

Easter III

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[0:00] He was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again, in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who is a Father and a Son, who is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.

[1:17] Amen. Please be seated. Amen. These next three weeks of Eastertide, we will be in the Gospel of John.

And particularly, we've been in the Gospel of John, actually, in some places already in Eastertide. But we'll be in Chapter 16 for these next three weeks. This week we'll be in Chapter 16, Verse 16 to 22.

Next week we'll go back to verse 5 to 15 And then in the week following when Bishop Julian is here We'll be in John 16 verse 23 to 33 But this morning we're in John 16 It's on page 1072 of your pew Bible I do invite you to open and follow along There is a phrase so small you could almost miss it Just three words And yet it carries within it the weight of every grief The human heart has ever known And the brightness of every hope That has ever kept a soul alive through the night The phrase is simple It's simply this A little while It's a phrase that is both hopeful But can also be devastating Depending on the context A little while Jesus spoke these words on the night before he died

That's where we're situated in John 16 This is in the upper room Surrounded by the man he loved most He had just washed their feet And broken bread with them Remember Monday, Thursday The readings there That he just washed their feet He's just broken bread with them He's stood in the Lord's Supper And now he talks to them He told them he was going away And into the silence of their confusion As he says this Is their confusion and sorrow He also said to them Into that silence A little while And you will not see me no longer And again a little while You will see me Those words echo across More than 20 centuries To us today Not merely words of comfort Whisper to the 11 Frightened men in Jerusalem In the upper room But it's words that are also Whisper to all his disciples Throughout the ages They are the church's word

For every age of suffering A little while In times of hardship Temptation Or grief These simple words Carry a deep sense Of comfort Christ reminds us That everything we endure Our struggles Our sorrows Even our most aching Longings Is temporary In the vast sweep of eternity What we suffer now Is but a fleeting moment And in that moment He is present With us Even in our suffering He is present with us With a promise And this morning We will walk through John 16 And slowly and carefully We will look at this promise That he has given us And we will ask ourselves Four questions of this text What did Jesus mean?

[4:41] In fact that's the question They were asking When they first heard it This original audience What did Jesus mean? Why does it matter? How does the image Of childbirth Illuminate This Message That Jesus wants us to know?

And what is the joy That no one can take away? Don't you want to know? What is that joy? And so We begin in verse 16 A little while And you will see me no longer And again a little while And you

will see me Let's look at that scene carefully Jesus speaks And the disciples Turn to one another As Jesus speaks They turn to one another In puzzlement They repeat his words Back to each other As though the repetition Of those words Might unlock the meaning And the mystery Of what Jesus had just said They said to them A little while A little while What does he mean?

And here I know Often times when we read The gospels We think the disciples The apostles are dense But they're not Being dense Or faithless In this Because I think If we were standing Inside time As they were Hearing what Jesus says We will be puzzled As well The disciples Faced Two little wiles The first was The imminent Departure of their Lord Between Good Friday And Easter morning Three days of darkness They will endure Three days when the tomb Would hold the most Dear person To them And then the second A little while Was stretched far beyond Even their own lifespan The long centuries Between Christ's ascension To his father's right hand And then his second coming Which we all await Centuries in which The whole church Would ask With increasing urgency The very question These eleven men

Were asking now What does he mean A little while And we Brothers and sisters Are part of that church That ask that question We know We know And we know To all pass To our Lord's promise As we ask the question Which is the answer To our question He says it In John 5 25 The hour is coming And is now here When the dead Will hear the voice Of the son of God And those who hear Will live We await that day When he comes A trumpet call And he also promised Surely I am coming quickly In Revelations 22 These are our Lord's words His very words That he is coming And yet centuries have passed Generations have been born Have suffered Have died Have waited And believers In every age Have whispered Among themselves

What does he mean By a little while And St. Peter In 2 Peter 3 Verse 8 and 9 Reflected precisely On this mystery Of time And offered a word Of insight For us St. Peter says this That God is not Delaying in his promise It only appears So to us Creatures Living inside time Because he says to us When this life is over When we stand On the other side Of eternity We will understand With sudden clarity Just how brief This span of life Truly is Moses understood this In the great psalm Of Psalm 90 The great prayer That he prayed In Psalm 90 He looked At the brevity Of human life With stark honesty He says For in your sight And that is in God's sight A thousand years Are like yesterday That passes by Like a few hours Of the night That's what a thousand years

