

John 16:16

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn again to this section that we read in John chapter 16 from verse 16 to the end. A little while and you will see me no longer, and again a little while and you will see me, and so on.

Now as we know there are many, many blessings in the Christian life, and one of the great blessings is Christian joy. And this section certainly highlights some of that.

It's very interesting that we find the disciples at the end of verse 18 saying, We do not know what he's talking about. And I sometimes look at that verse and you know I'm really glad it's there.

Because there are times that there are things in the Bible that we have to say, Well you know, I just don't understand that. I'm not able to get my head around that.

And so we find the disciples, as Jesus is talking to them, they're saying we do not know what he's talking about. Now of course, for them it was harder than it is for us.

[1 : 1 0] It was harder for them then than it was after Jesus rose from the dead and the Holy Spirit came in power. But anyway, that's what they're saying. And we find that there is a great emphasis here on joy.

Now of course there are times that we don't understand what the Lord is doing in us. We don't understand what the Lord is doing for us. We don't understand what the Lord is doing with us.

And I'm sure every one of us here can identify with that. Because there are times we genuinely don't know what is going on. And that's really what was happening with the disciples. They were bamboozled.

They were confused. And they were really perplexed at this time. And they couldn't understand. It seemed like Jesus is talking in riddles. A little while and you'll see me no longer.

And again a little while. And you'll see me. To them they just couldn't understand that. And we don't blame them because to a certain extent it was very hard for them to understand just exactly what Jesus was saying.

[2 : 2 0] But I think he's talking at two levels. And firstly he's talking in what's going to happen immediately. Exactly that. In a little while you won't see me.

Because Jesus was going to be taken. And he was going to be put on the cross. He was going to die. And he was going to be buried. He was going to be out of their sight and out of everybody's sight.

Nobody in this whole wide world was going to be able to see him. And particularly because even if somebody as we know went to the tomb to see him.

To anoint him. To put spices on him. They couldn't see him because he wasn't there. So what Jesus is saying is absolutely true. In a little while you will see me no longer.

No one will see me. But again in a little while you will see me. Now we know of course that after Jesus rose from the dead. He appeared to the disciples.

[3 : 1 6] And he started appearing regularly. We believe he was going back to the father. And coming back to earth. He was going and coming and going. In that period until his final.

The final ascension. Where he publicly before his disciples. He rose and ascended into heaven. But in that period he was coming back. And he taught them many things.

And their eyes were opened. Their understanding was opened. More and more. They were being able to grasp things. That they couldn't understand before. So at that level it is very true.

That you will see me no longer. And again in a little while you will see me. But while this is immediately for the disciples.

We also know that it is true for the church. Because what Jesus is saying to the disciples. Yes there were some things that were specifically for them. But a lot of what he said was also for us as well.

[4 : 18] And it is true. That for us we will see him. And we see him by faith. But you know while just now we can only see him by faith.

There is going to come a time when we are going to see him. Completely. Totally. Where faith gives way to sight. That is going to be. You know that is going to be some moment. Where we will actually.

Where we will see Jesus. Where we will see him. And we will be with him. And I am sure that every single believer looks forward to that time. Because so often we struggle.

We struggle with faith. Because all the time it is by faith. Some days our faith soars.

Some days we have such a grasp of who Jesus is. Such a grasp of God's purposes for us. Such a grasp of the whole work of salvation.

[5 : 19] Working God. Working everything to this great end. But there are other days we struggle. Not every day are we soaring with eagle's wings.

Some days it is a job. Some days there is a bit of darkness. Some days there are even doubts. Maybe some of you are here today.

Maybe some of you have followed the Lord for a long time. Are actually struggling. With the Christian faith. It is not that you have ceased to be a believer. But right now you are in a place where you are struggling.

Because you can't see Jesus properly. You can't even see God's purposes properly. And Satan is whispering to you. And he is saying. Come on. Do you really believe all this?

You have never seen with your eyes. All these years. All you are doing is believing. Yes my friend.

[6 : 19] That is what we are doing. But you know when these dark moments come. They are difficult. But the Lord does not leave us there. Because he will then rekindle that fire.

Rekindle the vision. So that we see the fire has not gone out. These are dark moments that the Lord's people experience. But you know.

