

John 16:16-24

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[0 : 0 0] Good? Okay, I'm going to read from John 16, 16 through 24. 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'm going to the Father. So they were saying, What does he mean by a little while? We do not know what he's 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 by saying, A little while, and you will not see me. And again, a little while, and 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. 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.

[0 : 5 7] 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. This is the word of the Lord. Heavenly Father, thank you for this word, O Lord.

And as we have seen Jesus tell us throughout the farewell discourse, we know that we need the helper, the spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, to guide us into all the truth that is bound up in Christ, and his revelation to the world.

And so we ask that even right now, Holy Spirit, that you would come like a flood, that you would cleanse our hearts, that you would purify us, renew us, teach us, guide us, comfort us, convict us, change us.

[2 : 0 6] Change us, O Lord, by the power of your word, by the power of your spirit. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Well, good morning, church. My name is Mike, and I'm so glad that all of you have joined us this morning to worship the Lord.

We are in the middle of, well, getting towards the end of the farewell discourse in John's gospel. So we're in John 16. And as you could have told as we read through this passage, it's about joy, right?

The heading is, Your sorrow will turn into joy. And I hope that even as we have spent time worshipping the Lord together, that your sense of joy has increased, being with the people of God.

But I don't know about you, I know that sometimes there is a profound sense of joy on Sunday, and then Monday morning, sometimes it seems to leave. And I want to ask, if you had to describe your dominant disposition, right, like your dominant temperament in life, what would it be?

Or if you had to describe the dominant disposition of the American culture, you know, who we are as a people in America, what is our dominant temperament? What is it? Now, I'm not talking about those fleeting feelings or fleeting emotions that we experience.

[3 : 2 4] I'm talking about our steady state nature, right? Our steady state, the way we are the majority of the time. So are you primarily happy or sad?

Are you primarily carefree or anxious? Are you primarily good-natured or angry or positive or cynical?

Now, what if your answer to that question was joyful? What if that was your answer? What if your answer was, Mike, you know, I certainly do get angry at times.

I get annoyed. I get frustrated. I get depressed sometimes. I'd be a liar if I said I didn't. But most of the time, by God's grace, I am filled with joy. Would any of us even believe you?

Like, is that even possible? For someone's dominant disposition to be joy? Because, you know, I don't know about you, but I live in the real world, you see?

[4 : 24] Not in some magical fairy tale. And the things that I experience in the real world, they don't bring me a lot of joy, right? Like, it doesn't bring me a joy to fail at work in an assignment that I was supposed to do really well at.

It doesn't bring me joy to get my child's poop on me again, you know, for the third time. It doesn't bring me joy to get stuck on the Gold Star Bridge or cut off. It doesn't bring me joy to hear the latest news headlines, rarely, or to get berated by my boss at work or an XO.

You know, it doesn't bring me joy to get into yet another marital argument or to be told no again by my three-year-old, you know. It doesn't bring me joy to face up to the reality of my inability to fight sin or to walk through physical pain and suffering.

That doesn't bring me joy. It doesn't bring me joy when my loved ones are taken from me. And yet, Jesus' words from today's text resound with clarity.

He says, Your hearts will rejoice and no one will take your joy from you. See, into the reality of brokenness and grief and sorrow, Jesus offers this word of hope and promise that there is real and unshakable joy.

[5 : 50] He has secured it for the saints now and forever. And that's our main point for today. Our main point is that Jesus has secured real, because this isn't fake, this is real.

It's real joy. And it's unshakable joy. It can't be taken away from us. It's for the saints. It's for those who believe in Jesus Christ. And it's now and forever.

It's now and forever. Now, throughout Jesus' farewell discourse, the Apostle John, he's been making it quite clear that disciples aren't exactly tracking with Jesus a lot of the time, right?

Like, they're not exactly picking up what he's putting down. They've been dazed. They've been confused by Jesus' words. And on top of that, we've seen over and over again, they're filled with sorrow, right?

And the text for today, it underscores both their confusion and also their sorrow. So, the first section here is the disciples' confusion. The disciples' confusion.

[6 : 48] Now, we pick up, Jesus is talking here. And so, Jesus says these first words. He says, 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. So, they were saying, What does he mean by a little while? We do not know what he is talking about. See, all throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus has been speaking about his future death and resurrection, right?

But the disciples, and the Jews publicly, but everyone has been simply unable to download that data, right? To actually understand what's going on. Now, one of the reasons is Jesus has been speaking cryptically throughout John's Gospel.

