# Let Your Heart Rejoice at Christ’s Promises

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[0:00] John chapter 16. Last week we did about the first half, so 1 through 15. Today's sermon text begins with verse 16.

Okay, I think all of our kids are assigned in, so I'll pray for you, and then we'll send you on. Thank you for the reminder. All right, let's pray. Father, thank you for these dear children.
We pray that you please go with them today. I thank you for James and Michelle and their preparation, Lord. We pray that you will speak to our children through the power of your word by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
Lord, we pray that you will give them hearts to love you. We pray that you will give them minds to understand you, and that with their eyes of faith they can see Jesus Christ in his glory. Please go with these dear children today, Lord. Amen.
All right. So we're in John chapter 16, and we'll begin reading today at verse 16 until the end of the chapter. As I read this, remember, this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.
[1:08] It's God's very own word for you, his people. If you receive it that way, then after I'm done reading, I'll say this is the word of the Lord, and we'll respond. Thanks be to God. John chapter 16, beginning at verse 16.

Jesus says to his disciples, A little while, and you will see me no longer. And again a little while, and you will see me. So some of his disciples said to one another, 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 am going to the Father. And so they were saying, What does he mean by a little while?
We do not know what he is talking about. Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant? And by saying a little while, and you will not see me.
And again a little while, you will see me. Truly, truly, I say to you, You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.
[2:18] When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come. But when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again. And your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. In that day you will ask nothing of me.
Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but will tell you plainly about the Father.
In that day you will ask in my name, and I will say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf, for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came from the Father.
[3:24] I came from the Father, and I have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father. His disciples said, Ah, now you are speaking plainly to us, not using figurative speech.

Now we know that you know all things, and do not need anyone to question you. This is why we believe that you came from God. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe?
Behold, the hour is coming. Indeed, it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.

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I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world.
And this is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God indeed. You may be seated.
The Bible tells us that the grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.
[4:45] Let's pray. Father, your word is waiting, because your word carries your glory.

We need your Holy Spirit to minister your word to us, Lord. On our own, we don't understand. We don't understand your glory.
We're like the disciples, Lord. Left to ourselves, we would be scattered. Apart from you, we could do nothing. But we praise you, Lord, that you have revealed yourself to us through all of Scripture, through Jesus Christ, and you've opened our eyes of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit to behold God.
We pray that you will do just that this morning, Lord, in a powerful way. We pray, Lord, that your word will minister to each soul that you brought here this morning by your providence, that you will have your way in our lives, we pray.
Amen. Amen. Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer for you this week has simply been that you would let your heart truly rejoice in the promises of Jesus Christ.
[6:17] Let your heart rejoice at the promises of Christ. In this passage, we have the final words of Jesus before he marches to the cross.

John 17, he's not addressing his disciples any longer, he's praying. He's praying that the Father will help him. And so these are the final words. And before he finishes his work on the cross, before he takes on the glorified, resurrected body, this is his last goodbye.
A final goodbye keeps a room in the heart forever, doesn't it? You have detailed memories of a last goodbye you've had to say.
And in his last words to his disciples, what's on the heart of Jesus is the Father. He knows they will be scattered. And yet, he gives them these glorious promises because he knows the love of the Father.
This theme reminds me of a missionary I read about in the 1800s named John Payton. He was born in Scotland, and he heard of Scottish explorers discovering these islands off the coast of New Zealand and Australia.
[7:41] Stories came back of extreme violence and danger, men who had been cannibalized and offered as sacrifices. And the Lord stirred in the heart of this young man to go as a missionary for 40 years to this pagan people group.

He wrote years later as an old man in his autobiography of that last goodbye he had to say to his Christian father. His father in Scotland loved the Lord, and he's sending off his young son now to college.
They had to walk for about 40 miles together to the train stop. Hear these words from his autobiography. For the last half mile we walked on together in almost unbroken silence.
His tears, that's John referring to his dad, his tears fell fast when our eyes met. His lips kept moving in silent prayers for me, my father, as was often his custom, hat in hand.
See, he would take his hat off to pray. We halted on reaching the appointed parting place, and he grasped my hand firmly for a moment in silence.
[8:52] And then he said solemnly, God bless you, my son. Why are goodbyes so hard? Especially if you know it's your final goodbye.