Deep down within us. There is a ministry going on of the Holy Spirit. Reassuring us. Of all that the word says. As being absolutely true. Reassuring us of our identity in Jesus Christ.

Reassuring us of where we are going. And that is why there is our longing. Growing in the heart of the believer. For the day when they will be with Jesus Christ.

But Jesus is showing us. That not everybody. Is going to be rejoicing. With regard to himself. Because he also shows us.

[7 : 18] That it is going to be the very opposite. With regard to the world. That the world in fact. Are actually going to rejoice. When Jesus goes away.

That is what it tells us. You know. When the Jews crucified Jesus. And when they saw his limp body. Taken down from the cross.

And put into the tomb. They were delighted. It is an extraordinary thought. There was a sense of euphoria. Amongst many people. The day that Jesus died.

And they were saying. We have got rid of this man. Because Jesus. Was somebody. We have looked at that. We are not going into it just now. But Jesus was somebody. Who confronted them. And Jesus got under their skin. Jesus was a rebuke to them. And they couldn't take him. They couldn't tolerate him. They were envious of him. They were angry at him.

[8 : 16] And they had to get rid of him. Do you know. It is still the same. There are still so many people today. And they hate the name of Jesus Christ. And so often you say to yourself.

I don't understand that. What has Jesus done to them? Why have they this hatred? Well the bottom line is. The hatred actually is a starting point.

It is not that people become enemies of Jesus. We actually. That is a starting point. Enemies of Jesus. That is why Jesus died for us. He died for us when we were enemies.

In order to make us his friends. But there is still this enmity against Jesus. And that is why.

The empty tomb. Is just one. Is one of the most annoying things to the world. That is why there is so much. Written. There is so much.

[9 : 12] That is said about it. To get rid. And that is why. At the very beginning. Remember how the Jewish leaders. They were actually afraid. It is very interesting.

Jesus' disciples. They were hiding in a locked room. They were dispirited broken men. Jewish leaders said. Hey. We want. We want. We want to put a guard.

Around the tomb. This man said. That he was going to rise from the dead. I find that very interesting. That Jesus' own disciples.

Were so crippled. By the trauma. And crippled by unbelief. That they didn't believe in a resurrection. They didn't. They didn't think of a resurrection. Here's the.

The Jewish leaders. Of course. They were looking at it. Maybe Jesus' disciples. Will come and steal his body. But the fact is. It's an empty grave. It's a risen savior. That's a heartbeat.

[10:06] Of the Christian faith today. And so. That's part of what brings joy. And so. For the Christian. There is joy. And that's what Jesus tells his disciples.

In verse 20. He says. Truly I say to you. You will weep and lament. But the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful. But then he says.

But your sorrow will be turned unto joy. And again he says in verse 22. So also you will have sorrow now. But I'll see you again.

And your hearts will rejoice. And no one will take your joy from you. Now. Joy. Is part. Of the Christian faith.

And I would go as far as to say. If somebody. Is a Christian. And has never. Ever experienced. Christian joy. There's something wrong. Because when a person. Becomes a Christian.

[11:01] It's not something. They just sort of. Decide one day. In name. And say. Well I'm going to become a Christian. To become. When you become a Christian. You become.

A Christian. It's not. In the sense of. I decide one day. Well. This is what I'm going to do. It's what you become. And you become. Because.

Jesus. Has come. Through the Holy Spirit. Into your heart. He's found you. He's come in. Come to live there. And when Jesus. Comes to live there.

He brings. Through the Spirit. Himself. And that is why. The believer. Has to be. Displaying. The fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit. Is developing.

Within. It's manifested. It's showing itself. Within the believer's life. Love. Joy. Peace. Gentleness. All these things. And of these things.

[11:57] That doesn't mean. That every single moment. You live in life. That you will be. Displaying. All these. But. There will be moments. When. We're displaying.

Anything. But. The fruit of the Spirit. But. The predominant. Thrust. Of our life. The main. Way. Our life. Ought to be lived. As one.

Where the fruit. Is being displayed. The fruit of the Spirit. And so part of the fruit of the Spirit. Is joy. And again. We find that.

Jesus himself. When we look in the Bible. That the Bible. Speaks to us. Of his joy. For instance. When you go. Into the book of Proverbs. And you know.