Some of the things he says are just cryptic. They're hard to understand. But also, as we've also talked about, the death and resurrection of Christ, the death and resurrection of the Messiah, was totally unexpected.

[7 : 52] It was not the way that the Jews envisioned that the Messiah would actually come to reign, right? And so, there's a few reasons why the disciples don't get it. And then John makes it clear again to us, to the reader, that the disciples don't, in fact, get it, right?

And so, they're like students in school chatting amongst themselves, thinking the teacher doesn't hear or see what's going on, right? Brad, you always see what's going on in the classroom, right? And Jesus is clearly aware.

Not only, I mean, he's God, but I think he probably also just is humanly aware of what's going on in the room. Now, I want you to notice, first of all, the disciples are looking for answers in the wrong place, right?

They're looking for answers amongst themselves. They're too afraid to ask Jesus. And they're looking for spiritual insights, and they're seeking it through earthly means. You ever do that?

They're looking for spiritual insight that Christ can give them.

Only Christ can give them. And they're trying to find it amongst their confused selves, the blind leading the blind there. Now, notice, secondly, the kindness and patience of Christ to bear with them.

[8 : 58] Now, we've seen this all throughout the gospel. We've seen this all throughout the farewell discourse. Because Jesus says next, Jesus says, or it says here, Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, right? So he said to them, is this what you are asking yourselves?

What I meant by saying, a little while, and you will not see me. And again, a little while, and you will see me. Jesus, I mean, we can assume, John doesn't tell us, but I don't think Jesus was rolling his eyes at the disciples.

He's not berating them for their ignorance or for their lack of faith, right? He is kindly and patiently breaking into their questioning amongst themselves. And then he proceeds to give them what they need, right?

John Calvin writes, though sometimes the Lord appears to speak to the deaf, he at length cures the ignorance of his disciples, that his instruction may not be useless.

Now, our duty is to endeavor that our slowness of apprehension, are you ever slow to apprehend? You're slow to learn. I am. I'm not getting any head nods. I am. Maybe some of you are too.

[10 : 03] That our duty is to endeavor that our slowness of apprehension may not be accompanied by either pride or indolence, but that, on the contrary, we show ourselves to be humble and desirous to learn.

Yeah, there's a lot of times I'm slow to learn. And Christ patiently, lovingly, guides us by his spirit into the truth. But before moving into Jesus' actual response here, verses 20 to 24, there's something more going on in this text.

Now, as Megan Parker read earlier, and as I've now read through these verses here, you may have been thinking, wow, this sounds really repetitive, right? And you would absolutely be right.

Like the Apostle John, he says, we'll go back once, one more. The Apostle John here, he says a lot of words that probably could have been condensed into like one sentence, right?

But we got to keep in mind, John is writing this like a few decades after the events happen, right?

He's choosing, under the inspiration of God, of the Holy Spirit, exactly what to include and what not to include in his gospel, right?

[11 : 08] So, even though he could have condensed this down to a single verse, he doesn't. He doesn't, right? The Spirit doesn't. He gives us all of this right here. And the repetition is important.

So you can go to the next slide. Four times in the gospel so far, Jesus has mentioned to both the Jews publicly and the disciples privately, that he will be with them only a little while longer.

And now, four different times, John is repeating that idea right here. So we've seen it in John's gospel four times. John's saying it again four times. And then seven times, seven times.

Underline here, a little while, a little while, a little while, a little while. Seven times right here. So clearly, this phrase is really important to John.

And he wants his readers to notice that. This repetition, according to D.A. Carson, argues that John sees this departure in a little while, in return after a little while, as utterly central to the themes he has been developing in these chapters.

[12 : 10] And this will become clear to us as we consider now how Jesus actually responds to his disciples' questioning and confusion. So part two here of the text is Jesus' response.

And Jesus starts by saying, 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.

That's the first part. Your sorrow will turn into joy. It will give way to joy. Jesus says, Truly, truly, I say to you, and for those that like numbers, this is now the 23rd of 25 times that Jesus uses this phrase in John's Gospel.

And as you recall, Jesus is saying, Amen, amen, or verily, verily. He is emphasizing the importance and the trustworthiness of what he's about to say. And what he's about to say is, You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice.

Now Jesus is connecting this back to the first a little while, right? A little while and you will see me no longer. You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. Something is about to happen, Jesus is saying, that's going to cause you tremendous grief.