The senses are heightened. You want to capture every detail of that moment. A final goodbye keeps a room in the heart forever. And so here we have in our epistle this letter from John retelling these moments as an old man now writing this to comfort the churches.
Think of the love of Christ in these final words to his disciples. In verse 22, Jesus says, Disciples, you have sorrow now, but your hearts will rejoice.
rejoice. Jesus says, Disciples, I'm going away, but I will see you again, and no one will take your joy from you. Just as you would hold on to the memories of a final goodbye and find comfort in visiting those memories, my encouragement to you today is to hold on to these promises, these final words of Jesus Christ.
Hear the love from the Father flowing through him to you today. Let your heart rejoice at Christ's promises. The first one is this.

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[10:14] Christ promises that his disciples will see him. Christ promises that you, his disciple, will see Jesus.

Let your heart rejoice at that. Look at verse 16. Jesus tells his disciples, a little while, and you will see me no longer, and again a little while, and you will see me.
It's not the first time Jesus gave this message. Earlier in John chapter 7, verse 20, do you remember that scene where it's the treasury, where those horn shapes, where people put money in, and right across that hallway, the Pharisees could hear him preaching and teaching, and what was it that Jesus said?
He said, I am going away. Where I am going, you cannot come. You will seek me, but will not find me. And then Jesus proclaimed, so all in the temple would hear, unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.
That's what he proclaimed in the temple for all the world to hear. Unless you believe, you will die in your sins. But now to his disciples, even though they will be scattered, and without the Holy Spirit, they would never follow Christ loyally.
[11:30] Jesus says, you will see me. Pastor John Gill commented, nothing touches believers to the quick and gives them more uneasiness than when Christ is out of sight.

There is none like him in their esteem in heaven and on earth. Oh, disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, we sing this, turn your eyes upon Jesus.
Turn your eyes to the morning and see Christ the lion awake. What a glorious dawn. Fear of death is gone. Oh, Jesus, we turn our eyes to you because there's not a more terrible thought than to never see Jesus again.
And now we see him with eyes of faith. One day he promises, my disciples, you will see me. Let that stir your heart with joy. See, this is the promise of God to everyone who has ever believed through all of human history.
One of the most ancient books of the whole Bible is Job. And this was the promise God gave Job. In Job 19.25, he could pray, I know that my Redeemer lives and at the last he will stand upon the earth.
[12:49] And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. That was the hope that moved Job to rejoicing when everything around him was perishing away.

Let your heart rejoice at Christ's promises today. And Christ promises, believer, that his disciples will see him.
Christ also promises that he will turn your sorrow into joy. Jesus Christ will turn your sorrow into joy. That's what he promises in verse 20. Look at that. In verse 20, Jesus says, Amen, Amen, or truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament while the world rejoices.
You will be sorrowful, but listen to this promise. Your sorrow will turn into joy. See, the disciples, they're confused and they do feel this deep sorrow.
[14:02] They feel the weightiness of this moment and their deep sorrow gets deeper. We're reminded again of that scene in Narnia when those wicked beasts are mocking and jeering and cheering as Aslan, the great mighty lion, marches to the stone table of his death.

The disciples are going to see that happen to their Lord. They will see Jesus be bound up, falsely accused, mocked, scourged.
They will see the innocent, righteous man bleeding for them, then being spat upon and publicly humiliated.
the Lord Jesus Christ, as someone put it, the one on whom their souls hope, the one who their hearts love, the one who is the very life of their souls.
His gracious presence is the only source of life to disciples. What this means is as they watch Jesus be carried away to his death, it means death for them.
[15:19] all of their hopes, all of their peace is being crushed. And now Jesus promises and the Spirit reminds them the very thing that caused you the deepest sorrow, the deepest anguish you will feel, that very thing will become the source and the foundation of your joy.

joy. Jesus says, your sorrow will turn into joy.
What is it that becomes joy? It's that very thing, it's the sorrow. And the word there, the verb, to turn into, it means to generate, to give birth, to be made into.
And the tense is passive. Like a mother giving birth, the labor pains, your anguish is intense, but Jesus says that same sorrow, that same source of pain, it will pass quickly.