That great chapter. On wisdom. Which we believe. Because wisdom. Is a passion. And we believe. This is a passion. Of Jesus Christ. That it talks so much. There.

[12:52] About. If this is. And we believe. This wisdom. Who is a passion. It talks so much. About. Being with God. In a. In a way of delight.

In a way of rejoicing. You'll find it. Repeated over and over. The delight. The rejoicing. That is there. So we see that. Joy. Is an integral part.

Of heaven. Of who Jesus is. In his relationship. With his father. And in his relationship. With his people. Now. We know.

Of course. That. Jesus. In this world. Was also. A man of sorrows. But he was also. A man of joy. I believe that. Although it doesn't tell us.

Spell it out. Maybe. In. In a lot of. Places. That Jesus. Was. Full of joy. It does show us. That. That. There was joy.

[13:46] Real joy. The gospel. Itself. Is joy. You know what the gospel. Is called. Remember. Good news. And maybe. It's called. Glad tidings.

It's good news. That's what the gospel is. It's. Joyful. Because. When you think about it. Could there ever. There be better news. Than this.

Here we are. By nature. We're all doomed. We're all lost. That's. That's a default. Position. Of everybody. Lost. Banished.

From God. Estranged. God says. I want to deal with that. I want to send. My son. The second person.

Of the Godhead. I want to send. My son. Into this world. To deal with it. Because they can't. Deal with it. Themselves. Everybody. Everybody will be lost. Unless I send. My son. And we know.

[14 : 41] Jesus came. And he. Went to the cross. He took. Our sin. Upon himself. He received. The punishment. Due for us.

All our guilt. All our sin. Everything. Was placed. Upon him. And God says. Now you're free. Now I've.

Lifted the condemnation. Of you. You're no longer lost. I'm taking you home. With me. Can you think of. Any. Better. News. In the whole.

Wide world. Than that. Well I can't. And yet. This is what people. Don't want to hear. This is what people. Try and stop. Others. Proclaiming. And teaching.

Can't you see. Who's behind it all. Satan. Satan. Does not want. From the very dawn. He tried to. Destroy. The glory of God.

[15 : 36] From the very start. He has tried to. Block. The spread. Of the gospel. But this is. The good news. And I. Can you.

If you're here today. As a Christian. Can. Can. Try and imagine. What it must be like. Again. Without Jesus. You know. The older I get. The more futile. And the more empty.

This world appears. Without the Lord. I'm not saying. For one moment. I don't. Of course. I enjoy living. And I enjoy. Many other things. In this world. It's great. But always.

You have this sense of. This sense of belonging. There's a. There's a purpose. In it all. The Lord. Is in it all. If you were to take that.

Out of the equation. And you're just. On your own. No wonder. There's so much. Despair. About. No wonder. So many people. Are. Just trying to block.

[16 : 33] Their existence out. And just trying to. Trying to deal. Trying to cope. See the Lord. He changes. The whole perspective. As we've said before. Takes you on.

To another dimension. Brings a reality. A purpose. Into everything. So Jesus. Is saying. When you come to me. Or when I come into you.

Part. Part of the result. Will be. Joy. Because. I am joy. Within myself. But Jesus. Also shows us. That.

It isn't all joy. That yes. They were going to be sorrowing. But then they would joy. Rejoice. But we see that. Sorrow. And joy. Overlap.

Within the same heart. Within the same life. Some people have this idea. That when a person. Becomes a Christian. Forevermore. It's joy. Joy. Joy. That's. That's. That's. That's a lot. But that's not what the Bible shows.

[17 : 28] That's not even how it was. With Jesus. Yes. Now we've. We've highlighted. That Jesus. Is joy. His. In glory. It was joy.

Joy. He came into this world. We're told. In Hebrews. That this. The saving of his people. Was bringing.

This was the joy. That was set. Before him. Why he endured the cross. So that in. In this world. There was this aspect. Of joy.

In his heart. At what he was doing. Jesus. Was filled. With the spirit. Without measure. Which meant that. He would be full of joy. And yet. He was a man of sorrows.

Because he saw this world's. Sin. And pain. At a level. That you and I can't. His holy. Pure soul. Must have been so hurt.

[18 : 24] So often. As he saw the injustice. And the cruelty. And the bitterness. And the anger. And the hatred. Of this world.