[13 : 29] Right? It's going to send you into a tailspin of sorrow. You're going to weep. You're going to lament. And at the very same time while you're weeping, the world is going to rejoice, right?

The world being all of those arrayed against Christ, those in opposition to Christ and their leader, Satan, right? The prince of this world. They're going to rejoice over what's about to happen.

So something is about to happen to Jesus and it's going to look like his apparent defeat, right? It's going to look like Satan's apparent triumph and it's going to overwhelm the disciples with sorrow. But, Jesus says, your sorrow will turn into joy. Now, this connects to the second a little while. Again, a little while and you will see me.

The temporary sorrow of the disciples will give way to a new reality, right? A reality of joy. By implication, the temporary triumph of Satan will give way to a new reality, his defeat, right?

[14:33] The world's rejoicing. It's going to come to a quick and decisive end as the seed of the disciples' sorrow blossoms into a flower of joy. And it's kind of like this, Jesus says.

It's kind of like, verse 21, 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.

Now, since none of you understand this analogy, let me explain birth for you real quick. I'm just kidding. It's kind of nice when Jesus gives us an illustration that needs no explanation. But he's saying here, I don't need to, I'm just going to repeat Jesus.

The pain, the sorrow, the anguish of a woman in childbirth, what happens? It gives way to something greater, right? It gives way to something more profound. A new reality that fills her with joy and that is the birth of her child, right?

Amen. Again, like we have, as a church, we've experienced this about 60 times now and a few more right around the corner. Praise God, right? And to make sure that the disciples understand the use of the analogy, because sometimes they're slow to learn, he reemphasizes exactly what he already told them, but even more explicit terms, verse 22, he says, so also, okay, so just like the woman in childbirth, 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, right?

[16:07] He's saying to the disciples, look, you are that woman in childbirth, right? You're going to be in great pain and in great anguish and in great sorrow when you will see me no longer, right?

When in a little while, you don't see me again. But in a little while, when I see you again, then you're going to be filled with a permanent, with an unshakable joy now and forever, right?

Now, this kind of joy is Christian joy. This is Christian joy, right? See, the world also experiences joy. They do. Like, the world gets joyful about things.

God's common grace and just things fill the world with happiness and joy, but it's fleeting, right? It's fleeting. It's superficial. We experience the same kind of joy.

Fleeting, superficial joy. But Christian joy, Christian joy, I have a definition here, it's lasting, right? Christian joy is soul deep.

[17:05] It's not just superficial. It's soul deep. Happiness and delight in Christ. And it's produced in believers by the Holy Spirit. All right, so in a little while, you won't see me and you're going to be filled with sorrow, right?

And then, a little while later, you're going to see me again and you will be, you know, irreversibly filled with this joy, this unshakable joy. Now, what is Jesus talking about?

We know. Like, we know, of course, we know what Jesus is talking about, right? And in a few days' time, like, it's Friday, right? It's Thursday night going into Friday. On Friday, we know what's about to happen, right?

Now, Jesus is mentioned here, he says, when a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come. Now, we've seen that phrase a lot in the book of John, right?

This is a hint. All throughout John, Jesus has been saying that his hour is coming over and over again. And then, the past few chapters, he's saying that that hour is now.

[18:05] Right? His hour has come. His hour of his passion, which we've seen, right? His suffering. So, Jesus is saying it's the disciples' hour, but he's also hinting to the fact that it's also his hour.

See, in a little while, Jesus will not see the disciples because he's going to his death on the cross, right? Jesus is about to be the victim of unprecedented justice, injustice, right?

He's going to suffer unimaginable pain. He's going to be arrested, right? Falsely accused, mocked, beaten, flogged, crucified, forsaken by his Father.

The Son of God, Son of God, incarnate Word, made flesh, he is going to undergo all of that suffering, right?

He's going to breathe his final breath and then be buried in a tomb, dead. His disciples, they're not going to know what to do. They're going to weep, right?

[19 : 06] They're going to lament. They're going to be filled, overwhelmed with sorrow. Waves of despair, waves of hopelessness will crash over them, right? They're facing the reality of the death of their rabbi, of their Lord, of the one they thought was the Messiah who was going to establish an eternal reign, right?

The Jewish leaders, they're going to applaud themselves. We did it, guys, right? We killed our enemy. The Prince of Darkness himself, right? And his demonic host. They're going to celebrate victory over their greatest enemy as well, right?