[8:37] Is in God's sight You end their lives They sleep They are like grass That grows in the morning That's humanity Grows in the morning In the morning It sprouts And grows By evening It withers And dries up Our lives Last 70 years Or if we are strong 80 years Even the best of them Are struggle And sorrow Indeed they pass quickly And fade away And fly away But Moses did not End this Psalm In despair He prayed it Toward He prayed that Towards the end That we may be taught In verse 12 And 14 That we may be taught To number our days Carefully So that we may develop Wisdom in our hearts And then he prays That God will satisfy us In the morning With his faithfulness With his faithful love So that we may shout With joy And be glad All our days The right response

Is what Moses just shows And St. Peter Gives to us The right response To the brevity of life Is not despair Yes Human life is brief It's momentary But the right response Is not despair But wisdom That's the prayer That Moses prayed Teach us to number our days And then the grateful disposition To receiving that wisdom From God Is joy Already we can see Where Jesus has taken us In this gospel reading The great saints Long for that day When the brevity of life Will be understood at last John St. John cried From Patmos Even so Come Lord Jesus Paul confessed I desire to depart And be with Christ Which is far better For these saints Who love the Lord The deepest ache Is not the shortness

Of life itself But the pain Of separation From their Lord And they longed To see him Even though now They see him Only through a glass Dimly As Paul says They longed to see The one whom they loved Fully Be present To be fully present In his light The disciples In the upper room Also felt this ache Before they had Words for it And Jesus Recognizing the ache In their hearts As they questioned Among themselves What does he mean Jesus in his tenderness Did not rebuke Their confusion But he answered it He drew closer to them And he answered them And in verse 20 He says to them Truly truly I say to you You will weep That's not the answer They were looking for But he's answering them Truly truly I say to you You will weep And lament But the world Will rejoice You will be sorrowful For your sorrow Will turn

Into joy Verse 19 Is one of the most Tender moments In the gospel of John Jesus knows What his disciples Were wanting to ask And he drew near He does not wait For them to find The words As they're looking for it He is the good shepherd After all Who knows his sheep And he says to them Truly truly I say to you In their unspoken trembling Jesus knew That they wanted To ask him So he answered The question for them And this is what Jesus is always doing With his people He draws near Whenever we have Any questions He draws near to us And he answers us When we bring them Our confusion Our out Formed fears Our worthless grief Whatever it is He is your good shepherd He already knows He does not demand That we have it all Articulated Tell me Explain it We're not going For a bank loan

When we come to the Lord We can come to him With our formed words He meets us In the middle of Whatever it is That we're in So then we have The promise That he gives them In verse 20 This is a promise You will weep And lament That is the Lord's promise And you The world will rejoice While you do so But You will be sorrowful But your sorrow Will turn into joy That is his promise This is the great reversal Look at the stunning economy Of verse 20 Two sentences It's a chiasm Of grief and joy It begins with With sorrow It ends in middle of joy It goes back to sorrow And then it ends in joy again In that one Just that one verse And Jesus says to them

[13:42] The world will rejoice At your sorrow And that's exactly What happened At the cross of Christ The Lord was crucified And all of Jerusalem Rejoiced And scorned the Lord of life As he hanged dying On a tree While his friends His closest friends Lamented and wept Bitterly But as Jesus said The disciples' sorrow Will turn Will turn to joy Notice what Jesus is saying here It will turn to joy Not be replaced Their sorrow will not be replaced Their sorrow will not be forgotten But turned Transformed From within That what carries the sense Of a reversal That happens inside The thing itself It's not a substitution But a transfiguration

I use that word intentionally Transfiguration That's what will happen Your sorrow will transfigure Into joy And isn't that what happened To the apostles The very event That caused their sorrow Becomes the ground Of their joy The very event The cross of Christ That was the event That caused The crucifixion Was the cause Of their sorrow But the cross Did not disappear When the resurrection Came Did it The cross Became the ground Of everything Upon which Their joy And our joy Hangs This is the Easter logic At work Brothers and sisters What the disciples Experienced Across these three days Between the Lord's First departure From them Friday's devastation At the cross The suffering Impact of our Lord The waiting on Saturday And then Sunday's Explosion of joy First confusion

We remember The resurrection story They didn't know What was going on But then upon realization Joy And bewilderment But then joy again That is the pattern For everything In the Christian life The worst thing That ever happened In all of human history Became the best thing But it wasn't But not despite Its darkness But through it St. Paul understood This pattern And applied it To the whole Christian life He says it in 1 Corinthians 7 The appointed time Has grown short Brevity again For the present form Of this world Is what?

