

Lighthouse Bible Church

August 3rd, 2014

John 16: 16 – 24 *Scripture Reading: Philippians 4: 1 – 7*

‘The Joyous Christian Life’

Stand – Read – Pray

As we saw last week in Verses 12 – 15, The Holy Spirit’s ministry will be to guide the disciples into all truth and we saw last time that that would include the writing of the New Testament.

We saw that the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of all truth would be accomplished as the Holy Spirit listens to what Christ tells Him and then takes what is Christ’s and declares it to the disciples, as Verse 14 said. We saw that that was exactly how the Scriptures were written according to **2nd Peter 1: 20 – 21** as **men were moved by the Holy Spirit of God** to reveal God’s truth.

And we saw that whatever the Holy Spirit does, it would be to glorify Jesus Christ in that revelation; not to glorify Himself or anyone else but Christ. Now, remember, that Jesus is telling His disciples all of this just hours before He is taken and crucified and killed.

Knowing that all of these things are about to happen to Him, Jesus puts aside the anguish that must be in His own heart about taking upon Himself the sin of the world and the physical pain accompanying that, and is comforting the sorrowful hearts of the disciples, who at this point, as we have seen, are selfish, ignorant and undeserving of it.

Yet our Lord understand their weaknesses and selfishness and sorrowful hearts and sympathizes with them and continues to minister to them with more words of encouragement. That is why **Hebrews 4: 15** says He **sympathizes with our weaknesses**. Look at it starting in Verse 16.

Verse 16: A little while and you will not see Me and again a little while and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.

Jesus first of all says ‘a little while and you will not see Me’. And that is true; in just a little while, within several hours, He will be arrested and tried and convicted and crucified and killed and they will not see Him.

Then Jesus says ‘and again **a little while** and you will see Me’. What does He mean by that? First of all we need understand what He means by a little while here. Jesus uses that term ‘a little while’ different places in John *John 7: 33, 12: 35, 13: 33 & 14: 19* and in one case ‘a little while’ means **several weeks**. In another case it means **several days** and in another case it means **several hours** and in another case it means just a **few hours**.

So what does He mean by a little while and you will see Me again. Well, it could mean His resurrection, right. He will be buried and they will not see Him for at least 3 days and then they will see Him again. So He could be talking about that, and that would be true. The problem is though, it will only be for a short time.

But keep in mind, the context here is talking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit right up to verse 15 and how would they see Him if He goes back to His Father as Verse 16 says? Who is Jesus going to send to the disciples when He goes to the Father? The Holy Spirit, right, which **Romans 8: 9** calls the **Spirit of Christ** which is the Spirit of God.

What Jesus is saying is this; I will be back but I will not have a physical body, I will have a spiritual body and I will come and live IN you. Remember He told them back in **John 15: 15** that He would send **another** of the exact same as Myself Spirit to dwell in you and in **John 15: 18** He says **I will come to you**. Jesus says ‘I coming again to you in the Spirit’.

His promise to His disciples and to us it to come and live within us as the Spirit of God and He will always be with us and we will never be out of His presence. That is why Jesus could tell them, and us, in **Matthew 28: 20 I am with you always, even until the end of the age** and **Hebrews 13: 5 Jesus says I will never leave your nor forsake you.**

That is why the Bible says in **Romans 8: 9 now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, He is not His.** That is why Paul tells us in **1st Corinthians 6: 19 says do you not know that your body is (what) the temple of the Holy Spirit.** Then look how the disciples respond to this information in Verses 17 – 18

Verses 17 – 18: then some of His disciples said among themselves, what is this that He says to us ‘a little while and you will not see Me and again a little while and you will see Me and because I go to the Father? They said therefore ‘what is this that He says, a little while? We do not know what He is saying’.

They didn't get what Jesus was saying to them. They didn't get a lot of things. He told them that He was going to be betrayed and beaten and mocked and crucified and killed and 3 days later would rise from the grave; and they didn't get that. So look what Jesus does in Verse 19. *Again, we don't have the excuse today.*

Verse 19: Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him and He said to them ‘are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said ‘a little while and you will not see Me and again a little while and you will see Me?’

I like this verse because Jesus knows the very thoughts and words of the disciples, and he knows ours as well too, because He is God. **Isaiah 65: 24 says before they call, I will answer and while they are still speaking I will hear.** It is like in **Daniel 9: 20 – 23 while Daniel was still praying and confessing his sins God already sent the angel Gabriel to answer him.**

Jesus has already shown His omniscience, His all knowing, in **John 2: 24 – 25**, **John 4: 17 – 18**, **John 6: 64** and He is showing it again here. That is why it says in **Matthew 12: 25 & 36** that Jesus **knew their thoughts and that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account of on the day of judgment.** So Jesus says to them in Verse 20.

Verse 20: Most assuredly I say to you that you will weep and lament but the world will rejoice and you will be sorrowful but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

Jesus promises His disciples that although they will be crying and lamenting while the world is rejoicing over what will happen to Christ, Jesus says your sorrow will be turned into joy. While the world laughs at the death of Jesus, the disciples will mourn but their sorrow will be turned to joy.

Jesus says ‘the very event that will cause you sorrow will be the very event that will cause you joy. Jesus doesn’t say that I will replace your sorrow with joy, He says that through the very event that is causing your sorrow, I will bring about joy. Jesus will take our sorrows and turn them into joy.

