, acceptable and perfect?

When we pray in His name in faith we experience genuine joy. We begin to recognize that we are His body here on earth and He does much of His work through us. We rejoice over the fact that we have access to the Father and we grow in our intimacy with Him as we come in Jesus' name asking for what we need to accomplish the work that Jesus has given us to do.

II. The Journey from Tribulation to Peace (V25-33)

The two words that ought to characterize Jesus' disciples are joy and peace. Because of the cross and what He accomplished there we can experience these two blessings that are not tied to our circumstances. Even when we face sorrow causing circumstances and tribulation, joy and peace can be ours.

A. The Personal Knowledge of the Father's Love (25-28)

The journey to peace amid tribulation begins when we begin to grasp the Father's love for us. Many times preachers and teachers use illustrations to get the point across that Jesus died for us and took the wrath of God in our place, but some of those illustrations give a false view of the Father. Some illustrations tell us that the Father is so holy and angry with our sin that He desires to wipe us out, but the loving Son of God stands between us and the angry Father and takes His wrath that we deserved. There is a lot in that illustration that is biblically accurate, but here is the problem. It communicated that the Father hates us and desires to destroy us but Jesus at the last minute stepped in front of us and took the judgment we deserved. It is almost like it is Jesus and us against God the Father. Then there are the illustrations about Jesus' intercession for us and some make it seem like that even after the cross the Father would like to zap us, but Jesus steps in and talks the Father out of zapping us all the way to Hell. Learn this: God the Father loves you! The whole plan of salvation was devised by the Father before man sinned and even before man was created. **Ephesians 1:4-5 (ESV)** is speaking of God the Father when it says, "even as he

chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love**⁵ he predestined us **for adoption** as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will". What motivated the Father to send His son to die for us? **John 3:16a (NKJV)** "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." Peace begins with the experiential knowledge that God loves you, you personally! The Father does not have to be persuaded or coerced to accept us or forgive us. He initiated the whole process to bring all of that about. The Father does not love us because Christ intercedes for us; Christ intercedes for us because the Father loves us. The Father doesn't reluctantly answer our prayers that are offered in Jesus' name; when we pray in Jesus name, it allows the Father to do what He desires to do. Because we have come in Jesus' merit, He can answer our prayers without being unjust or unholy. Peace begins with a personal knowledge of the Father's love.

B. The Proudful Overconfidence of the Disciples (V29-32)

Verses 29-30 are basically the disciples saying, "Lord we've got it now. We believe You! We understand all you're saying." On the surface, their confession was good and clear, but their words contained proudful overconfidence. They weren't capable of understanding all that He said, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come to indwell them. They were not ready for the cross that would come in just a few hours. Knowing what would soon happen, the Lord says in **John 16:31b (NKJV)** "Do you now believe?" He then proceeds to tell them what would happen in just a few hours, and His prophesy must have devastated them. In verse 32 He tells them that they will all be scattered and leave Him all alone except for the presence of His Father.

C. The Prevailing of the Savior (V33)

This is one of the most encouraging verses in the Gospel of John. One of the accomplishments of the cross is that we might have peace – peace with God and also the peace of God ruling in our lives whatever the circumstances that surround us. The promise we began the message with was the promise that in the world we will have tribulation. The word "tribulation" is an interesting word. It originally meant to pressure, to compress, to crush. Over time it came to mean any distress. The world seeks to distress you. Our Lord doesn't come in and rescue us from the distress, the pressure, the crushing of the world; He simply promised us peace in the midst of the world's tribulation and He gave us the good news that He has overcome the world. Referring to this verse Dr. J. C. Ryle said: "Here our Lord winds up all by bidding the disciples take courage, cheer up, be confident, and go forward without fear. The world in which they lived was a vanquished enemy. He, their master, had 'overcome the world'. This means, I believe, not merely that He had given them an example of successful fighting by overcoming the fear of the world and the flattery of the world, but something far more important. He has overcome the prince of this world, and was just about to win His final victory over him on the cross. Hence His disciples must remember that they were contending with an enemy sorely beaten" [Dr. J. C. Ryle, *Expository thoughts on the Gospels, Volume IV*, Page 166].

Jesus alone brings us on the journey from sorrow to joy and the journey from tribulation to peace.