Passing away The world as we know it Paul says Is passing away Time is short Life is brief St. Peter wrote To those scattered Christians Across the diaspora Who were being persecuted For a season For a little while If necessary You have been Grieved by various trials In the midst Of your suffering St. Peter Rides to the church Who were being persecuted Rejoice For a season For a little while The sorrow Is real It's not that Peter Peter is not Minimizing the sorrow Paul is not Minimizing the sorrow Of the world That we live in But they understand That even our sorrow And our suffering Is bounded Up And it is temporary And what is coming After that suffering

Is not merely The end of suffering But the transformation Of it Into something That will surprise us With its completeness The joy that the Lord brings Right now Right now The Christian life Is often marked By waiting That's what The Christian life is We're waiting For its return There are many other Kind of waiting That is marked By your life Waiting for For a promised job Waiting for clarity About life's decision There is waiting And as we wait We're longing For Christ But this waiting We're told Is only temporary A little while One day He will return And what seemed Like a long time To us Will in the light Of eternity Seem like a little while Indeed We will understand it To be truly A little while And then Jesus Jesus goes on After saying All of this Telling them That their sorrow Will be transfigured

[18:26] Into joy He uses this analogy In verse 21 A woman in labor Has sorrow Because her time Has come But when the child Is born She forgets The anguish For joy That a new life Has entered

the world Jesus chose This image He's a master Of images He could have Used any analogy But he chose This one deliberately And let's look At the analogy He chose He chose He chooses A woman in labor Not a soldier Enduring battle Not a farmer Waiting for harvest But a mother In a most vulnerable And painful moment There is something Profoundly intentional In that choice Of our Lord Jesus is not Reaching for Heroic image An heroic image Of suffering A soldier Suffering Under the Arduous labor And war No Jesus reached For a mother

Suffering In anguish Of birth He reaches For something Intimate Bodily Entirely human Suffering At it's most Inescapable Suffering At it's most Purposeful Here she is The mother In anguish She is in Anguish The text Does not Suffern this For us She is In anguish It does not Say she is Uncomfortable Or that she Finds the Experience Challenging We use those Kind of Euphemistic Words today No Jesus says She is In anguish And I know All the moms In the room Appreciate the Exactness Of that description From our Lord The Greek word Is heavy We use that Word too Heavy With child But now She is Heavy With child Bearing Jesus does Not pretend That what The disciples Are about To face Is mild No Or that What we Will face In our Life Is going To be Trivial No The suffering Is real The tears Are real The waiting Is real This is one Of the gifts Of this passage That we have Before us It does not Spiritualize Pain away Christianity Is not a Religion That tells you That your Suffering Doesn't hurt Or that If you Add more Faith You wouldn't Feel it No Jesus looked His disciples Right in the eye On the night Before his crucifixion And he told them You will Weep You will Mourn And he said it Without shame Because sorrow Is not a failure It is the mark Of a heart That loves And here And here's The astonishing Thing When the child Is born According to The knowledge That Jesus Gave Jesus says The woman No longer Remembers The anguish Not She remembers It but Feels better About it Not She recalls It Philosophically

From a distance No Jesus says She no longer Remembers it Why? Because the joy Of new life In our homes Is so complete So overwhelming So present That in Einsight Everything that Preceded It changes In character It's been Transfigured Into joy What kind of Joy is so real That it does this? This is not Mere relief Not the simple Absence of pain That's not what Is happening here In fact Continuing with The analogy Jesus just gave The mother After delivering The child Is still in pain But this is the joy Of new life Which is precisely What Easter Announces to us This is precisely What the return Of Christ At his second Coming will bring And he brought To the disciples At his resurrection The resurrection Brothers and sisters Is not a Consolation prize It is the arrival Of something so real And so new That everything Before it Even the suffering Is absorbed Into it And the image Is larger than One woman Or one birth Paul makes it Into Turns it into Cosmic scale And Paul says In Romans The whole creation Grows in pain

[22 : 59] Together until now In the pain In the pain Of childbirth The entire world Is groaning For our Lord's return In the same way A mother Who is about To give birth Groans We await His return A little while And every act Of grief In a Christian life Participates in this Cosmic waiting And labor Every bit Of your suffering Is longing And waiting For the resolution And the completeness And the transformation That will come When Christ Your Lord Comes Then the last verse Jesus says This wonderful Promise to us You now have Sorrow But I will See you again And your hearts Will rejoice And no one Will take your joy From you The promise Is personal Three short clauses In that verse