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Your very suffering will give birth to rejoicing. You don't need to go out and work for this, disciples, this will happen to you. I will work this out in your life.
[16:36] Think of that mother. Many here have gone through this. There's the pain in the back, the changes to the body, the weight in the stomach carrying a child, the fear, the uncertainty.

The Lord Jesus was carrying a weight here. He was carrying a spiritual heaviness. He was marching to suffer. But He did it for the joy set before Him.
Just like a mother joyfully endures all of that in her own body. That's what Jesus was enduring spiritually. He was looking forward to that joy this would produce in His disciples.
There's no other way for them to have joy than for Christ to carry that load for them. The disciples could see this happen before their eyes and the Spirit teaching them what this means.
And for us, looking back on that work of Christ on our behalf, we can sing like the hymn says so well. When Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within, upward I look and see Him there who made an end to all my sin.
[17:52] It's because the sinless Savior died. My sinful soul is counted free for God the just has satisfied to look on Him and pardon me.

Praise God for His work. I don't know the details of what each one of you is carrying this morning, but if you picture your sorrow like heavy clay packed inside of a big backpack you're carrying the sorrow around.
The promise that Jesus gives here is that He will turn that sorrow on your back, on your shoulders. He will turn that into joy. It's like that heaviness on your load, He's going to make that very thing become feathery wings.
You're going to soar with Him. He doesn't waste your pain, He transforms it. That's what He's telling them. How does He do this? How do I get that?
How do I get out of this slump and this anguish and sorrow and experience that? It's on our knees with our Bible open. The Holy Spirit ministers the Word of God to us.
[19:06] The thing is, our flesh, our remaining sin in us, we don't want to get on our knees with our Bible open. We usually don't choose that, do we? That's why our very sorrow, the very thing that we hate, that feels like this heavy anguish, that is what puts us on our knees before the Lord.

That's why J.C. Ryle could say, no commentary opens up the Bible so much as sickness and sorrow. Praise God for the sorrow if it drives you down before the cross of Jesus to receive from Him again.
Let your heart rejoice at this promise. He will turn your sorrow into joy. Christ also promises that He will return to reveal the Father.
He promises that He will return to reveal the Father to you. He promises this in verses 22 and 25. Look at 22. Jesus says to the disciples, so also, you have sorrow now, but I will see you again. And your hearts will rejoice and no one can take your joy from you. He says, when you see me, your hearts will rejoice.
[20:23] Why is it that no one can take your joy from you? It's because the source of your joy is Jesus Christ. And no one can take you from Jesus Christ. Look at what He says in verse 25.

He says, the hour is coming when I will tell you plainly about the Father. Disciple, you're going to see Jesus and you will rejoice.
And Jesus says, it doesn't stop with me. Look at my Father. I reveal the love of God Himself to you, disciple. We sing, come behold this wondrous mystery.
It was a mystery to the disciples. They don't understand and Christ sees them trying to figure it out and even when He tells them this, they think they get it, they act like they do, and He says, you're going to be scattered.
It's a wondrous mystery. And if God has opened your eyes to behold the gospel, let that be assurance for you. You would not be able to believe the gospel unless the Holy Spirit had regenerated you.
[21:25] That's the source of your assurance. I see this wondrous mystery of Christ. I can sing like the hymn, come behold the wondrous mystery. See the price of our redemption.

See the Father's plan unfold, bringing many sons to glory, grace unmeasured, love untold. Jesus says, your hearts will rejoice in verse 22.
Your hearts will rejoice. The word rejoice is used, it's to hail someone in greeting. It's at the sight of me, Jesus says.

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Your heart will signal to you to be glad and to delight in me. This promise is not just for the disciples referring to his resurrection along with 500 other witnesses.
They see the risen Christ. They see him in his glorified body. But it doesn't stop with them. You will see Jesus.
[22:25] You will see Jesus. He is coming again. And he will show you the Father. Thomas Aquinas, a great synthesizer of the early church all the way up right before the Reformation.