So there was both. Joy. And sorrow. In the heart of. The Lord Jesus Christ. We find Jesus. In fact. In time. See. Remember. Before the garden.

My soul. My soul. He says. Is very sorrowful. Even unto death. So. Jesus goes on. To illustrate. That sorrow and joy.

Can exist together. And. He does so. Using. The illustration. Of a woman. Giving birth. 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.

[19 : 19] You have sorrow now. But I'll see you again. And your hearts will. Rejoice. And so on. Now. I'm obviously. Not an expert. I'm not even.

Going to try. But. It's a very simple. Illustration here. And in the normal. Course of things. I know that sometimes. There is sorrow. Sometimes. And I don't want to go near there.

But people. There's sometimes. There's tragedies. And sorrows. Attached to birth. And. Some people. Have to nourish that. Throughout their life. But. And generally. What happens. When a. When a mother. Is giving birth. Of course. There's intensity. The intense pain. That's attached. To labor. When that baby. Is born. Into this world. That doesn't mean. At that very instant. That. Everything. That the mother. Is absolutely. Free of all pain.

[20 : 13] That everything. Is just. Back to normal. Instantly. That's not. What happens. But. That there is. This great. Sense of. Joy. That.

Just as it says. A baby. Has been born. Into this world. So that the joy. Of the moment. Overcomes. All the pain. And the distress. Doesn't say.

It removes it. But it overcomes it. In that. This. Moment. Is greater. Than what. What has been there. Obviously. Takes a long time.

For a mother. To begin to. To get back. To an armistice. And through. So. So much. In the whole process. And that's really. How it is.

For the believer. It doesn't mean. When a person. When the joy. Of Jesus Christ. Comes into her heart. That that sorrow. Instantly banished. Still part.

[21 : 07] And partial. Of our experience. Here. But that there is. A joy. That is able. To overcome. The sorrow. That joy. That is in. Jesus Christ.

And. The Bible. Is full of that. Paul writing. Remember how he says. There's always. These tensions. In the Christian life. Sorrowful. He said. Yet rejoicing. And.

It might. It sounds. A strange thing. But that's exactly. What it is. And. So we find. That. Jesus. Is saying. This is what's going to come into your heart.

I'm going to give you. A new heart. A new heart. With joy. Remember. I would tell. In Ezekiel. Say. Say. The Lord says. I will take away. Your heart of stone. And give you a heart of flesh.

You know. When a. When a person. Becomes a Christian. That's what's happened. The hardness. That is natural to us. Is broken. The Lord gives us a new heart.

[22 : 06] Takes away the heart of stone. Gives us a heart of flesh. A heart that feels. A heart that's soft. A heart that's tender. A Christian with a heart of stone.

Is a contradiction. There is something. Really. Really. Wrong. You meet. Jesus. It tells us. Was constantly. He was moved. With compassion.

One of the. The things you will often find. Written about Jesus. Because he has this heart. This tender. Heart. Hard. Hearted. Christian. Fool.

Shouldn't be such a thing. Because the Lord says. I'm taking away. Your heart of stone. Giving you. The heart of flesh. But Jesus then says.

About this joy. That nothing. And no one. Will take it away from you. And then very briefly. Just in conclusion. We find that. Jesus is saying.

[23 : 02] To them. In verse 23. In that day. You will ask. Nothing of me. Right. Truly. I say to you. Whatever you ask. Of the father. In my name. He will give it to you. Two different asks there.

The first is. In that day. That is when. That's really. When the Holy Spirit. Comes in power. And my joy. Comes into your heart. You're not going to be. Asking.

In that day. You will ask. Nothing of me. That ask. That means. Inquire. In the last few. Chapters. They've been asking. All the time. Judas.

And Thomas. And Peter. They've all been asking. Where are you going? What's happening? We don't know. Often we're finding. We don't know. What do you mean? In that day.

You're not going to be. Asking me these things. Because it's all going to come. And begin to make sense. You're going to start understanding. And that's exactly what happened.

[23 : 56] Because Peter. Back in. In the upper room. When he was saying. We don't know. Where you're going. We don't know. Where are you going? This is a Peter who.

About 40. 50 days. Just. Well. A short time before. He says. We don't know. It's the same Peter. Who's standing up. Two months.