Each one is a gift For us First I will see you again Not you will seek me And perhaps find me Not you may If you are faithful enough Eventually enter my presence No Jesus says I will see you He will bring it about The reunion Is His promise Not our achievement And for those disciples Who are in terror In Jerusalem Who fled on the night Of His arrest Who stood stunned At the tomb This is the word That changed everything For them I will see you again And for forty days He did And then This next word In this verse Your heart Will rejoice Not your mind Alone Not your understanding Not your imagination This is not all Just in your head The reunion Is real It's tangible

Your heart The seat of love Of longing The seat of grief Will rejoice For these apostles The very thing That has been broken By His absence Will be the thing That rejoices Their wounded heart Will be filled Again With living water That flows from Him And then lastly No one Will take your joy From you That's the last Clause That's the one That rings The true bell For us Brothers and sisters No one Will take your joy From you And this is not A description Of present Experience The disciples At that moment Were ours From the worst Night of their lives And yet Jesus Is already making This promise Before they Experience the pain Jesus was not Telling them They will feel No grief No He was giving them A promissory note Against the future That as you go Through this suffering

Remember joy Is at the end of it The joy Is promised And it's not a feeling That circumstances Produce

Or circumstances Can take away This is a joy That is grounded In a fact A historical fact The fact of the resurrection Which no circumstance Cannot make Christ is risen That cannot be changed And that changes Everything For us The world Will wound us It will take things From us That we hold dear There will be lost There will be death There will be loneliness In this world But nothing In this world Cannot make the resurrection Because he was raised Our joy Is secured And our joy Is permanent This is why The church sings And shouts for joy Brothers and sisters Where does this Leave us This morning In the midst Of all of this

We must remember That we are Easter people We are the people Of the resurrection And in the midst Of this world As we wait We must name Our grief Honestly This text Jesus actually Gives us permission Here To weep To mourn To lament Grief Not to hide It away As if it's not There And it's not Real To be in Anguish Grief Is not Faithlessness Rather Grief is the Mark of a heart That loves We mourn With one another When there is Mourning We sorrow With one another But also We are to All that time This brief life That we have With open hands Remember Moses' Prayer Teach us to Number our days Not to waste them Not to clutch them And hold on to them Unwisely

[28:02] But to hold it With open hands Knowing that The Lord is sovereign Our good shepherd Knows Our end From our Beginning From our beginning The years are short The little while Of your grief Is also short In the vast mercy Of God's eternity So In this short Little while Of your life Live it well Love well Suffer well As St. Peter Encourages us to And then lastly We are to remember That we are in labor Not in defeat Those are two Different things We are in labor Not in defeat The groaning Of this world Your groaning Your family's groaning The church's groaning All of creation's groaning Awaiting the coming Of the Lord Is not meaningless It's purposeful It is the labor Of something new

Being born You are not Suffering pointlessly You are part Of a story Under God's Sovereign hand Towards a new birth So hold The joy As the anchor As you go Through all of it Remember what Our Lord says No one will Take your joy Away Hold that joy As an anchor Not a feeling That you manufacture Not as a performance Of cheerfulness But as a fact That undergirds All your experience In this world Jesus was raised He will come again He will see you And no one Will take the joy From you Let that fact Be the ground Under your feet On the days When the ground Seems to shake Until that day He has given us

His word It is enough To persevere In this earthly Programage As we await Our true home You now have sorrow But I will see you again And your heart Will rejoice And no one Will take your joy From you Amen Let us pray For the church And for the world Saying Hear our prayer For the peace Of the whole world And for the well-being And unity Of the people Of God Lord In your mercy For Stephen Our Archbishop For Julian Our Bishop

For Mark And David Our Assisting Bishops And for all the clergy And people Of our diocese And congregation Especially for Ife Our Pastor And for the people And clergy Of St. Peter's Anglican Church In Southerton, Pennsylvania Venerable Jeffrey Firth And Deacon Blair Biddle Lord We thank you For faithful leaders Of the local Diocese Of national And the global Level Lord We ask you To watch all of those Leaders As they make Typical decisions On how to interact With the world With other church Poppies And Lord Just Watch all of them And give them Faithfulness And wisdom As they do so Lord In your mercy Hear our prayer For all those Who proclaim the gospel At home and abroad And for all who teach And disciple others We pray for Pastoral care Ministries of the ADLW

