

John 16:25-33

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[0:00] Amen. This morning's scripture verse is going to be John 16, 25-33.

! The title is going to be I Have Overcome the World.! 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 plenty about the Father.

In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not 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 God.

I came from the Father and 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 and 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?

[1:06] 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.

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. This is the word of the Lord.

All right. Good morning, church. Let's open in prayer before talking about this text here.

Lord, we come before you today, aside from your spirit, unable to understand this text for what it should mean to us, Lord.

Aside from your Son, we do not have the ability to go to you, Father, for help today.

[2:09] Lord Jesus, would you be magnified in this passage? One name holds weight above them all.

Lord, as we sang already today, lift up our eyes and see the King has come. Lord, would your spirit do that today? Would your spirit lift up our eyes, open the eyes of our heart, Lord, so that we could see the King has come already for us.

We pray that the reading of your word, the discussion after this sermon, Lord, would all glorify your name. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Good morning, church. My name's Brad. I'm excited to be here this morning. Catherine, my wife, asked my daughter, Liza, what I should tell the church today, and she said I should say hi.

So, hi. And that I should tell you about Zacchaeus. I won't be doing that part. But it's a great story, so check it out. So, we are going to be diving into this text today.

[3:22] And yeah, it's the last thing that Jesus has said to his disciples. So, have you ever spent time with someone and when they are getting ready to go, they leave you with something?

Has that ever happened to someone? A couple examples I've heard recently is a friend came over to dinner and left food. You get the leftovers for lunch tomorrow. That's pretty sweet, right? A Navy buddy moves away and leaves you with a second smoker so that you can smoke twice as much meat.

I'm not referencing anyone specific here. Maybe it's more serious. Maybe a loved one has passed away and leaves you something in their will. Many people will plan for the end of a visit, but how many people go somewhere with their main intention being the leaving, with the end being the main focus, the biggest part?

Usually, when a visit is over, we see the most significant part of a visit as being over. Today, we are in the Upper Room Discourse where Jesus has been preparing his disciples for his departure.

So, I'm going to give us a little bit of context here. Nice clickers. Working. This is great. All right. [4:34] So, the Upper Room Summary. And we skipped a slide and won't go back, but the title of the sermon is Jesus Leaves. Pretty easy. So, what has happened so far? Jesus has said a lot of things.

He's gone back and forth. It seems like he's almost changed topics a couple times. He said he's going somewhere and he's told his disciples they can't follow. He has mentioned multiple times he wants to comfort them.

He wants to prepare them. Jesus has told them he wants the disciples to ask confidently for things amidst all this stuff that's going to happen.

And he has told them in various ways that there will be trouble, there will be sorrow. He has said the world will hate them. He said you will weep and you will lament.

And then multiple times he has mentioned something magnificent here that the Father will send a helper. One of my favorite lines from this whole Uproom discourse is he says it is to your advantage that I go away which is still kind of mind-boggling.

[5:38] The physical Jesus is in front of them and he says it's to your advantage I leave. I would probably disagree with him even right now. I'd be like no, like please not now, right? And he will teach you all things.

Some really, really big claims. There is no doubt about the swelling of emotion in the room. Jesus is going away and the disciples can't follow.

They're going to endure difficulty and hatred and Jesus has announced among his closest friends already that he's going to be betrayed. He's mentioned that he's going to be denied and today he tells all of the disciples in the room that they will all abandon him.

As we have already mentioned though all of this terrible forewarning has been surrounded by comforting words and powerful promises like the helper who will come and the advantage they will have.

Whatever they ask in Jesus' name he will do. This is obviously an incomplete summary but I hope it highlights the wide range of information and emotion the disciples may be trying to process.

[6:44] In last week's passage that Mike preached on we saw Jesus is aware and sensitive to his disciples' feelings. The disciples asked what does he mean by a little while?

We do not know what he is talking about. Jesus addressed their emotions instead of the question about time. He said he will leave but also return they will be sorrowful but their sorrow will turn to imperishable joy.

Amidst the disciples' emotions and unclarity Jesus is going to end the upper room discourse with life changing promises. So I've broken down today's passage into three chunks.

Jesus leaves us a position. Jesus leaves us with a process. And Jesus leaves us with his peace and power.

my prayer for us today is that the truth in this passage and the words of Christ would continue to comfort and strengthen us. The disciples would soon understand what Jesus meant in this passage and would have a huge impact on the way they live their lives.

[7:59] I hope the same thing for us that the helper would show us what Jesus was saying plainly and impact how we live for God. So this is the first chunk we'll tackle today.

