

Lean in and Listen. Jesus has a Message for You.

Notes week 7

John 16: 16-33

A Message of Hope (part 2)

Jesus wants us to be hope-filled. Not filled with wishful thinking about what we want to happen, but filled with an anticipation that we will receive all that God has promised in His Word. In these last moments with His grieving and confused disciples, Jesus speaks hope into their lives. When life is difficult for us, He speaks hope into our lives as well. We too must remember the hope we have in Christ.

He gives a message of hope concerning four promises

1. The Holy Spirit is coming
2. Sorrow will be turned to joy
3. Prayer is your privilege
4. Peace is yours

Last week we covered the Holy Spirit in John 16:5-15, so this week we will move on to the other three. I will list the Holy Spirit simply for the sake of keeping the outline intact.

- I. The Holy Spirit
  
- II. Sorrow to Joy (John 16:16-22)

Jesus seems to be speaking in a riddle when he tells the disciples He will go away and then he come back. They do not understand what he means. They begin to confer among themselves because they are afraid to ask Jesus anymore questions.

He could mean three things by His words about leaving and returning.

- a. He could be speaking for ascending to the father but coming again in the second coming
- b. He could mean going to the cross, being buried, but rising from the dead and appearing to the disciples.

- c. He could mean ascending to the Father after His resurrection but sending the Holy Spirit to indwell believers.

It seems in light of the verses preceding verse 16, Jesus means His leaving but sending the Holy Spirit. Although He can also mean the second option of dying, rising, and appearing to the disciples before His ascension.

The point however is to assure them they would not live in this sorrowful, confused state for long. Their sorrow would indeed be turned to joy. Jesus gives the illustration of a woman giving birth to a child. It is a painful process! But when the child is born the pain she experiences is transformed into joy. **The very thing that brought the pain, now brings great joy.**

**The pain is not removed or glossed over or even forgotten but it is transformed!**

The disciples would indeed be sad, in fact they would be horrified at Jesus' death and they would be filled with fear. The world would be happy to see Jesus gone—thinking they were rid of Him. But the disciples would not remain in fear and sorrow. Jesus will rise from the dead. They will see Him. Additionally, the Holy Spirit will come after Jesus ascends to Heaven. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. They would recognize the work of the Christ in them! What a joy and a privilege.

When the Lord speaks hope into our lives, He is not promising good circumstances and an easy life. He is our joy. The Holy Spirit living in us does a work, producing fruit in us that is distinguished by joy (Galatians 5:22) Christ in us is our ultimate joy.

Joy is not based on circumstances or happiness. **Joy is an inner contentment only Christ can give.** Joy can be present even in the middle of difficult circumstances—because Christ is at work in us. He is also at work in the difficult circumstances.

Romans 8:28 is not a Band-Aid verse that we can slap over every trial and think it will all turn out OK. The verse is saying God uses all things—even the tough things—to work for good. We do not get to define what is good. Only God does that. He can use anything to bring glory to Himself—to lift up Jesus. And

additionally, He will use it for our good as well. Only God can do that with the junk of life. He does it based on His grace and His love toward us.

Kay Arthur writes, *“Nothing comes into the life of a believer that does not first go through the loving hands of God.”* God is still in control even in the difficulties of life—using it all for His glory and for our good. The hard stuff is not good—it is painful—like the woman giving birth—but the pain is transformed by the grace of God and somehow brings joy.

This is not Pollyanna thinking or looking naively at life through rose colored glasses. This hope we have is based on the Word of God and the character of God for those who trust in Christ.

The question may arise, “But what if life does not get better? What if I die or my loved one dies? Can that bring joy?” Remember, joy is an inner contentment—not happiness. Surely there is sorrow and grief in this temporal world, but for the believer in Christ, even our grief, our pain, and our sorrow will be transformed into joy when we see Jesus face to face. Heaven may be the ultimate end to our suffering—but joy is still the ultimate outcome.

### III. Prayer is a Privilege

This is the third reference to prayer in the course of our study together. Jesus wants us/ them to understand prayer is essential and available. It is not a quick crisis maneuver—but a cultivated relationship and lifestyle.

Verse 23-24 remind us to ask in Jesus name and the Father will listen and answer. Can it possibly that simple? To pray in Jesus name is not a tag at the end of our prayers. **It means we are related to God through Jesus.** We are part of the family—we are His children. We are not begging God to work. We are children who are trusting Him to meet our every need. It is a loving relationship.

