

John Ch16v16-33 - A Joy No Trouble Can Take Away

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Preacher: Sam Ross

[0:00] You can have that open, that's on page 1084, if you're using the Church Bible. John chapter 16, starting at verse 16. And A. Bean's going to read that for us in just a minute.

Thanks, Emma. A little bit of context. As the last few weeks, we've been reading through chapter 16. These are Jesus' last words to his disciples before he goes to the cross for us.

Chapter 17, he's going to pray for his disciples, for us, for himself. Chapter 16 is his last teaching that he has for his disciples.

So let's read this together. And before A. Bean reads it, let's just pray and ask for God's help.

Father, as we turn to your word now, this is not just any text.

This is your eternal word. Open our eyes that we would see wonderful things in your word today.

[1:09] Amen. And bless you. So John chapter 16, starting in verse 16.

When Jesus went on to say, In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me. At this, 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. They kept asking, What does he mean by a little while? We don't understand what he is saying. Jesus saw 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? Very truly I tell you, You will weep and mourn while the world rejoices.

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

[2:29] 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. In that day, you will no longer ask me anything.

Very truly I tell you, My Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

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. In that day, you will ask in my name.

I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you, Because you have loved me, And have believed that I came from God.

I came from the Father, And entered the world. Now I am leaving the world, And going back to the Father. Then Jesus' disciples said, Now you are speaking clearly, And without figures of speech.

[3:38] Now we can see that you know all things, That you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.

Do you now believe? Jesus replied. A time is coming, And in fact has come, When you will be scattered, Each to your own home. You will leave me all alone.

Yet I am not alone, For the Father is with me. 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.

You will face trouble in this world.

That's what Jesus says to us today. We all came in the door this morning, With our own unique set of troubles. And the Greek word here for trouble, Can mean trials, Afflictions, Anguish, Or distressing situations.

[4:53] Our trouble could come from people who have wronged us. Could come from our own sin, And its consequences. Or our trouble could just come from living.

And Jesus here, He doesn't downplay our pain, Or our trouble. Instead, He shows us that He understands. And He does that very skillfully, Using the picture of a woman in labor. Read verse 21 again. 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 has been born into the world.

Now there are many in this room, Who know all about, The pain of labor. For reasons evident to all, I am not one of those people.

[6:01] But I hear it on very good authority, That the pain, And anguish of labor, Is off the charts.

I see a few nodding heads. It is excruciating. It's a kind of anguish, That you apparently can't, Fully understand, Until you've experienced it.

And what's so interesting, About the original Greek here, Is that the word Jesus uses, For a mother's anguish, In labor, Is the exact same word, That he uses in verse 33, When he says, In this world you will have trouble.

Our English translators, Use two different words for that. It's actually the same word, In Greek. So Jesus connects, These two experiences together. The trouble, Pain, Anguish of labor, And the trouble, Pain, And anguish, Of living life in this world.

Now what that tells us is this, Number one, The pain and trouble we experience in this world, Is no little niggle. At times it's going to be excruciating.

[7:31] It may feel overwhelming. Like a mother in labor, There are days when, Maybe you feel like you won't ever get through, The pain you are experiencing.

Jesus knows this, Because he's actually experienced it himself. He gets it. But this picture of labor, Also tells us, That the trouble that we face, Is not the end of the story.

The pain of childbirth, Is overtaken, By a far, Superior joy. And I have it on good authority, Again, That the moment a mother, Holds their baby in their arms, For the first time, Is right up there, With some of the most joyful, Moments in life.

So after sharing that picture, Of the mother, Going through labor, And giving birth, Jesus says, Have a look in verse 22, He says, So with you, Now is your time of grief, But I will see you again, And you will rejoice, And no one, And no one, Will take away your joy.

No one. That joy, That Jesus promises us, Is indestructible. No matter what people, In this world, May do to you, No matter what pain, You might experience, Jesus offers you and I, A kind of joy, That will surpass, Every suffering.

[9:19] But is it actually possible? That's the question, Right? You might be skeptical. Maybe you're thinking, Well Sam, You don't know my trouble and pain.

You haven't experienced, What I've experienced. Trouble seems to have, The upper hand, Over joy in my life. And that may be true.

But joy is not a, Surface level happiness. Christian joy is a deep, Gladness in our hearts, Given by the Holy Spirit, That isn't dependent, On our circumstances.

Christian joy is not pretending, That pain isn't painful. Or putting a smile, On your face, When your heart is broken. No.