He said, there is a desire in the human soul to know God. And that desire to know God can only be satisfied by the fullness of the beatific vision.
The beatific vision, it's a theological term for what mere mortals like us will get to experience one day in glory. Not by faith, but by sight to behold God and to see his glory.
That's what Jesus is so excited for his disciples to behold and to know. He knows the glory of his Father. They're going to scatter, but his Father is with him. The Father loves him.
The Father loves those he has given to him. And he can't wait for them to behold the glory of his Father. That's why he took on flesh. This is his mission. One day, don't you look forward to seeing the face of Christ?
[23:40] To seeing God in all of his glory? He promises this will happen. In 1 Corinthians 13, he says, you will see God face to face.

Not just now like through a dim glass. You will see God face to face. face. Psalm 17, verse 15, looks forward to that promise.
I shall be satisfied when I awaken thy likeness. See, I go to bed, but when I awake, I die, my body is buried, but my soul is alive. And I will see thy likeness.
I shall behold thy face in righteousness. Let your heart rejoice rejoice at the promises of Christ. Psalm 147 was put to music, to lyric, and it goes like this. Millions of years my wondering eyes shall o'er thy beauties rove in endless ages I'll adore the glories of thy love.
[24:45] Oh, we long for that day. Christ promises he will return to reveal the Father to you, disciple. Christ promises that the Father himself loves you.

The Father himself loves you. That's what Christ promises to you. Maybe there are some here today that simple truth, you need to not just hear it and understand in your mind for someone else. You need to let your heart rejoice at those words from Jesus. Jesus. In verse 26, look at what he says. In that day you will ask in my name and I do not say that you will ask the Father, that I will ask a Father on your behalf.
Look at what he says in verse 27. The Father himself loves you. The Father himself loves you because you have loved me and believe that I came from God.
Jesus says, I will return for you. I will see you again, disciples. I am the source of your joy and none can take me away from you.
[26:06] From that day on, I will be with you, my people, by the power of the Holy Spirit. You will abide in me and you will be able to approach the Father directly in my name.

No one had ever prayed in Jesus' name, amen, before. But he teaches us to pray directly to his Father. Why? Because the Father himself loves you.
Now you don't do it by your own merits. You pray in the name of Jesus Christ. But he wants you to have full access to the Father for yourself. he wants you to see the Father's love for you.
He wants you to experience the Father's true love for you. The Father himself loves you. If you love me and receive me as a gift from the Father to save you, you can know with assurance that you belong to my Father.
You can pray our Father with me. See how patient the Father is? We sing of his patience.
[27:22] What patience would wait as we constantly roam. What Father so tender is calling us home. He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor.

Our sins, they are many. His mercy is more. more. That's what Christ wants you to know and to trust. It's that same love in which the Father has sent his Son to save you.
That's the love of the Father through Jesus Christ for you who believe today. God will take you back to that scene of the Father walking with his son in Scotland, sending him off to go to mission school. He wrote in his autobiography, unable to say more, my father kept praying for me as I walked. For one final time, we embraced and then I parted.
I ran off as fast as I could and went about to turn a corner in the road where we would lose sight of each other. I looked back one last time and saw him standing there with his head still uncovered

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where I had left him, gazing after me.
[28:41] But my heart was too full and sore to carry me further so I darted into the side of the road and wept for a time. I caught a glimpse of my father climbing the dike and looking out for me.

He did not see me and after he gazed eagerly in my direction for a while he got down and he set his face toward home and began to return, his head still uncovered and his heart I felt for sure still rising in prayers for me.
I'm so moved by that because I believe that's a picture of the loving father and his son Jesus Christ and where is this young man on a mission going?
he's going to the most dangerous people he had ever heard of. Why? Because of the love of God through his father, through him for the world. The father himself loves you.
Let your heart rejoice at Christ's promises. Christ promises that he has overcome the world.
[29:55] Christ promises that he has overcome the world. Look at verse 33, the last verse of our sermon text. Jesus tells the disciples, I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace.

In this world you will have tribulation. Take heart. I have overcome the world. I have overcome the world.
Christ overcame the world through his submission. Christ conquered through sacrifice.
John Calvin's commentary was helpful. He said, you will soon see me, disciples, for my death is not a destruction to separate me from you. My death and resurrection are the necessary passage into the heavenly glory from which my divine power will diffuse itself to you.
This is why you can have peace in this world. Jesus says, now you have tribulation. Do you have tribulation now?
[31:06] It's okay to say amen to that. Soon you will have peace. Jesus promises. Now you have a godly grief.