I'll reread it for us. Jesus says, 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 do not say 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 God.

I came from the Father and have come into the world and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father. So Jesus has spoken in a way that the disciples cannot fully understand yet.

He also wants them to know that a time is coming when he speaks to them plainly and the communication and relationship with God will be clear and intimate.

[9:06] They will know more about God but also know God personally. He also wants the disciples to understand that their relationship to God will be vastly different than what they are used to.

The disciples have been encouraged many times in this passage to ask God for anything in Jesus' name. But their relationship to God is going to be closer than they can imagine.

Asking things in Jesus' name is not just asking God or asking Jesus to ask God for them. They will have direct access to God and be fully accepted by him.

There will be no final steps to God. Jesus is pointing to his ultimate purpose in coming to the world. But how will this be accomplished? Jesus says, I came from the Father and have come into the world.

And now I am leaving the world and going to the Father. When I first read this, I did not think much about this phrase. I thought that's a great summary of everything Jesus did just in one sentence.

[10:17] But this is actually a massive, massive statement. In this statement, he is announcing himself as one with God from eternity.

Choosing to come to earth as a man and returning to glory having accomplished his work of revealing God and redeeming man. Jesus secured the disciples' relationship to God by coming to earth and returning to the Father.

So for the disciples, what does this mean? For a group of men who may be feeling confused, this means there will be clarity. For a group of friends who may be feeling left behind, it means it is for the sake of ultimate connection to God.

And for Jesus, the one leaving, this means that he is in complete control of whatever is about to happen. He already knows his destination.

And for believers today, there are three truths to feast on in this part of the passage. church. The first thing is, for us, the hour of plain communication from Jesus is right now.

[11:32] When Jesus returned to the Father, he sent his Holy Spirit. We have the helper to teach us all things in the spirit of truth to guide us into all truth.

We have the opportunity to plainly understand magnificent, eternal truth. not only do we have clear communication, but it is direct and personal.

The relationship we have with God is complete. Jesus knew that when he died, the veil would be torn in the temple, signifying our direct access and perfect acceptance by the Father.

We can struggle to really understand this, just like the disciples. But the more we understand this, the more we will turn to God in all circumstances of life. The words of Psalm 17 came to mind for me when I thought about this, where it says, I will call upon you, for you will answer me, O God. Incline your ear to me, hear my words, wondrously show your steadfast love, O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand.

[12:43] And lastly, this clear, direct, loving relationship we have with God has been made secure by Jesus. Our communion with God is eternally, unshakably secure.

Jesus came and completed his mission. He has made a way to have fellowship with God, so our only task is to claim our position in him. If we are in Christ, our relationship with God is unshakable. Jesus returned to the Father on our behalf so we could also be with the Father forever. Hebrews 6, a powerful passage, says, for when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself.

And a few verses later, we have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf.

I do want to be clear at this part of the sermon that these promises are for believers. Jesus is talking to a group of his followers.

[13:51] If you have not accepted Jesus as your Savior, then you are not in him, and these promises can't apply to you. The good news is Jesus did come to earth, and he did die on a cross, was buried, and rose again three days later, so that anybody who repents of their sin and believes in him can have this gift.

Jesus took the righteous punishment for sinners on the cross. Jesus was separated from his Father so that we do not have to be. He did this and then rose from the dead to show his final victory over death and ability to save you too.

Jesus offers you this eternal security today. If you want to talk more about this after the service, I will be up here. Andrew was up here, one of the elders, there's other elders here, people that would

love to continue that conversation with you, so don't leave today without starting that conversation. So that's our first point. We're going to move on to point two, which is Jesus leaves us with a process.

Jesus leaves us with a process. The next set of verses say, his disciples said, and I love how Josh pronounced this in his reading, ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech. [15:13] Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you. This is why we believe you came from God. So the disciples' response shows several things. They thought they fully understood what Jesus had said.

They believed Jesus because they knew he knew all things, and they believed he came from God. all of these are true, yet incomplete.

They thought they fully understood what Jesus said. In a way they did. They understood what Jesus intended them to understand at this point. The disciples did not misunderstand Jesus.

They did not, just did not completely understand Jesus. Jesus will give them direct access to the Father in an unhindered connection by the Holy Spirit.

They do understand Jesus, but they will understand him even more very soon. Secondly, they believed Jesus because he knew all things.

[16:14] So to break this down, they did believe Jesus, but they based this on their personal assessment of him knowing all things. This isn't wrong as much as it's incomplete.

