

SORROW TURNED TO JOY

John 16:16-33

In the Upper Room the night before His death,
the mood was somber; it was a sad scene.

He urges them not to be troubled; they *are* troubled.

He encourages them to rejoice; they *aren't* joyful.

Jesus is about to leave.

He teaches His followers things we need to know
for life and ministry after His departure.

His followers have the privilege of laying aside our rights to serve each other.

We'll demonstrate that we're His followers by our love for one another.

Jesus predicts that one of His trusted followers will betray Him.

He predicts that another of His trusted followers will deny knowing Him.

He predicts that He's about to die.

He promises that He's going to prepare a place for us.

He promises to come back and take us to live with Him there.

In the meantime, Jesus promises to send His Spirit to live within us.

The Spirit will teach us everything we need to know.

He'll bring peace in the midst of hard times.

He'll empower us to live godly lives and do mighty works.

He'll cause the world to understand the truth concerning our sin,

God's righteousness and coming judgment.

He'll teach God's children the truth and glorify Jesus.

Jesus promises to provide everything we need for productive living,
if we live in constant dependence on Him.

He promises that the world will hate us.

Therefore, based on all He has taught us,

Jesus concludes that His departure should cause JOY!

BENEFITS OF HIS DEATH 16:16-33

Besides the coming of the Spirit,

we experience other benefits because of His death.

The thought of His departure doesn't sound like cause to **rejoice**.

He's already told them that it's for their good that He go away.

Only that way will the Spirit come to reside in them.

Only through Jesus' departure will they be enabled to do greater works than He has
done, as the Spirit works through them.

Now Jesus points to two more benefits of His departure—

two more reasons that it's better for us that He leave—

two sources of great **JOY** for His followers! First, . . .

WE LOOK FORWARD WITH EAGER ANTICIPATION TO HIS TRIUMPHANT RETURN. 16:16-22

"In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." 17 Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?" 18 They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

19 Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?" 20 I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has

pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

**Though Jesus' followers mourn His departure,
our sorrow will be transformed into joy
when we see Him again.. 16-22**

Jesus' announcement: 16

"Soon you won't see Me."

"Then you will see Me again."

Could refer to His resurrection or to His second coming.

Both perspectives are true.

Either accounts for present sorrow which turns to joy.

While their sorrow because of His death turned to great joy

when they discovered the risen Lord,

that does not begin to compare to the extent of the suffering,

before our Lord's return, provoked by the world's persecution,

or the great joy His people will experience when He comes again.

Both Paul and Peter attest that our present suffering for Christ's sake in no way compares to the glory and rejoicing which will be ours when Jesus comes again.

The extent of pain and joy seems to point to His second coming.

The language sounds similar to what Jesus promised in John 14.

Jesus is going to His house to prepare a place for us.

If He goes, He will come again and take us to be with Him.

That brings a time of celebration

in which our present sorrow will be transformed into joy.

Some struggle with His statement: "A little while . . ."

So did the disciples!

However, in light of eternity, even 2000 years are a little while.

Later Jesus compares our suffering to birth pangs.

To a woman in labor, every minute may seem like an hour!

When we're enjoying a dinner with friends,

hours may seem like just a few minutes.

2 Peter 3 tells us that from God's perspective,

1000 years are like a day—just a little while for Him

—God's in no hurry!

Heb. 10 tells us it's "just a little while" until He comes.

His followers' question: What does He mean? 17-18

They ask each other.

They don't ask Him!

"What does He mean: 'In a little while you'll see me no more?'"

What does He mean by: 'After a little while you will see me?'"

mean by: 'Because I'm going to the Father?'"

What does He

mean by 'a little while?'"

We don't get it?! We don't understand what He's saying."

Jesus' response to their questions 19-22

He knows what they want to ask. 19 => 30

Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a

little while you will see me'? => **30** "Now we can see that You know all things and that You do not even need to have anyone ask You questions. This makes us believe that You came from God."

Your sorrow will turn to joy. 20

I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices.

You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

Right now –you mourn –the world celebrates

That's going to change—Your **sorrow will turn into joy!**

Illustration from childbirth: 21 *A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.*

Pain leads to rejoicing when you see the result.

Result of pain leads to rejoicing. [Wolfenbergers]

So your sorrow will turn to joy. 22

So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

[Second benefit of His departure—a second source of JOY:

Jesus' return will result in our sorrow turning into joy.

But, now our joy is made complete when we go directly to God in prayer and He gives us what we ask for.]

WE CAN PRAY IN CONFIDENCE DIRECTLY TO GOD

AND HE'LL GRANT OUR REQUESTS. 16:23-28 *In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.*

25 "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

"In that day you will no longer ask ME anything."

"In that day . . ." WHAT day?

When He departs, . . . When the Spirit is given, . . .

You won't be asking ME.

"You'll ask the Father directly in My Name."

Three times Jesus repeats: "You'll ask the Father in My Name."

23 I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.

Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

26 In that day you will ask in my name.

What does it mean to ask "in His Name?"

It doesn't mean to add: "In Jesus Name, Amen!"

Some people believe that by tagging Jesus' name on the end of our prayer, we can get whatever WE want.

