

Sermon #105 — John's Gospel

Title: **EQUIPPED FOR TROUBLE**

Text: John 16:1-33

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Tape: *John #105*

Subject: *Promises for Troublous Times*

Readings: *John 16:1-33*

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Introduction:

Anyone who knows anything about public speaking knows that the most important parts of any public speech are the first thing and the last thing spoken. There are good reasons for this. If the speaker doesn't get your attention when he begins, he's not likely to get it at all. And people tend to remember the first thing a speaker says and the last thing he says.

The same thing applies to preaching. I had very few really good professors while I was in college. In Bible colleges and seminaries as in most colleges and universities, those who cannot do the work are hired to teach the courses. — But I did have a few very good professors. One of them was my Homiletics/Pastoral Theology professor (Dr.

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Billy Martin). He constantly stressed the need for careful study and preparation. He taught us that in sermon preparation preachers should always give as much attention to the sermon's introduction and conclusion as to the main points of a message.

If you read sermons, especially those men wrote out for their own use and never intended to have them published, the good ones, those from which people really benefit, almost always have three parts:

1. The Introduction
2. The Main Body: (Doctrinal Points and Exposition)
3. The Conclusion, or Application.

In the 16th chapter of John's Gospel we have the conclusion of our blessed Savior's last sermon just before he suffered and died as our Substitute at Calvary.

1. The sermon's introduction in chapter 13 was a picture of redemption by the institution of the Lord's Supper.

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2. In chapters 14 and 15 the Savior's doctrine is all grace.

- He promises abiding, immutable grace to all who trust him (14:1-3).
- He teaches and encourages us to trust him, assuring us of his goodness (14:4-14).
- He promises to send the Holy Spirit to be our abiding, indwelling Comforter and Teacher (14:15-31).
- The Lord Jesus then shows us the wonder of our union with him in chapter 15.

3. Then, when we come to chapter 16, we come to the conclusion of this great sermon. Here our Savior graciously applies all that he has said to our lives.

EXPEDIENT DEPARTURE

As we look at this 16th chapter of John's Gospel the Savior himself applies the message to us. Our dear Redeemer here tells us that his departure out of this world by the sacrifice of himself upon the cursed

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tree was a matter of expediency for us. He said, “*It is expedient for you that I go away.*” **As we read this chapter, did you notice that the Lord’s attention was altogether on us?** He said nothing about the joy that was before him in returning to his Father. There is not a word about the felicity to which he was going, as he returned to the Father’s house.

- The Father’s Reception of His Son, His Servant, Our Savior!
- The Saints’ Reception of Their Redeemer!
- The Angel’s Reception of Their Lord!

We hear of none of those things in the Lord’s farewell sermon. Everything is about the Savior’s dear children he was about to leave behind in this world of trouble.

Proposition: As he was about to endure all the agonies of his sufferings and death as our Substitute, as he was about to enter into his glory as our Mediator-King, our Savior’s whole heart was on us and our needs in this world of woe!

I find that fact wondrously amazing. — Don’t you?

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In the hour of his greatest sorrow and in the anticipation of his greatest glory, our Savior's heart was on us!

(Psalms 69:1-7) “Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto [my] soul. 2 I sink in deep mire, where [there is] no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. 3 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. 4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, [being] mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored [that] which I took not away. 5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. 6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. 7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.”

The title of my message is **EQUIPPED FOR TROUBLE**. In this chapter, as our Savior

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concludes his last sermon before his crucifixion, he tells us the reason for all that he has taught from chapter 13 to here. You will see this in the very first verse of our text. — “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended” (John 16:1). All that he has been telling us, all that he has been teaching, has been to prepare us for the trouble he knew we must face in this world of woe.

- That we should not be offended (v. 1).
- That we might remember his doctrine (v. 4).
- That we might have peace in him (v. 33).

Our Lord’s intention here is that all who follow him, all who trust him, all who seek to live for him in this present evil world might be equipped for the trials, temptations, and troubles we must face in this world of woe. In these 33 verses of Inspiration our blessed Savior gives us **SEVEN PROMISES**, promises by which he would prepare and equip us for the troublesome times we must face in this world.