Less than two months later. And preaching. With an authority. And with a power. About the risen. Jesus Christ. His mind. Has been opened. His heart.

Is full of joy. And thousands. Are converted. And that's what Jesus says. In that day. In that day. You will ask nothing of me. Because your understanding. Will be opened.

But then he goes on to say. Whatever you ask. Of the father. In my name. That is. The ask of petition. Where you're asking. For something. And notice what Jesus says.

[24 : 54] In that day. You shall ask nothing. Truly I say. Whatever you ask. Of the father. In my name. He will give it to you. That's a great qualification. In my name.

You know. We often say. In the name of Jesus. But. When we use that. In our prayer. In the name of Jesus. It means that. We should only ask. For what is in keeping.

With his name. With his righteousness. With his holiness. With his love. With everything. That Jesus is. In other words. We cannot be asking.

For things that are not. In keeping. With who Jesus is. Praying in his name. Means that. Jesus is interceding. On our behalf. Praying in his name.

Means that. He. We're praying. With all the authority. That he has given to. You know. It's an amazing thing. To pray in the name of Jesus. Sometimes we just. Add it on.

[25 : 49] Like it's. Something we add on. No. This is praying. In his name. With all his authority. And he's saying. This is what I want you to do. And then we find.

There's a lot of things. That we could say. But just. As we come to the end. I find this. One of the great. Moments. Of where Jesus is saying. He's talking about. How he's overcome. That last section.

Is termed. I have overcome the world. But you notice. How Jesus. Is saying this. At the end. I have said. These things to you. That in me. You may have peace.

In the world. You shall have tribulation. But take heart. I have overcome. The world. Right. Here's Jesus. At the very threshold. Of darkness. He has to meet.

Satan. In all. Satan's. Malice and anger. Because Jesus said. This is your hour. And the power of darkness. He has to meet. Full on. All the curse.

[26 : 46] And punishment. And anger of God. He hasn't. Yet. Been there. And yet. He's saying. I have overcome. And because. I have overcome.

He said. Be of good cheer. You will as well. In this world. You will have tribulations. Not going to be plain sailing. But he says. I have overcome. Hendrickson.

Who in his commentary. This is the way. He likened it. He said. It's like. You're climbing. I don't know. If it was in the Alps. Or say. One of the. Climbing a mountain. And you've got a. A mountaineer guide.

With you. Man who's gone. This course. And he knows. Knows. Whether it's a Matterhorn. Or whatever. Knows it like the back of his hand. There you are. On this ledge.

It's a really difficult climb. And your guide. Goes up. And this is the most. Difficult part of it. You're left on the ledge. You're all roped. Everything. Is there.

[27 : 40] He goes up. And he goes up. And he goes up. And he fixes himself. On another. Ledge. And secures the rope. And he says to you.

You climb. Now you climb. But you know. The great thing is. Yeah. It might be a difficult climb. But you're safe. Because. Your guide has gone ahead.

He has made the way for you. He has you. In a secure grip. That rope is so strong. That's opposing you fall. It's. Everything is so secure. That you can dangle it.

And then. Be pulled back in. But you're still to do the climb. And in a sense. That is how it is with Jesus. He. Has gone ahead.

He has secured us. On the rock. But we. Have to. Do the climb. But we're safe. Doing it. Nothing. Will ever.

[28 : 36] Cause our doom. So this is it. This is a great news. Of the gospel. So I hope today. That all of us. That we are secure. In Jesus. Yeah.

We've got the climb. To do. But may we look. To the leader. To our captain. To our guide. To our shepherd. To our Lord. Our eyes fixed on him.

And follow him. It's the only. Way to go. Let us pray. Lord our God. We ask to bless us today. We pray that we might have that focus upon yourself.

We know there's many trying to take the focus away. So that we'll look elsewhere. But may our feet be upon the rock. May we follow our Lord and our master. We ask oh Lord to do us good.

Pray to bless the cup of tea. Coffee in the hall after. We ask oh Lord that you will shine on us. Into our hearts with your love. Give us a love for yourself. And a love for one another.

[29 : 35] Draw close to us. May we know and may we bathe Lord in your love. Take away all our sin we pray. In Jesus name. Amen. We're going to conclude singing from.