When Jesus rises from the dead, he is going to be providing the ultimate power and reason to be trusted. The disciples' faith is going to be grounded in a whole new way.

One commentator wrote that the disciples came to the right conclusion, but their reasoning reveals immature faith. They do believe Jesus, but they will continue to grow in their faith.

And then thirdly, they believed he came from God. How is this incomplete? Jesus told them he came from the Father, and that he is returning.

So they left out the most important part, the end of the story. I think this more reveals what they are focused on. Jesus in front of them right now.

[17:21] But remember, Jesus is preparing them for what's next. After this conversation, Jesus is going to begin his last steps to returning to the Father in glory. But it won't appear like that.

Jesus is going to be arrested. Jesus is going to be put on trial. He's going to be murdered and put in a tomb. The disciples will continue to understand what is happening until Jesus rises from the dead. Jesus' final acts on earth were crucial to the disciples' understanding of who he was and what he came to accomplish. So the disciples did believe that Jesus came from God, but they did not yet know the full significance of him going back to the Father.

I think this is the human reaction many times to Jesus. Jesus is trying to draw our gaze to the big picture, to God and his will for our lives.

We have the Holy Spirit and all of God's word to inform our lives, but we still get stuck right here in the moment. We took Liza to the beach a couple weeks ago when the weather was really nice and she loves the beach, she loves the sand to throw rocks in the water.

[18:33] So we pull up, we get out of the car, and she's old enough to walk, so I'm like, all right, Liza, let's go to the beach, and I notice she's not bolting for the beach, right? She'd be like, oh, hold your horses, little girl, you know? Instead, she's playing with parking lot sand.

Trash, broken bottles, can. She's playing with parking lot sand, that's our reaction, right? Jesus is trying to pull us to this ultimate bigger picture, the best thing, right?

The reason for our existence, the reason we're going to the beach, and we just get caught up, parking lot sand right here. That's us. Our understanding of life is only as complete as we understand it in light of God's truth.

life. This part of our passage shows that knowing God is a process. The disciples were the closest people to Jesus, and yet sometimes it seemed like they understood so little.

Jesus has told them so many things in this conversation alone that they do not fully understand. But as the next few days and weeks unfold, Jesus is going to show them what he had been talking

about.

[19:45] They will experience these promises. Their faith will be put into practice. They will understand what Jesus meant by, it's to your advantage that I go away.

Greater works will you do, and because I live, you also will live. I think there's an encouragement and a warning that we can pull out of this part of the passage.

The encouragement goes like this, it is incredible that God wants us to know him. It is amazing that the eternal God desires for finite creatures to begin to know him, and that he wants to continue revealing himself to us in new ways.

We don't get like the God light or the diet God, right? He wants to continue to reveal his whole self to us. That's wild. I think the warning goes like this, because our God is matchless in glory, we ought to take heed if our relationship begins to feel stale.

The Christian life does have dry and difficult seasons, so I am not calling for feelings to be the main indicator of spiritual health. But we should be wary of growing callous to the things of God.

[21:10] have we been in awe of God recently? Have we sought him like the treasure he is?

Or like it says in Ephesians 1, have we marveled at the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe?

Isaiah 66 2 says, but this is the one to whom I will look. He who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

If we know God is amazing, then it would make sense that we are regularly amazed. let's look at the next few verses to see how Jesus responds to these disciples excited ah moment.

31, verse 31, Jesus answered them, do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone.

[22:26] Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. 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. These last three verses in the upper room discourse are Jesus' last words to his disciples according to John before he prays and goes to the garden.

His response to the disciples, do you believe? Do you now believe? This question is not fully rebuke, but not fully affirmation. Jesus is recognizing their current belief while also leaving room for the disciples to see that there is much more to know.

Jesus continues, Behold, the hour is coming, indeed, has come when you will be scattered. This is a contrast. Yes, the hour has come, but it's not the hour of speaking plainly.

Right now is the time when the disciples will abandon Jesus upon his arrest. What a blow to their confidence. At this point in the upper room discourse, Jesus has predicted he will be betrayed.

[23:43] He has predicted Peter's denial, and now finally, he says at any minute, he will be abandoned by all his disciples. Every disciple must feel the weight of these words.

And this is what Jesus addresses in these last few sentences. Jesus ends his whole conversation with final promises that are grounded in himself.

I am not alone, for the Father is with me. 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. How can Jesus guarantee the disciples access to God?

How can Jesus preserve short-sighted followers through tribulation? Notice the tense. The disciples will abandon Jesus, but he is not alone.