We will begin at verse 1. — “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.” — How considerate our Savior is! We might presume that he would be angry with us if he suspected that

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we could be offended by anything that he did or suffered. We might presume that he would be angry if he suspected that the things we suffer for him might cause us to stumble; our presumption would be wrong. — “*He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust!*” Our blessed Lord knows the weakness of our flesh; and he sympathizes with us in our deplorable weakness. How gracious he is! He prepares us ahead of time for the trouble that we might not be offended, might not stumble, might not fall.

(Verses 2-4) — “*They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.*” — As long as the disciples enjoyed the Savior’s physical presence, he was like a wall of fire round about them. They did not sense any other need of protection from danger,

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as long as he showed himself in their midst, as long as he was manifestly aware of their danger.

Our Lord has not told us yet some of the things which he will reveal and do at the time appointed, because the trial has not come; but when the trial comes, he will give us grace sufficient for the hour.

“In every condition, — in sickness in health,
In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home, or abroad, on the land, on the sea, —
As your days may demand so your succor shall be!”

You may think, “I am fearful that I could not die peacefully.” Perhaps you dread death. If you are the Lord’s the Lord will supply you with the grace needed when it is needed. Do not torture yourself, fretting about tomorrow and tomorrow’s trouble. “*Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof;*” and sufficient is his grace for every day. He promises, “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*”

(Verses 5-6) — “**But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest**

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thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.” — The disciples were filled with sorrow because the Lord Jesus told them he was about to leave them; but none of them thought to ask “Why?” Had they known, had they understood ahead of time that which he would make them look back upon with joy unspeakable, they would have rejoiced in the prospect as much as they did in the remembrance. What a lesson for us! — Blessed Holy Spirit, give me faith to trust my God for tomorrow as well as for yesterday. If we would but trust him implicitly we would rejoice in the Lord always. Now, watch this...

NEVERTHELESS

“*Nevertheless*” — I’ve learned to love that word, “*nevertheless.*”

(Psalms 31:21-23) “Blessed [be] the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city. 22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I

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cried unto thee. 23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints!”

(Psalms 73:22-23) “So foolish [was] I, and ignorant: I was [as] a beast before thee. 23 **Nevertheless I [am] continually with thee:** thou hast holden [me] by my right hand.”

(Psalms 89:28-34) “My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. 29 His seed also will I make [to endure] for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. 30 If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; 31 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; 32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. 33 **Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.** 34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.”

(Psalms 106:43-45) “Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked [him] with their

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counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. 44 **Nevertheless he regarded their affliction,** when he heard their cry: 45 **And he remembered for them his covenant,** and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.”

Now, let's look at the seven great promises our Lord gives us in the rest of this chapter. Here are seven things promised to every believer, things by which the Son of God equips his elect for life in this world of woe.

1. **A BLESSED COMFORTER** (vv. 7-11).

First, the Lord Jesus promised to give his redeemed a blessed, Divine Comforter. Of course, you know that Comforter is God the Holy Spirit. Most everyone who even casually reads the Bible knows that; but very few understand or appreciate that by which he the Holy Spirit comforts God's elect. Yet, our Savior plainly tells us that the comfort by which he comforts the redeemed is the revelation of God's grace in Christ.

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(John 16:7-11) “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

The comfort of the Spirit is that sweet work of his grace in us, creating faith in Christ, by which he seals to us all the blessings of the covenant (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:4-6; Ephesians 1:12-14).

2. SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT (vv. 12-15).

Second, the Lord Jesus promised that he would grant every saved sinner spiritual knowledge, discernment, and understanding.

(John 16:12-15) “I have yet many things to say

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unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you.”

This is the Spirit that “*searcheth all things*” (1 Corinthians 2: 9-10). John tells us that if we have Christ, we have the unction of the Spirit and know all things, for the anointing teaches you all things (1 John 2:20-27). Paul tells us that we have the mind of Christ and know all things (1 Corinthians 2:12-16). — Why should we not expect the Holy Spirit to do his work in us just as effectively as Christ has done his work for us?

Hear the Savior’s promise and rejoice. In this world of religious confusion and chaos...

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- The Spirit of Truth guides believing sinners into all truth.
- He shows us, by his Word, that which the Lord Jesus actually accomplished at Calvary. — “*He will show you things to come*” (v. 13).
- He glorifies Christ and shows us the things of Christ (vv. 14-5).

