

John CH 16:16-33

“From Principle, To Practical, To Positional”

That’s the basic path that’s pursued as ch 16 comes to its conclusion, we have A principle to grasp Vs16-22, the Power that makes the principle practical Vs23-28, and a Peace that is positional Vs29-33. and Ch 16 finishes off what’s commonly called the upper room discourse, the last meeting Jesus ever had with His disciples on the preside of the cross. Of course by this time they’ve long since departed from the upper room and if they’re not *in* the garden they’re approaching it fast. Because in less than a few hours (at most) Jesus will be apprehended there in the garden and the political events (the mock trial and all) leading up to His crucifixion will be set in motion.

As Jesus has been spending these last few minutes with His boys, He’s been seeking to prepare them for the persecution that’s to take place, in vs 18-20 or so of ch 15 He begins to speak of His personal persecution. But then He tells them that what’s happened to Him will happen to them as well, that no servant is above His master, and that if they persecute Him, they’re going to persecute you if you stand to represent Him. The bible says that, “...*all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*” 2 Tim 3:12 At *some* point, in *some* form, if you have a love *for* Jesus, are available *to* Jesus, and desire to be used *by* Jesus, persecution is coming your way, it’s a guarantee of God’s Word. and Jesus said to them, I’m telling you this in advance so that when it comes down the tracks you won’t freak out like some strange thing is taking place that you were never expecting. So that you and I might have the fortitude to follow through in our commitment to Him in the face of even fierce hostility and harassment. If it happened to Him, let’s not think that it won’t happen to us when *we’re representing Him* in the world, they won’t react any differently towards you or me than they did Him, some received, but most rejected.

But thankfully Jesus didn’t leave us to try and deal with these things on our own, because none of us could. He said when I go away I’m going to send the Helper to you, the Holy Spirit. and He’s going to help you, He’ll solidify you in *your* position and convict the world of *theirs*, that is of sin and righteousness and judgment, He’ll be working to show people their need for Me as you share My Word with them. and He’ll guide you into all truth, (and this is the work and witness of the Holy Spirit, to help you, to strengthen and teach you, to reveal the heart of God through the Word of God to *you* and convict the *world* of sin and their need for Jesus Christ) and Jesus began to teach them these things, what the work of the Holy Spirit would be in their midst, giving them tools to discern the work of the Spirit. He’ll teach you to *understand* God’s Word, He won’t speak *contrary* to God’s Word, He won’t lead you in a manner that differs from who Jesus is, and He’ll consistently and purposefully *glorify* Jesus.

This is where we find ourselves in the text today, having been brought up to speed on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and nearer to the Lord’s being taken from them in His arrest. and So once again Jesus tries to prepare them for what’s about to take place in (possibly) a matter of minutes, notice vs 16.

Vs16-18

You ever come across a text and you're reading what the Lord is saying, but you're just not really tracking, you're not understanding what's being said? We all have, but be encouraged you're in good company, so often we think of the disciples as some kind of super human guys. Never confused, always on target, all this spiritual knowledge and insight, but the fact is that they were just like us. and Here we find them in one of those moments of humanity whereby they're confused, not tracking at all with what the Lord is saying, lacking insight into His word.

What encourages me about these types of realistic insights into their lives is the fact that even though they didn't always get it, even though they were afraid sometimes, they were confused sometimes, they would fumble around and miss the point, yet Jesus would use these guys in an incredible way. Which means what? That Jesus can use me, and He can use you to. As a matter of fact the Lord loves to take the most unlikely candidates and put them to work in His kingdom, why? Because the less qualified you and I are, the less likely we'll swell up in pride and take the credit for what He's done, God hates pride. and We've already learned that apart from Jesus we can do nothing of eternal value whatsoever, and the more sober we are regarding that fact, the more God can be glorified through our lives. Of course this premise reminds us of the commonly quoted passage of scripture there in 1st Cor, "*For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God -- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption -- that, as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.'*" 1 Cor 1:26-31

So God chose this fool to share His wisdom, and even in that it's nothing of me, Christ has become for me wisdom from God, it's all about Him, and who He is. How many times have you praised a glass for pouring out water to quench your thirst? More than likely you've never praised and adorned the cups in your cabinets, why? They're just instruments, they're just vessels in the hand that ministers to your needs through them. and That's the way it is with us, now I have plastic cups, mismatching cups, tippy cups and all kinds of various glasses in my cabinet. and They all just sit there unable to do anything, but when placed in my hand everyone of them can quench my thirst, or water plants (if we had any), or whatever. and The point is that it's not about if it's made of crystal, or plastic, any cup properly cleaned can quench an individuals thirst. and The Lord takes us, cleanses us, places us in *His* hand and uses us to quench the thirst that's deep in the soul of every person who dwells on the topside of this earth. If you'll allow the Lord to take you in His hands, you don't have to get it all, you don't have to have all the esoteric insights into the Word. If you'll entrust your life to Him, He'll use it for His glory, and as you just stick by the Lord, He'll teach you what He means in His Word, these guys were just walking with the Lord, He said something, they didn't get it, and so the Lord explained it to them, and He'll do the same thing for you and me.