God's Son is dead, Satan's going to say, right? Like, what now can man do but bow to my rule? What now has become of God's promises of a Messiah who's going to crush my head?

It's Genesis 3. What now is going to become of those promises of an eternal reign of peace and righteousness and joy? Yeah, but in a little while more, right?

That crucified Savior by the power of the Holy Spirit will rise again from the dead to indestructible life. Amen? To indestructible life.

[20 : 19] Now, we just had Easter. We talked about the resurrection. We get to talk about it again today, right? What Satan took for victory, Christ will then show to be his doom.

This is his sure doom, actually. The disciples' sorrow, though it lasted a little while, three days, it will give way to unshakable joy in the presence of their risen Messiah.

Right? It's an everlasting fountain of joy and it springs forth from the triumph of Christ's resurrection. That's the kind of joy that's going to flow in power through their hearts.

And then it will become clear, right, that Christ's death on the cross, that his resurrection from the dead are the fulfillment of prophetic promises from of old, right?

The New Age. I'm not talking about like 1970s New Age. I mean like the New Age promised in the Bible, right, by the prophets. It will have dawned.

[21 : 21] Future restoration, future redemption, future renewal is now. It's now. So that phrase a little while, right, that phrase a little while.

The promise here of sorrow turning into joy, even the analogy of a woman in childbirth, these are all taken up repeatedly by the Old Testament prophets. Now there's one passage in particular that actually combines all of these into the same passages in Isaiah chapter 26.

And in that prophetic passage we see that the discipline of the Lord upon Israel is compared to a woman in childbirth who writhes and cries out in her pangs, it says.

But it seems that this pain is futile because the people of Israel exclaim, we have given birth to win, right? Like apparently this suffering, this sorrow, it's unproductive. It doesn't yield anything.

But then in Isaiah 26, jarringly, mysteriously, this proclamation is announced. Your dead shall live. Their bodies shall rise.

[22 : 23] You who dwell in the dust awake and sing for joy. For your dew is a dew of light and the earth will give birth to the dead. See, though the people are told to hide yourselves for a little while until the fury has passed by, after that time, the Lord is coming out from his place.

When the Lord comes forth, he does so to bring victory over the enemy and to usher in a new age of redemption and resurrection life. Right?

And this, saints, this is exactly what has happened through Christ's death and resurrection. Right? The new age has dawned and it is an age of real and unshakable joy and it begins now.

It began 2,000 years ago and it continues on forever. Isaiah 35, verse 10 says, As everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.

They shall obtain gladness and joy and sorrow and sign shall flee away. Psalm 16, 11, In your presence, David says, There is fullness of joy.

[23 : 34] It's fullness of joy. Okay, so where do you and I fit into this? Like, what does this mean for us today? First thing it means is joy in spite of sorrows.

Joy in spite of sorrows. So when I read through this text the first few times, I was reading myself into the disciples' situation. Right? Like weeping, lamenting, and hopelessness.

But the reality is, church, the reality is, praise be to God, we will never be in the disciples' situation because we live on the other side of the resurrection of Christ.

Right? And that means that you and I have access to unshakable joy today. Today, in Christ, we can have unshakable joy whatever we are facing.

Right? That means that our dominant disposition can be joy in Christ. Christ. Right? Though we face many sorrows, yet we are filled with his joy.

[24 : 35] This is why Paul says that he is treated as sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Sorrowful yet always rejoicing. This joy, right, this unshakable joy that we have access to that ought to fill the saints and flow out of the saints that also ought to be a witness to the world, is it not?

Right? Like Jesus has said multiple times now, he's talked about our love. Love is the defining mark. We were just singing about it, praying for it, that love in the body of Christ would define the saints and be a witness to the world and so too is this joy.

Right? This joy. Because all those negative things I was mentioning at the beginning, those are the dominant, the dominant dispositions of culture are those things. Right? But we, through the joy in Christ that we have, can be a witness to the world.

Joy in spite of our sorrows. Well, here's the second thing this means for us though. It's joy to smite all sorrows. Joy to smite all sorrows.

See, at the same time, we can relate to the disciples in their grief, right? The grief that the disciples experienced between the cross and the empty tomb, we can relate because we too face all kinds of sorrows, all kinds of afflictions, tribulation.

[25 : 51] Actually, that word anguish, Jesus is going to use that same word again in the next text and it's translated tribulation because we face tribulation, anguish, sorrow in the brokenness of this world.