But to pray in Jesus names also means **we are representing Jesus.** We are praying for the very things Jesus Himself would pray for. We are praying according to the Word of God and the will of God. We can do this because the Holy Spirit lives

within us, guiding us into all truth, using the Word of God to direct us, and adjust our praying.

Philippians 4: 6-7 are a succinct lesson in praying. Paul is writing the book of Philippians under house arrest in Rome. He is chained 24/7 to a Pretorian guard. He has been in prison in Judea for 4-5 years, finally appealing to Caesar, ship wrecked on the way to Rome, and then arrested when he arrives. His circumstances are awful—and have been for years. YET, when Paul writes Philippians, the over whelming theme is joy. He uses the word *joy, joyful, or rejoice* 20 times in this short little letter to the church at Philippi. He addresses the issue of prayer when things are not going well, when life is hard, when we are anxious.

**Read carefully Philippians 4:6-7. Memorize them and implement them into your life.**

*Be anxious for NOTHING...* right off the bat, we usually miss this. I worry way too much about things I have no control over. Those things make me anxious and fearful. We are admonished to stop worrying and start praying. Three words describe how we are to pray when life is making us anxious,

Prayer

Supplication

Thanksgiving

The word for *prayer* that Paul uses is a general word for prayer that has the connotation of worship. When we pray, we are not to rush into the presence of God and throw our anxious request at him. We are to come into His presence, settle our hearts and worship Him. When we worship first, we begin to see how big and awesome our God is. We understand He can handle anything we are about to bring Him. We are adjusted when we worship!

*Supplication is energetic, specific asking.* We ask! But be careful. Remember we are praying in Jesus name. WE are praying like Jesus would pray. Our requests are adjusted and in line with the Word of God. Certainly, we do not have to pray perfect prayers, using perfect wording, but the heart of our praying needs to be

God-focused and not Me-focused. Only the Holy Spirit can help us get the “me” out of our prayers.

*Thanksgiving.* Hmmmm. Usually we are thankful after the fact, after we see what God has done. But Paul is telling us to be thankful BEFORE we know how God will respond. Our thankfulness is evidence that we have taken our hands off. That we are trusting God’s answer no matter how He chooses to answer. We have surrendered the situation to Him.

When we pray in this way, Paul says the peace of God will stand guard over our hearts and minds. The phrase *stand guard* is a military term (remember Paul is chained to soldiers when he writes these verses). It means *standing guard like a soldier at his post*. God’s peace guards our thinking and our feeling—the very place where worry begins.

Worry for a believer is wrong thinking that leads to wrong feeling. God’s peace is available to stand guard over these areas as we bring our needs to Him in prayer. So, pray. There is great hope in that privilege.

#### IV. Peace (John 16:33)

Jesus concludes with the promise of peace. (Verse 33 is another great verse to memorize)

“In ME” is an important concept. Jesus says we are “In Christ” Jesus is not just with us, or beside us--- He is in us through the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are in Him as well —remember the Russian nesting doll? In Christ, there is peace.

Peace is not the absence of conflict. It is the presence of Christ in the middle of the conflict. George Morrison said, “*Peace is the possession of adequate resources.*” We have everything we need in Christ—therefore we can have peace.

In the world, we will have tribulation. Tribulation is a pressing from the outside. It is not something we have caused or some consequence for our personal sin. The pressing is from a world that hates Jesus and hates us too. We can count on tribulation. But we do not have to be overcome by it.

Jesus says, *cheer up*. He has overcome the world. The word *overcome* is one of my favorite words in Scripture---***nike***. Look familiar? It means victorious. Jesus is victorious. He has overcome sin, death, hell, and the world system. He did it when He died in our place on Calvary. He paid our debt for sin. Then He rose from the dead on the third day, conquering death, having paid our debt forever. He is victorious.

Because we are in Christ, we too are overcomers. We are not just squeaking by—we are overwhelmingly victorious. Not in our own strength but in the power and strength of Christ who lives in us. Romans 8:35-39 practically shouts this truth! Because He is the overcomer, and we are overcomers in Him—we have peace available to us. Peace with God and the peace of God is ours in difficult days of tribulation.

We must choose to live in the peace He offers. It is available. We can choose conflict. We can choose anxiety. We can choose worry. But we do not have to. We have hope in Christ and He gives peace, even in the trials of life. Choose to live in His peace.