Christian joy, Is a deep, Gladness in our hearts, A profound sense of comfort, Even in the midst, Even in the midst, Of pain, And broken heartedness, Knowing that no matter, What I'm going through, In Christ, I am safe, I am loved, I have a future.

[10:38] It doesn't change, Our circumstances on the outside. Joy is a gift, But joy is a gift, The Spirit gives us, Which strengthens us, To endure through trouble.

The Spirit produces this joy, You may be aware, It's one of the fruits, Of the Spirit, In his life, In us. So this text answers, How the Spirit grows, That joy in us.

And the answer is, He builds our joy, On the double foundation, Of the Son, And the Father. On the one hand, Jesus is risen, And he has overcome, This world.

That's one foundation for joy. Here's the other, The Father, Is our Father, And he will answer, Our prayers. Two, Immovable foundations for joy, That no one, Can take away from you, If you are in Christ.

And as we look closely, At these two foundations, We're going to see, How joy is more than possible, In the midst of suffering and pain. And it can be ours, As we look, To the Father, And Son, Day by day.

[12:00] First of all, Let's start, With Jesus. What is it about Jesus, That gives us a foundation, For joy? Well, Here it is, Jesus is risen, And has overcome, This world.

Have a look, In verse 22, He says, Now is your time of grief, But I will see you again, And you will rejoice, And no one, Will take away, Your joy. Now the resurrection, Changes everything, For you, If you are in Christ.

Think about this, Humanity's greatest problem, Your greatest problem, And mine, Is that left to ourselves, We are sinful people, Who have rejected God as Father, And we stand condemned, Before him, Without any excuse.

Our only hope, Is that the perfect, Son of God, Would stand in our place, Take our sin, Take the judgment, We deserved on the cross, And so, We see Jesus, Going to the cross, Dying for our sin, But just think about this, For a second, What if Jesus hadn't risen, From the dead?

You see, If Jesus had only died, Sin and death, Would have defeated him, Paul, Even goes so far, To say this, If Christ, Has not been raised, Your faith is futile, And you are still, In your sins, Jesus' work on the cross, Would have been utterly useless, In atoning for our sins, If death and sin, Had conquered him, But no, Paul continues, Christ has indeed, Been raised from the dead, The first fruits of those, Who have fallen asleep, He says again elsewhere, Christ Jesus, Has destroyed death, And brought life, And immortality, To light through the gospel, Jesus conquered our sin, And our death,

[14:14] And he rose up, In victory, Why? Peter says in Acts, It was impossible, For death, To keep its hold, On him, Indeed, Death, Has been swallowed up, In victory, That is your conquering, Savior, You, Share in his, Victory, Your sins, Are atoned for, You are united to him, In his, Resurrected, Life, You, You cannot, Lose, That's a foundation, For joy, That cannot be shaken, And when you truly, Meditate on that, How can you, But know, A deep, Rooted, Joy, That whatever happens, I'm hidden in Christ, I cannot lose, He has won the victory, Over, My sin, And death, But not just over sin,

And death, Look at what Jesus says, At the end of verse 33, He says, In this world, You will have trouble, But take heart, I have overcome, The world, Jesus, Not only overcomes, Our sin and death, He has overcome, All the troubles, That we face, In this world, As well, Now you might think, That the trouble, And pain you face, Is going to overcome you, You might wonder, How can I even go on?

Well Jesus, Was despised, And rejected, He was, The man of sorrows, Familiar with suffering, He was tempted in every way, Yet he overcame, That's why, He can say, Take heart, Because I have overcome the world, He says, You can have joy, In the middle of this, Because, Jesus says, I journeyed through, The trouble and pain, Of this world, And overcame it, So also will you, My life, Is your life, It's not because, You're a really strong person, But because, His strength, Will fill up, Our weakness, Paul says, In all these things, We are more than conquerors, Through him, Who loved us,

Think about this, The same spirit, That empowered Jesus, To journey, Through the trouble, He experienced, In this world, That same spirit, Is alive in you, And me, Jesus rose, To defeat, Your sin and death, So you also, Will rise with him, To new life forever, Jesus overcame, The trouble and pain, Of this world, So you also, Will overcome, It will not take you down, You are safe, And secure, In him, Now I wonder, Do you ever get so consumed, By your trouble, That you can't think, Of a reason for joy, Think upon Christ, Read of how he overcame, Sing of his victory, Think upon these things, Take your mind,