But in a little while, when Christ returns, right, it might not feel like it, but in a little while, that's how the New Testament talks about it, when Christ returns, those sorrows are going to fully and finally give way, right, to unimaginable, glorious joy in the presence, the physical presence of the Lord and we're going to be raised to new bodies that can actually handle it, right?

Throughout the Old Testament, God's like, no, you can't see me. You're going to die if you see me. I'll show you my backside, right, and declare who I am to you, Moses, but you can't see me. We're going to see him unveiled in glorious joy.

That's going to be joy that smites all of our sorrows that we face today. The Apostle Paul, he preaches this message in Romans 8. Right? When he says the sufferings of this present time are what?

They're not worth comparing. They're not even worth comparing to the glory to be revealed. That's what Paul says in Romans 8. And he employs the same analogy as Jesus.

[27 : 08] He says that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now and like creation, we too, we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

In other words, the sorrows, the afflictions that we face today are light and momentary, he says in 2 Corinthians 4. They don't feel like it. But when you do the comparison to the endless joy, the endless delight that we're going to experience when Christ comes back in a little while, then it will feel like it.

Light and momentary compared to this endless weight of glory. joy, that joy is going to smite all of our sorrows. Joy in spite of sorrows, joy to smite all of our sorrows, and also, there's a third implication here, and it's joy in light of our sorrows.

Joy in light of our sorrows. Now Jesus, here, he could have told the disciples in explicit terms exactly what was going to happen, right?

He could have said, look, when I say in a little while and I'm not going to see you, I mean I'm going to die on the cross, right? You're not going to know why, but I'm going to die on the cross, and then I'm going to rise from the... He didn't do that. And perhaps he didn't because he wanted them to experience a greater depth of sorrow.

[28 : 36] Why would he want that for them? Why? Well, so that when they experience joy, it would be that much higher of a joy having walked through the depths of sorrow and hopelessness, right?

The contrast would be enormous. And God causes us to walk through all kinds of suffering today, does he not?

And he wants us, though, to trust him, to abide in him through the journey, and that leads to a greater experience experience of his resurrection power and his resurrection unshakable joy.

This is the main idea behind Paul Miller's book J-Curve, that in the Christian life, we are continually united to Christ in his death, right?

Through our afflictions, through our sorrows, through the sufferings that we undergo, in order that we might also be united to Christ in his resurrection life and power. J-Curve, right?

[29 : 39] Dying in the suffering, rising with Christ. And Paul demonstrates this in 2 Corinthians 4. He describes the saints as what? As jars of clay.

And my brother Carl has been helping me to see this more over the last few months. Jars of clay, right? Those jars, Paul says, are afflicted. They're perplexed. They're persecuted.

They're struck down, but not destroyed. Struck down, but not destroyed, right? Now what happens when a jar is beaten around, afflicted, perplexed, crushed, or struck down, but not destroyed?

They're cracked, right? There's pieces that go missing from that jar. And that is the means by which the light inside the jar bursts forth. And that's the light of Christ, right? The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ inside that jar, inside of you.

If you're filled with the Holy Spirit, if you believe in Christ, that light is in you. And as you walk through suffering and sorrow, those broken pieces let the light of Christ out.

[30 : 41] And the light that we're talking about today is joy. It's real. It's unshakable joy. And it springs forth because of his resurrection from the dead. It's a joy in spite of sorrows.

Joy to smite all sorrows. Joy in light of sorrows because Christ is risen because he's risen. Because by his resurrection a new age has dawned.

And Jesus, he goes on in the text to talk about what else will result because of the dawning of this new age. So three more realities of the new age. And the first thing he mentions here is knowledge, full knowledge.

He says in verse 23, In that day, in that day, you will ask nothing of me. When the new age has dawned, right, after Jesus' resurrection, the disciples will have no need to ask Jesus questions anymore.

Why? Well, first, the death and resurrection of Christ, it brings clarity. Right? It brings gospel clarity. Right?

[31 : 53] For centuries, the promises that were prophesied by the prophets, the promise of one to crush the head of Satan from Genesis 3, it was a mystery.

How is this going to happen? How is the Messiah going to do all these things? How is redemption going to come? Because I don't know if you've read the Old Testament, but Israel, they weren't it. Like, they kept failing and failing and failing.

I'm in the middle of 2 Kings right now and there's a lot more bad kings than good kings. And God speaks into that and says, but I'm going to be faithful to my covenant. Right? My love will not depart.