"In Jesus' name I ask you to give me a new Lexus, a fancy house, and a better job."

James 4 warns us: *"You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motives, to spend it on what YOU want!"*

Lehman Strauss, *Sense and Nonsense about Prayer*.

Lots of common nonsense about prayer!

Jesus teaches His followers to pray.

First principle:

It's about *God's Name, God's kingdom, God's will.*

Concluding principle: It's about *God's glory.*

Prayer is not about *my* will being done in heaven!

Prayer is about *God's* will being done on earth!

Illustration of significance of "in Jesus' name":

Traditional: checkbook signature authority

NOT a blank check to be used however WE want!

It's to be used in accordance with HIS desires.

More like Power of Attorney

Asking in Jesus' name is to act in His place; seeking His will.

We include that at the end of our prayer

as a reminder that we're acting on HIS behalf,

seeking His will and His benefit—*NOT* our own!

"Until now you've asked me.

From now on you'll ask the Father directly.

But your requests come in MY Name."

Our prayer is addressed to the Father, in Jesus' name.

John Mitchell: "When you and I pray in Jesus' name, it means that we stand before God in all the merit, all the righteousness, and all the good standing of the Savior Himself."

Prayer "in His name" also means:

Asking in a way that's consistent with His plan and desire.

Asking for *HIS* will to be done.

When we ask in that Spirit, He gives us what we ask for,
and our sorrow turns to JOY.

When we see the Father's work in us, it leads to JOY.

Until now He's been speaking in parables and figures.

That's all they've been able to take! 25 *"Though I have been speaking figuratively,"*
[teaching in parables and figures]

From now on He's going to speak plainly. *"... a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father."*

He's going to tell them about the Father.

He will not ask for us. 26 *In that day you will ask in my name.*

I'm not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

WE will ask in Jesus name.

We do the asking.

We do it in His name—consistent with His will and plans.

Jesus is speaking to the twelve, as His representatives.

The same promise is true for His followers

as we seek to represent Him and accomplish His will.

**The Father will give us what we ask in Jesus name,
because He loves us.** 27

No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

People who love and trust the Son are loved by the Father.

While Jesus was present, He took care of them and met their needs.

Now He's going to leave. *Who's going to meet our needs now?*

Jesus wants us to understand: we don't need His personal presence to obtain the Father's blessing.

The Father loves us too; He will respond to our cry for help.

God is not a stern, far-off God,

Who doesn't care about the needs of His children.

He loves us too! He will meet our needs.

The disciples' response to Jesus' promise 29-30 *Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. 30 Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."*

"Now You're speaking clearly."

"Now we know that you know all things."

"You even know the questions we haven't asked!"

"We don't even have to ask!"

"Therefore, we believe that God sent You."

Jesus' warning to His followers 16:31-33

"You believe at last!" Jesus answered. 32 "But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. 33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus' words introduce a question: *"Now do you really believe?"*

Jesus' promises encourage His followers concerning the future.

However, the peaceful state will be short-lived.

Jesus' followers will suffer because of their identification with Him.

"Though you believe now, rough times are ahead."

When you struggle in the hard times, will you still trust Me?

You're going to be scattered.

You're going to take off--Everyone will look out for himself.

You're going to abandon Me.

Peter isn't the only one who denies Him! They all abandon Him!

But the Father will never abandon Me.

"I've told you in advance,

so you'll have peace in the midst of the hard times."

The world will produce affliction and suffering.

"But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus is leaving; persecution's coming;

but there's cause for joy!

Recording the playoffs to watch after church.

Then someone tells us who won.

It affects how we watch the game.

We can handle the hard times if we know who wins.

WE know who wins! We've read the last chapter!

Christ has triumphed over the world.
Therefore, Jesus' followers find peace in Him.

IMPLICATIONS FOR US:

As Jesus warns His followers, *we can expect turbulent times*
as we approach the end of the age.

We may just be seeing *the beginning* of birth pangs!

We should expect persecution from a world that hates Him.

We're reminded week after week of our brothers and sisters around the world who are
suffering on account of Jesus.

We can expect turbulent times to *increase*
as our Lord's coming draws nearer.

In the midst of the hard times, we can trust Him.

We can have peace in the midst of turmoil and suffering,
because we've read the last chapter.

We know who wins! We're trusting Him.

After "a little while," we will see Him again.

Jesus is coming again. God's in no hurry.

But He will fulfill His plan and glorify Himself.

We can come boldly to the Father in Jesus' name

--as His representatives--**and expect Him to act.**

Our requests should be consistent with His plans for His people.

When we ask according to His plans,

we can expect God to give us what we ask for.

We need God's perspective on what's happening in the world
to act as one with Jesus' Power of Attorney.

We have cause for joy--even in the hard times!

We have joy because we know God will transform our sorrow into joy.

We have joy because the Father hears and answers our prayer.

We have joy because we know that Jesus has overcome the world.

John Mitchell links passage to Scottish chorus I was taught by an old Scot:

Cheer up ye saints of God there's nothing to worry about.

Nothing to make y' feel afraid; nothing to make y' doubt.

Remember Jesus never fails, so why not trust Him and shout.

Y'll be sorry you worried at all tomorrow morning.

That's cause for joy--even in the hard times!