Off the trouble, And put your mind, On to Christ, And the spirit, As we do that, Will build a deep, Rooted joy, On the foundation, Of Jesus, And everything we are, In him, We have another, Foundation for joy, God is your father, And he will answer, Your prayers, Have a look with me, At verse 23, Onwards, Jesus says, In that day, You will no longer, Ask me anything, Very truly, I tell you, My father will give you, Whatever you ask, In my name, Until now, You have not asked, For anything in my name, Ask and you will receive, And your joy, Will be complete, Jesus says,

[18:56] Asking of the father, And receiving from him, Is going to make your joy, Complete, This is another, Foundation for our joy, Now how do we understand, This asking and receiving, These are tricky verses, To understand, How does it work, For our joy, Well I think, In the first case, Jesus is trying, To get across, The tremendous privilege, That is ours in him, He, Has shared everything, With us, Even his relationship, With the father, Isn't that amazing, His father, Is now our father, And that in itself, Is an immovable, Foundation, For joy, In our lives, Look at what he says, In verse 26,

He says, In that day, You will ask in my name, I am not saying, That I will ask, The father on your behalf, No, The father himself,

Loves you, Because you've loved me, And I've believed, That I came from God, In an astonishing, Change of status, We who are rebels, And enemies of God, Have been adopted by him, Given the rights, Of sons, And daughters, Dearly loved, By him, Jesus says, You don't even need, To come to me, So that I can, You know, Bring your requests, To the father, Jesus says, Go on and talk to him yourself, You're welcomed, Into the throne room, The king of kings, Is holding out his scepter, To you, The father says, Come in, My child, Bring me your requests, And he is the best of fathers, He is not annoyed, By our requests, He delights, To hear our voice, He delights, To provide, All our needs, And that makes believers,

The most privileged people, On the planet, We get to approach, The God of the universe, As our father, Anytime, Any place, Now the next thing, We need to deal with here, Is what kind of things, Do we ask, Of the father, And that's actually, The tricky bit, Because on first reading, This can sound like, We hold, Some sort of power, Over God, Like we can ask him anything, And I mean anything at all, And he is obliged, To give it to us, Now you don't need, To be a parent, To know that's a recipe, For disaster, If a loving parent, Were to grant, Every single request, Of their little cherub, That would not be, For their good, Or anyone else's good, In the world, Around that person, Sometimes the answer is yes, Sometimes it's no, Sometimes it's not yet,

Prayer is a mystery, We will never fully understand, But that shows us something, Of what it's like, With our heavenly father, He is the all wise, All knowing, Creator of the universe, And we, Don't see, The whole picture, Like he does, We just don't, Romans 8, 28 says this, We know, That in all things, God works for the good, Of those who love him, God, Our father, Promises, To work for our good, Always, We can bank on that, Experience, Has taught all of us, That in the moment, We don't always know, What is best for us, Or for people, In the world around us, So thank God,

He is not obliged, To say yes, To every, Request of ours, I think that's actually, A comfort, Instead, Jesus puts an important, Qualification, On our requests, Did you notice, That qualification, In the text, Verse 23, He says, My father, Will give you, Whatever you ask, In my name, Now that's crucial, One scholar, Says this, A request, In the name of Jesus, Is a request, In keeping, With the character, And mission, Of Jesus, Asking in Jesus name, Is like a safety net, On all our prayers, To say, Only give me this, If it lines up, With what you say, Is best, Jesus, For me, For this world, And when our prayers,

[23 : 59] Do align, With God's perfect will, We will receive it, From the father, Tim Keller says this, God, Will either give us, What we ask, Or give us, What we would have asked, If we knew, Everything he knew, If we knew, God's perfect, Unchanging plan, For our lives, And our world, We must believe, That we would want that too, Even, When trouble, And pain, Is part, Of his will, We come to prayer, As Jesus taught us to pray, Remember in the Lord's prayer, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, On earth, As it is in heaven,

Now here's where the mystery, Of prayer deepens, Because we might say, Well why bother even praying, If God has an unchanging plan, For all of history, Surely my little prayers, Don't make any difference, Well James says, In scripture, He says, You do not have, Because you do not ask God, Scripture shows us, That there are actually things, That God wills, Which won't happen in this world, Until, His people, Have prayed for them, To happen, Isn't that amazing?