But how is this going to happen? Through the death and the resurrection of Christ. Christ's death brought forgiveness of sins that could not come from the law. Right? His death on the cross and then his resurrection from the dead, it proved that he is actually God.

He is the Lamb of God and only God could have paid the punishment. Only God himself could have absorbed the full weight of his own wrath for sin. It brings clarity.

[32 : 54] Like, now we know. Now we get it. We understand how redemption has come to mankind. How it's come to the world. Right? Because that was a big mystery in the Old Testament. There's all these promises of salvation going to the Gentiles.

Right? To non-Jews. But how is that ever going to happen? Well, in Christ. And we're here. Beneficiaries of that promise fulfilled in Jesus. The gospel having gone forth to the world.

Clarity. Clarity. And you have not, if you're here and you have not believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, if you have not put your faith and your trust in Jesus, oh, I beckon you to do that today.

The love of Christ can become yours. Eternal, unshakable joy can become yours today in Christ. So the death and the resurrection brings clarity. Right?

Answering so many of the questions of the saints from the centuries. So many of the disciples' questions. And secondly, we've seen the helper will come. Right? The spirit of truth. He's going to guide the disciples into the truth that is bound up in Christ.

[33 : 59] We talked about that last week. He's going to enable the disciples to understand the fullness of God's self-revelation in Jesus. Full knowledge.

Right? That's a reality of the present age, the new age that has dawned. Secondly, full access. Let's look at verse 23. And that day you will ask nothing of me.

Then Jesus says, 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.

Right? When the new age has dawned, after the resurrection, the disciples will have unhindered access to the Father. Right? The veil of the temple is ripped in two.

Access to the Holy of Holies, access to God the Father is now possible for the saints. Why? Because of the work of Christ. Because of the redemptive work that he's done, his death, his resurrection, he makes the disciples into his friends, into his brothers who now have access to the Father, the same access that he does.

[35 : 16] The same access that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has is the access that you and I have in Christ. So this means that when we pray prayers in Jesus' name, we will receive the thing asked.

Right? Now, this is now the fourth time that Jesus has given us this promise. It's like, do you get it? Nope. Do you get it? Nope. Do you get it? Nope. You still don't get it, but you're going to be dwelling on these promises for decades to come.

Disciples were and understanding the mysteries that were going on here and we've been delving into them. Right? Jesus is, he's holding out the promise of answered prayer to his disciples and he wants them to get it.

That's why he says it four times. He wants them to get this. Now, we've learned that to pray in Jesus' name, it's like, as Dave Moynihan said, it's like invoking the power of attorney.

Right? It's availing ourselves of Christ's divine access before the Father. Now, if we're going to do that, we've also talked about we have to pray consistent with the character and concerns of Christ.

[36 : 22] Right? You can't invoke his name and then pray something that's totally contrary to what he wants. Doesn't make any sense. Consistent with his character, his nature, right? His concerns, his will.

As Carl says, we've got to pray in God's wheelhouse, like things the Lord actually wants. He wants his disciples to get this. So I want to ask, what kinds of prayers are you praying?

When you gather your family in family worship, what kinds of prayers are you teaching your children to pray? What kinds of prayers do we pray in community group when we gather together?

What kinds of prayers do we pray here on Sunday morning? Like we need to be evaluating this.

And has the answer to those questions that I just asked, has that changed at all over the last few months? Like I hope so.

I hope so. Are your prayers in Jesus' name? Are they in God's wheelhouse? Are they consistent with the character and the concerns of Christ?

[37 : 24] Or, are they consistent with your own fleshly desires, your own wants? That don't align with what God actually wants.

Now what this doesn't mean, I need you all to hear this, what this doesn't mean is that we need to assess every petition before bringing it to the Father. That's not what this means.

Right? This means we need to assess every petition that we bring to the Father. You see the difference there? Right? It's like your children, when they run to you, you don't want them to be scared to ask what's on their heart, you want them to say it.

But they don't always ask for things that are actually good for them. Right? So you teach them. There's an instructive moment there. When your kids ask for something that's not actually good, you have the opportunity to teach, to instruct, to guide, to lead them into a more mature understanding.

That's what the Father wants to do with us. Right? So like children in childlike faith, right, in humility, bring your requests, bring yourself as you are, to the Father.

[38 : 27] That's what he wants. He wants you as you are to come before him. But then, there has to be humility and recognition that what you bring before the Father might not actually be the best thing.