[24:54] The Father is with him. The disciples will be troubled. Jesus says they may have peace in him. In the world, the disciples will have tribulation and struggle.

Jesus says to take heart because he has overcome the world. Jesus can give the disciples peace and power because he has already it.

Jesus knows their failure, sorrow, struggle, but he has already planned to preserve and protect them. Jesus has already overcome the world.

This made me think of the beginning of the book of John where it starts by saying, the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God.

He was in the beginning with God and all things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life and in the life was the light of men.

[26:00] The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. There has never been a dark moment in this world that was not subject to the power of the light.

When Jesus went to the cross he had already told the disciples I have overcome the world. Imagine how differently the disciples would have acted if they fully understood even just this last phrase I have overcome the world.

Then again don't we do the same thing? Don't we struggle in the same way? Even though we know so much more than the disciples we struggle to act on our beliefs.

there are two ways in particular that I think we struggle to obey and believe take heart I have overcome the world. Both of our struggles stem out of believing or acting like man is bigger than God.

One of these ways is we seek our own victory. We try to overcome difficult things by our own power and to our own versions of success.

[27:13] Thank goodness Jesus did not ask the disciples for advice. Too often we look for our version of winning instead of looking for God's will.

God's will can be as obvious as sharing the gospel or as subtle as trying to love others well. But the tension in both of these situations arises from following Jesus while being in the world.

If we believe Jesus already won the ultimate victory we can have peace and confidence knowing that the final outcome has already been accomplished.

This can turn our efforts into joyful worship not anxious work. As long as we are in the world we are walking the path of Christ who was humble to the point of the cross he was inconvenienced exhausted served and ultimately died for the sake of others.

Does that sound like victory? This is the path to real victory. When our view of our power in circumstances is more important than Christ's there is another struggle that arises.

[28:35] If we struggle to fully realize that Jesus has already won we may find ourselves throwing in the towel. Life's difficulties may feel like a slog complaining!

Rolling our eyes! Throwing our hands in the air! What's the point? You could call this defeatism or cynicism. These are my personal struggles.

living like this is living like Jesus never won. This is living like we don't have direct access to the almighty God.

This is ignoring the fact that we have the Holy Spirit in Christ who we cannot lose. Christ's victory means that every effort made in his name will accomplish exactly what Jesus wanted it to.

I do not want to ignore the fact that life does bring very difficult circumstances. Life has genuine sorrow and genuine struggle.

[29:44] So I'm not trying to tell you that Jesus is saying get it together and feel better. He won. See? Rather this whole upper room discourse has been an encouragement.

Jesus wants you to cling to him because he's the only one who can provide. Jesus knows you. Jesus hears you.

Jesus knows what you are going through. And he has made a way for you. He will not leave you. Jesus tells us to take heart and to have peace.

He wants us to have everything we need in him because in him our future is sure. This changes how we engage with difficulty of any kind.

No matter our circumstances, no matter the difficulty or distraction, we know that abiding in Christ is the best thing we can do in our circumstances because Christ alone guarantees our peace in the circumstances and victory in the outcome.

[30:56] this changes how we engage in tribulation. We engage like we already won. This changes why we do it.

We struggle to obey God instead of winning personal goals. This changes who we work for, not ourselves, but for God and his glory.

Jesus came to leave.

By coming to earth and leaving victoriously, Jesus demonstrated his ultimate power to leave us in a position or relationship with God.

To leave us a process we can continue to grow in personal knowledge of him and to leave us his peace and his power. My prayer for us today is that this would have an effect on how we view our current circumstances in this world.

[32:02] My hope is that if you have been struggling and feeling discouraged with your circumstances that this would remind you of our hope in Christ. He has secured your relationship with God who loves you and desires you to know a renewed purpose and perspective in this passage.

For those of us who may not feel engaged in such weighty circumstances right now, I hope this passage calls you to embody Christ to believers around you.

We can join others in their low and dark places and go with them to the Father and point them to Jesus who has already won.

I pray that we would all take heart because Jesus has already overcome the world. Let's close in prayer. Lord, the task of sending your son to secure our relationship was undoable by anybody.

The position that your son has given us, an unbreakable relationship to you cannot be attained any other way. There are no other ways to go to you except for by your son.

[33:33] Lord, would you humble us today? Would you show us more of yourself to know these truths? Lord, I pray for this congregation of believers.

I pray that your peace and power would manifest itself in our lives, Lord. Your Holy Spirit can do this, Lord.

You have promised to use us, your people, Lord. I pray that you would give us hearts to follow you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.