And we know from elsewhere, God is teaching us, In this process, He's teaching us, To have faith, In prayer, Not the size of our faith, That matters, Jesus says, Faith as small as a mustard seed, Can move mountains, It's the object of our faith, That counts, Is our faith in Jesus, As we pray, That he really can, Do anything, God is also teaching us, Perseverance, In prayer, It may be, That a friend you prayed for, Consistently, For 50 years, Comes to know Jesus, Question is, Why didn't the father, Answer that prayer, On year one, Not year 50, That's a mystery, Right?

God must be teaching us, Perseverance, In prayer, Depending on him, In all those years, But here's the main gift, That prayer, Gives to us, That God gives to us, In prayer, And it's joy, And Jesus says, At the end of verse 24, He says, Ask and you will receive, And your joy, Will be complete, So Jesus says, When you ask for things, That align with my will, The father will give them to you, And that will make your joy, Overflow, It could be a brother, Persevering through a trial, That you've prayed for, It could be, A sister, Returning from sin, It could be a house, Provided for someone in need, A friend coming to Jesus, A sickness healed, If it's God's perfect will,

We will receive it from the father, And what joy, Will be ours in that moment, Right? What a joy, To watch God, Directly grant, A prayer that you've brought to him, That is one of the most exhilarating, Encouraging experiences, In this life, If you're a Christian, Any amount of time, You'll know this, You'll have experienced that, What joy, Is ours, When the father, Hears, And gives us, What we've asked for, To look back, And think, God chose, To involve, My little prayers, And the carrying out, Of his, Big purpose, Think about that, That the God, Of the universe, Chose to involve, You, And me, In the unfolding, Of his cosmic plan, For the world, You prayed, He acted, What a joy, [28 : 30] What a joy, Still a mystery, We'll never quite understand it, What a joy, He gives to us, In prayer, So I think, There's an application here, And it simply does, I think we lose out on joy, When we don't pray, When we're not praying, In Jesus name, Regularly, God is your father, He beckons you to come, By his spirit, To ask him for things, In Jesus name, So come and ask, That's the invitation, And be diligent about it, Don't, Try and set a time, Have a place, Plan out, What you want to pray about, Over time, Keep track of it, Pray with faith, In Jesus, That he really can do anything, There's nothing that's, Too hard for him, Pray his words, From scripture, Into your life, And the lives of others, And as we do that, The promise is that our joy, Will increase, And overflow, As we walked in, Here today, We all brought with us, Our own set of troubles, And we will walk out the door, With them, Again, Same way we walked in, Is it possible, To have joy, In those troubles, Well I think Jesus has shown us today, It is, Because our troubles, Do not define us, No, It's our relationship, With the father, And the son, That defines, Who you are, You, You, Have a joy, In the father and son, That no one, Can take away, Joy, Joy, Joy, Is more than possible, In the deepest trouble, And pain, So remember, Those two foundations, For your joy, In Christ, All that the son, Is for you, All that the father, Is for you, The son, Because Jesus is risen, He's defeated, Your sin and death, And he's overcome, This world, He's walked, The path of trouble, And pain ahead of you, And remember, The foundation of joy, In the father, Because he is your father, And he will answer, Your prayers, As you pray, In Jesus name, Amen, Let's pray together, And maybe in the silence, You could, Talk to God yourself, What is it that has, Stuck out to you today, From his word, Which one of these, Foundations for joy, Most speaks to your heart, And maybe you can say, Thank you to God, For that now, Thank you, we thank you father that you have given us your son and we thank you that he walked the path of trouble and pain ahead of us we thank you for the gift of your spirit who reminds us of everything we are in you and in Jesus comfort us in our trouble and pain thank you that you do not downplay it you understand and you have come that we might have joy that our joy may be complete help us day by day to meditate on all that you are for us Lord Jesus that you are risen and victorious over our sin and death may that just give us strength as we face the trouble we face remind us of all the father is for us that he is our father we are safe in his arms and he longs to hear our requests Lord help us to pray without ceasing in Jesus name and to watch as you provide Lord make our joy complete as we do this we ask all these things in Jesus name and for your glory amen we are going to sing a great song now it is called Christ our hope in life and death in the last verse there is a line that says and we will feast in endless joy when Christ is ours forevermore it is not just joy in this world this text ultimately points us forward to the fulfillment of our joy in heaven when the trouble and pain part is going to be taken out of the equation and we will just have joy in Christ forever so let's think about that as we sing please stand if you're able