It might actually be tainted with your own selfishness, right? Your own pride. And he wants to do that work with you, with us, and help us to see, okay, that might not have been according to his will. Well, let's change that prayer request a little bit. Maybe that's more consistent with his will. The promise here is when our desires do take on the shape of his desires and we pray accordingly, we will see his hand at work in answer to those prayers.

We'll see his hand at work. Church, we've got to believe this and ask the Lord to help us to believe this and just put it into practice. Like, he's going to grow us in this as we do it.

In this dynamic at work in the lives of his saints, it leads to the final thing, full joy. Right? Jesus brings us back full circle because he says, ask and you will receive that your joy may be full.

[39 : 39] His desire for us is that we would be a people filled with joy. Joy. He actually wants that for us.

He wants us to be marked by love, by joy. Right? And God's people, the saints, have always been a people marked by joy. Right? Just read through the book of the Psalms.

Right? Read through the Psalms. I've circled and read the word joy all over it and as I flip through the Psalms, it's everywhere. Right? God's people are people who rejoice because we have a reason to rejoice.

The redemption of our God. But now, in the dawning of the new age, right? Following the death and the resurrection of Christ, a new quality, a new fullness of joy is possible in the saints.

See, John Calvin writes, By this he means that nothing will be wanting which could contribute to a perfect abundance of all blessings, to the accomplishment of our desires, and to calm satisfaction provided that we ask from God in his name whatever we need.

[40 : 44] God. Jesus is connecting here in chapter 16. He's connecting the themes of the previous chapter. Chapter 15, the vine and the branches, right? That as we abide in Christ, in his love, in his word, sharing in the divine life of God, walking in obedience to him, and praying according to his will, God will bear fruit.

Right? He'll bear fruit in us, through us, resulting in fullness of joy. Fullness of joy. So saints, fullness of joy, unshakable joy.

It is ours for the taking. It's ours. I was just, I was reading the book Gentle and Lowly by Dane Ortlund. Fantastic book. But he uses this illustration of a vent.

Now none of us have central air around here. Some of you do. But if you have central air in the past, right, the vents are running, well I guess we have them right here, they're running with air. But the vents closed, there might be warm air, right, in the winter, but you're not going to get any of it because the vents closed, right?

We've got to open the vents. Like Jesus has joy for us, a fountain of joy, everlasting joy. And he's showing us the way that we get it, right, through faith in him, his death, his resurrection, by going to the Lord in prayer, by praying according to his will and then seeing answers to that prayer.

[42 : 10] Fullness of joy results. We have access to this joy. It's ours for the taking. I want to close by just considering one final question that we touched on earlier.

And that's this. Did Jesus actually answer the disciples' question? Do you remember what their question even was at this point?

They said, 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. Did he answer that question? He answers their question eventually, right, by dying and rising again, by ascending to the Father and pouring out his spirit.

But right here, right, right here, hours before his death, the disciples, anxious, confused, sorrowful, Jesus doesn't really answer their question. But there are other questions.

One of the disciples were probably asking deep down in their hearts that they wouldn't possibly verbalize to Jesus that Jesus does answer. Jesus, can we trust that whatever is about to happen, God is still in control?

[43 : 26] Can we trust that you are still the Messiah and the Lord who was to come? Can we trust that? Jesus, can we trust that God still intends good for us?

Can we trust that his heart towards us is still one of steadfast love and faithfulness? And to those questions, Jesus provides a really clear answer, right, to those disciples then, to us today, whatever we're facing, yes.

Yes. you can trust that God is supremely in control, right? You can trust that I am the promised Messiah and Lord.

You can trust that God the Father intends good for you. You can trust that. You can trust that, yes, he still flows with steadfast love and with faithfulness towards you, towards the saints.

You may not have a clue what's ahead, but I do. That's what Jesus is saying. I do and there is real and unshakable joy to come and church for us on this side of the resurrection, right?

[44 : 40] Christ's indestructible life is the proof that he has in fact secured real and unshakable joy for us now and forevermore. 1 Peter 1, 8-9, Sarah used this phrase in her testimony.

Though you have not seen him, you love him. And though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Church, even in a broken world filled with all kinds of grief and sorrow, even still, our dominant disposition can be, can be one of joy, right?

Of real, actual, unshakable joy. Why? Because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins but just a little while later and behold, he rose from the dead.

Please pray with me. Let's pray.