3. **SWEET REUNION** (v. 16-22).

In verses 16-22 the Savior promised his sorrowing disciples that shortly after his departure they should look forward to a sweet reunion with him.

(John 16:16) “A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.”

(John 16:20) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”

(John 16:22) “And ye now therefore have

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sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”

The sight of our Savior and of our blessed union with him makes our hearts rejoice. We see him as...

- Our Successful Substitute.
- Our Unrivalled Sovereign.
- Our Coming King.

This was literally fulfilled when He rose from the dead. “*Then were their hearts glad when they saw the Lord.*” But there is a wider, complete fulfilment of this promise awaiting his suffering, sorrowing disciples in these latter days. He has promised: — “*I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also*” (John 14. 3).

4. **EFFECTUAL PRAYER** (vv. 23-24).

Look at verses 23-24. Here is the fourth promise. Our Savior equips us for the trials and heartaches, the temptations and troubles we must endure in this world by promising that our hearts’ prayers shall

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never fall on deaf ears in heaven, by promising us that our prayers to our God are effectual prayers.

(John 16:23-24) “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give [it] you.** 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

Our Lord made this promise three times in this one message (John 14:13; 15:16, 16:23). I presume he intends for us to understand that our God will never ignore the cries of our hearts, that our God will give us our hearts’ desire, that our joy may be full. — “*Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He will give you; ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full.*” — “*Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it*” (Psalm 81:10). — **What is it that you want from God?**

- Uninterrupted Communion with Christ?
- Complete Consecration to Christ?
- Perfect Conformity to Christ?

It shall be yours!

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5. **BLESSED ADVOCACY** (vv. 26-27)

Fifth, our Savior assures us of his blessed advocacy on our behalf as our Intercessor in heaven.

(John 16:26-27) “At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: 27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.”

Our Lord said, “*I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you*” because there was no need. He had already promised this (John 14:16). Never forget this, child of God, never forget this, — “*We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins*” (1 John 2:1-2; Zechariah 3).

What thanksgiving and confidence this should bring to our hearts! Christ is pleading for us with the Father who loves us. Nothing in heaven, earth, or hell can

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harm us or prevent his will beings done in us, for us, and with us!

6. **PEACE** (v. 33)

Sixth, the Savior promises peace, blessed, sweet, abiding peace. — *“These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace”* (v. 33). He has made peace by the blood of his cross. He has spoken peace by the grace and power of his Spirit. This peace is not of ourselves. It is not the result of something we do. It is not conditioned by our circumstances. Not affected by our disappointments or tribulations. The world cannot give it nor take it away. Christ himself is our Peace. He is our Peace; and in him we have peace: — Peace with God! — Peace from God! — Peace of God!

- The Peace of Propitiation!
- The Peace of Pardon!
- The Peace of Providence!
- The Peace of His Presence!

This peace is as real as abiding and as eternal as Christ himself. — *“In Me ye shall have peace.”*

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7. CERTAIN TRIUMPH (v. 33)

The seventh promise given by our Lord before he left his beloved disciples in the world of woe, the seventh promise by which he equips us for all that lies before us between here and eternity is this: — sure and certain triumph in him. — *“In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”* (v. 33).

It is true, *“All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”* (2 Timothy 3:12). But persecution, mockery, or even death does not mean defeat. The fact is, all of God’s elect must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22); but out of their tribulation they shall come forth into everlasting glory with robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14). Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, in whom, by whom, and with whom we are more than conquerors (Romans 8:35-37). The powers of the world are impotent before God’s saints. It is written, — *“Greater is he that is in you than he*

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that is in the world” (1 John 4. 4). Christ has already overcome the world, and your life is hid with Christ in God. — *“Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ”* (2 Corinthians 2:14; Revelation 19:1-9).

(Revelation 19:1-9)“And after these things I heard **a great voice of much people** in heaven, saying, **Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2** For true and righteous [are] his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. 3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. 4 And **the four and twenty elders** and **the four beasts** fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.”

“5 ¶ And a voice came out of the throne, saying, **Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.** 6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude,

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and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.** 7 **Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.** 8 And **to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.** 9 And he saith unto me, Write, **Blessed [are] they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.** And he saith unto me, **These are the true sayings of God.**”

Amen.