That cause of their sorrow was the cross, wasn’t it? And the unbelieving world and the Jews and the religious leaders rejoiced over it. And after the sorrow, the cross was also the cause of their joy as well and it became a short lived joy for the Jews and religious leaders. This would be a perfect example of **Romans 8: 28** **we know all things work together for good...**

It is the same for us today. The source of the joy of our life is the cross, isn’t it; It is not our circumstances. And God wants to take the sorrows of our lives and turn them into joy. Without sorrow and trials and tests, we wouldn’t know the greatness of joy, that is why **James 1: 2** says **count it all joy when you fall into various trials...**

We can even have joy in our sorrow when God chastens us because we know that He is doing it for our best, right. In **Hebrews 12: 11** it says **now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present...but afterwards it yields joy and the peaceable fruit of righteousness.** The Apostle Paul understood this and that is why he could say in **2nd Corinthians 6: 10** as **sorrowful yet always rejoicing.**

Jesus wants us to have a fullness of joy as He said back in **John 15: 11** and sometimes we have to go through the sorrow and pain and trial and test as we look forward to Him turning it into our joy and rejoicing, not replacing it. So Jesus gives them an illustration in Verse 21 to support what He has just said about the sorrow of an event being turned into joy.

Verse 21: **A woman when she is in labor has sorrow because her hour has come, but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish for joy that a human being has been born into the world.**

He is talking about the birth process here and the pain accompanying a woman who is close to bearing a child. That all happened because of the curse back in **Genesis 3: 16** where God said **I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception and in pain you shall bring forth children.** So Jesus here is talking about the sorrow and the anguish not being remembered after the child is born.

What Jesus is illustrating is that through the same event that starts out with anguish and sorrow, ends with joy. It is not that the sorrowful event is replaced with a joyous one, it is the same event that may start out sorrowful but it can end with joy.

What Jesus is ultimately saying to His disciples is ‘when death comes to Me and you see Me no more, you will be sorrowful, you will be in anguish, but I promise you that out of My death will come great joy. So He says in Verse 22.

Verse 22: therefore you now have sorrow but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice and your joy no one will take from you.

Do you realize that the joy of the cross that is ours, no one can take away, no one and no circumstance. No matter how much you feel your life is falling apart or how a circumstance may rob you of your joy and you question how God can bring some good out of this: just know that no one or no thing or any circumstance can undo the work of grace that God did in your life through the cross.

No one can undo the cross, no one can take away the finished work of the cross in your life and so no one can take the joy from you that comes from the cross. That is why, in the midst of all of our circumstances, no matter how difficult they may be, we should be able to say what the Apostle Paul said in **Philippians 4: 4** **rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS and again I say rejoice.** Then Jesus says in V-23,24

Verses 23 – 24: and in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly I say to you whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full.

Jesus says **in that day**, the day your sorrow turns to joy, the day I will come and be with you, when the Holy Spirit of God whom I am sending that is just like Me, comes, the day of Pentecost, **you will ask Me nothing.**

Jesus says you will ask Me nothing, #1 because I won't be here and #2 the Holy Spirit will guide you into (what) all truth and bring all things to your remembrance and you won't need to ask.

Then Jesus says **whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.** This is a new way of praying for the disciples. Up until this time, you prayed directly to the God and now you pray to God through Jesus, in Jesus name. We go to the Father in the name of Jesus and through Jesus and not through any human mediator. **1st Timothy 2: 5** says **there is One mediator between man and God and it is the man Christ Jesus.** Jesus said a similar thing already in *John 14: 13 – 14, John 15: 16* and now again here.

And again, it is not a blanket statement that whatever you ask and if you tack ‘in Jesus name’ to it you will get it. It is praying and asking the same way Jesus would to His Father, it is asking on behalf of Jesus and in the will of God in essence saying ‘I want this because Jesus wants this’.

Jesus says in **Verse 24 until now you have asked nothing in My name.** There was no need to because He was right there. He says **ask and you will receive that your joy may be full.**

You want to know how to have full joy in the Christian life? It is through answered prayer. There are a lot of things that can and do bring joy to the Christian life, but nothing brings as great of joy as God answering our prayers. If you want to find real joy, full joy, then find it on your knees.

Jesus says ‘I can turn your sorrow into joy’
He says the cross is where you can find permanent joy
He says that’s the kind of godly biblical joy that no one can take away
And He says you can experience the fullness of joy in communion with God in prayer and receiving answers from Him.

What about you? Go to the Lord’s table

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Introduction and Review:

2nd Peter 1: 20 – 21, Hebrews 4: 15

Verse 16:

John 7: 33, 12: 35, 13: 33, 14: 19, Romans 8: 9
John 15: 15, 18, Matthew 28: 20, Hebrews 13: 5
Romans 8: 9, 1st Corinthians 6: 19

Verses 17 – 19:

Isaiah 65: 24, Daniel 9: 20 – 23, John 2: 24 – 25
John 4: 17 – 18, 6: 64, Matthew 12: 25 & 36

Verse 20:

Romans 8: 28, James 1: 2, Hebrews 12: 11
2nd Corinthians 6: 10, John 15: 11

Verse 21:

Genesis 3: 16

Verse 22:

Philippians 4: 4

Verses 23 – 24:

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