As well as For other ministries And chaplaincies The Reverend Darren Johnson We also pray For Dean And Kyria In Ethiopia Lord In your mercy Hear our prayer For our brothers And sisters in Christ Who are persecuted For their faith Lord In your mercy Hear our prayer For our nation Those in authority And all in public service Especially Donald Our president And Kathleen Our governor Lord In your mercy Hear our prayer For all those Who are in trouble Sorrow Need Sickness Or any other adversity Especially those You might name now Matthew For all those

[33:08] Who are in trouble Because She is Lord In your mercy Hear our prayer We bless Your holy name For all your Servants Who departed This life Praying you Would grant us Grace To follow Their good Examples That with them We might partake In your heavenly Kingdom Your additional Prayers and Thanksgivings Are invited At this time We pray for a Just end Of the war In the Middle East We pray for our Troops in harm's way And for their Families who wage Almighty

God We commend to your Gracious care And keeping All the men And women Of our armed forces
At home And abroad Defend them Day by day

With your heavenly Grace Strengthen them In their trials And temptations Give them Courage to
face The perils Which beset them And grant them A sense Of your abiding Presence Wherever
They may be Through Jesus Christ Our Lord Heavenly Father Grant these Our prayers For the
sake Of Jesus Christ Our only Mediator And advocate Who lives And reigns With you In the unity
Of the Holy Spirit One God Now and forever Amen Let us humbly Confess our sins To Almighty
God Almighty God Father Our Lord Jesus Christ Maker

And judge Of us all We acknowledge And repent Of our many Sins Offenses Which we Have
committed By thought Word And deed Against your Divine Majesty Promoting Most justly And
righteous Anger Against us We are deeply Sorry For these Transgressions The burden Of them Is
worthy We can bear Have mercy Upon us Have mercy Upon us Most merciful Father For your Son
Our Lord Jesus Christ May For give us All that is Past And grant That we may Evermore Serve and
Please you In new This life To the Honor And glory Of your Name Through Jesus Christ Our Lord
Amen Almighty God Our heavenly Father Who in This great Mercy Has promised Forgiveness Of
sins To all Those Who sincerely Repent And with True faith

Turn to Him Have mercy Upon you Pardon and Deliver you From all Your sins Confirm and
Strengthen you All goodness And bring you To everlasting Life Through Jesus Christ Our Lord
Amen Amen Hear the word God You all Who truly Turn to Him Come to Me All who Labor And are
Heavily Latent And I Will give You rest If anyone Sins we have An advocate With the Father Jesus
Christ The Righteous He is The propitiation For our Sins And not For ours Only But also For the
Sins Of the Whole World Please stand The We The We So The Lord We Always Because The That
It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It It
It It

It It It It It It Thank you.

[37:51] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[40:15] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. For it is our God.

Amen. Praise Him, Father, He has beheld.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Amen. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[42:32] It is just and right, so is to you. It is right and a good and a joyful thing. Always and
everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ our
Lord. For He is the true pastoral Lamb, who was offered for us and has taken away the sin of the
world.

Who by His death has destroyed death, and by His rising delight again has won for us everlasting
life. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with angels and archangels and with all the
company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your name.

Truly holy, holy, holy Lord our God.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest Hosanna in the highest
First is he who comes In the name of the Lord Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest Hosanna in the
highest Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest

[44:42] Hosanna in the highest Let us feel and say the prayer We do not ask you to come to this
Your table The Lord Trusting in our own righteousness That we are abundant In great adversities
We are not worthy so much As to gather up the crimes On your table But you are the same Lord
Whose character is always To have mercy Grant us therefore Gracious Lord So to eat the flesh Of
your dear Son Jesus Christ And to drink his blood That our sinful bodies May be made clean By his
body And our souls Watch through his most precious blood And that we may have more For well in
the image

Our Savior Jesus Christ Holy Institution In remembrance Of his death And fashion May be partakers Of his most blessed Body and blood For the night That he was betrayed Our Lord Jesus Christ Took bread And when he had given Thanks He broke it And gave it to his disciples Saying Take Eat This is my body Which is given For you Do this In remembrance Of me Likewise After supper Jesus took the cup And when he had given Thanks to them When he had given Thanks He gave it to them Saying Drink this All of you For this Is my blood Of the new covenant Which is shed For you And for many

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