Do you feel that? soon you have relief. If the Lord causes you to repent today, it's because soon your full salvation will be made real.
2 Corinthians 7.10 says, godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation. And blessed are those who mourn, Jesus preached, for they shall be comforted.
that's how Christ conquered the world. He has overcome the world. The hymn says it so well. He the champion in the battle.
He can say, where, oh death, is now thy sting? In our place he bled and conquered. Crown him Lord of majesty. His shall be the throne forever and we shall heir his people be.
[32:14] Isaiah 33.17 promises, your eyes will behold the king in his beauty and his people will see a land that stretches afar.

Christ promises that he has overcome the world. He is that stone cut not by human hands that has established the kingdom that the mountain rises up and it fills the earth and his kingdom has dominion already from heaven.
One day his dominion, the true kingdom of heaven will descend and will have the new heavens and the new earth. Keep your eyes set on that glorious day. Love for Christ is the fuel of global missions.
That's my purpose in bringing in John Payton. I want to make sure that we understand why we're having a focus next week from one of our missionaries on every tribe, people, and tongue. It's because it's this love for Christ that is the only fuel for global missions.
If you see Christ in his glory, you believe his spiritual kingdom is real now, then you join him in praying for his love and his kingdom to go as far as the eye can imagine.
[33:39] In his autobiography, John Payton reflects on times where their dad would gather the family around by the fire and they would get down and pray. He described his father's discipling him as a young boy that way.

He says, how much my father's prayers impressed on me as a child, I can never explain, nor could any stranger understand. When on his knees and all of us kneeling around him in family worship, he poured out his soul, his whole soul with tears for the conversion of the lost nations of the world to serve Jesus.
And we all felt as if in the presence of the living Savior and learned to know and love Jesus Christ as our divine friend. When we pray for God's kingdom to come and his will to be done, the father is so pleased by that, that his spirit draws you into the very presence of Jesus from his throne and

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praying that his kingdom will go forth till every nation hears.
This is only possible because of this promise. Jesus says, I have overcome the world. Because Jesus overcame the world, his disciples do have peace inside of that tribulation.
salvation. Well, once John Payton got to those islands, it was described as a pagan worship enslaved to really worshiping demons.
[35:18] The locals worshipped and were knowingly enslaved to a, quote, spirit of evil on these islands. They were trapped as a society in a cycle of sacrifice to an invisible world channeled through idols made of stone.

The culture had valued deception and taboos and practiced arson, that's setting things on fire on purpose, witchcraft, tribal wars, which perpetuate the cycle of revenge.
And when they would capture their enemies, they would practice ritual human sacrifice followed by cannibalism. When he got to this island, the Lord's gospel went forth and many believed a church was eventually planted on a neighboring island and that they came back as missionaries to this most violent island.
And as the Lord brought sons and daughters into the kingdom, the persecution against the church got even stronger. John Payton had to say goodbye to one of his early converts.
words, a final goodbye keeps a room in your heart forever. And he would never forget that final goodbye to this first Christian convert who had to give up their life.
[36:41] He wrote in his autobiography that the first martyr was a native who with his dying breath at the hands of these persecutors echoed the words of Jesus Christ himself.

For the sake of Jesus, forgive them for they know not what they are doing. Take not away Lord, thy worship from this dark island.
Because Christ overcame the world, his disciples have peace in the midst of tribulation. Christ promises to you, disciple, he has overcome the world.
Let your heart rejoice at Christ's promises today. Let's pray. From Romans 8.
Oh Lord, we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the spirit, we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
[38:03] 2 Corinthians 5. So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Yes, we are of good courage and we would rather be away from the body. And at home with you, Lord. Yet as long as you have us here, Father, to live as Christ, please come quickly, Lord Jesus, and help us to trust in you, stir our hearts up with hope and a deep rejoicing in the midst of tribulation.
We pray for your glory in our lives, in the life of this church. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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