But one of their primary problems for not understanding is found back in vs 17. Did you see it there? When Jesus began to speak about not seeing Him in a little while (literally), and then seeing Him again because He would go to the Father, what did they do with that? They began to discuss it (notice) *among themselves*, as opposed to what? Taking the matter straight to Jesus, how often I find myself eager to take matters to friends, or perhaps other pastors when I'm confused about something when Jesus is right there the whole time. “*Come now, and let us reason together, ' Says the LORD,*” Isa 1:18 “*Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.*” Ps 50:15 and It's not that there's not safety in the multitude of counsel, but it's that we should take the matter to the Lord Ist, seek out what He has to say 1st, through prayer and the Word. and So often the things that trouble us could be easily remedied and dispelled if we'd only go to the Lord before we went to everyone else.

Now what was Jesus saying here? I have no clue...(Just kidding) Actually there are a couple of schools of thought, either one I believe is sound. One is regarding the ascension and the subsequent reunion that they'll have in Heaven.

So that He's saying, “A little while and you won't see Me because I'm going to the Father, but because I'm going to the Father you will see Me again in a little while.” Meaning as soon as they die physically they'll see Him again.

To me it seems that the context alludes more to simply the fact that in a # of hours He'll be crucified and put to death. Therefore they won't see Him for 3 days, but then they'll see Him again because He will resurrect from the dead to ascend to the Father. So that He's prophesying again here of His death, resurrection and ascension, and He's saying that He'll have to rise again from the dead to ascend to the Father, and because I go to the Father, you'll see in a little while.

Vs19

Draw attention in your bibles to the fact that, “Jesus *knew* that they desired to ask Him.” It's just another insight into His deity, because only God knows what's swimming around in your heart. The bible says, “*O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.*” Ps 139:1-4 The book of Heb tells us, “*And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*” Heb 4:13 and In Rev Ch 2 Jesus said, “*I am He who searches the minds and hearts.*” Rev 2:23

Jesus knows the goings on of the secret things of our heart, and yet so often like these disciples we try and hide things from Him, that perhaps we're ashamed of, or don't want Him to know about us, He knows. It's best to be open and honest before the Lord, about our faults, our frailties, our frustrations and failures, when we're confused or not tracking with what's going on, because He knows already. So go *to* Him, lay it out *before* Him; that He might begin to minister to your heart, maybe minister forgiveness or clarity to the situation that you've been wrestling with. Jesus knew that these guys didn't get what He was talking about, and since they wouldn't come to Him, He went to them, another picture of grace; so He begins to explain it a little further.

Vs20-22

Vs 20 is the principle we need to grasp, and it's His *explanation* of vs 16, vs 21-22 is His *illustration* so that they can grasp the deeper truth by placing it alongside of a simple truth that we can easily apprehend. So in a little while you won't see Me, and you'll weep and you'll lament, but the world will rejoice. and Of course the religious leaders and non-believers were all too happy to get rid of Jesus, but we read throughout the gospels that the disciples mourned and wept as He was taken from them, put to death and laid in a tomb. The people would pass by and wag their heads and mock Him saying things like, "...*save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.*" Matt 27:40 and The hopes of the disciples would be shattered, and even after the resurrection before they'd seen Him, we read where Mary Magdalene, "...*went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept.*" Mark 16:10

But, Jesus said, your sorrow will be turned to joy. and This is the pivoting point, and the principle we need to glean, can you imagine the joy of Easter morning? When they realized the reality of the resurrection and all the implications, and connotations that it carried with it. But here's the principle; the Lord doesn't replace our sorrow *with* joy, He turns our sorrow *into* joy. It's not substitution, it's transformation, it's not *taking away* our sorrow, it's *transforming* our sorrow into joy. The bible says, "*Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.*" Ps 30:5 and Again, "*Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.*" Ps 126:5 and To illustrate His point in how the very object of such pain can become the object of joy, how that which can bring tears of pain, can be transformed into tears of joy, Jesus speaks of the birthing process. and He speaks of the sorrow, and the anguish that takes place in the hour of birth, the pain (physically) that that baby is causing. (This was before the day of the epidural, you understand)

But just as sure as that baby is the object of sorrow and pain, as soon as it's brought forth, as soon as you see the end results of that pain, and what's been accomplished through that pain, it becomes your joy, and you wouldn't trade it for the world. The one and the same object that caused you sorrow, has been transformed into the instrument of your joy. and He says, "That's kinda what it's like for you right now, you're experiencing sorrow, and the pain for you is going get worse because you're going to see Me abused, battered, beaten, and nailed to a cross.

But that which you despise now, the bruising of My flesh, the shedding of My blood, the cross upon which I hang, these things that make for your sorrow, are like birth pains. As soon as I rise from the dead they'll be the very thing that make for your joy and no one will take that away." and As you know all of them that Jesus was talking to, outside of John would die because they refused to be void of the joy of the cross of Jesus Christ and everything that meant to them.

Jesus was saying, "I'm kinda like that baby, and what's about to take place through Me will be painful for you now, but in a few days when I rise again as the 1st born from the dead, that sorrow will be turned into joy." and We spoke a bit about that last week, how death could no more hold Jesus than the womb of a pregnant woman in the hour of birth, it was impossible that death should hold onto Him, and it was inevitable that He should rise again. and Everything that they despised about the breaking of His body, the spilling of His blood, and the altar of the cross by which He would sacrifice Himself, would come to be so endearing to them then. Apart from the breaking of His body, we'd never be whole, apart from the shedding of His blood we'd be lost in our sin, apart from Him laying down His life, we'd be in bondage to death, they don't get that now, but they will then.

The cross will become the central theme of the NT, Paul said, "*For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*" 1 Cor 2:2 and Again, "*For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified,*" 1 Cor 1:22-23 To the Galatians he said, "*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*" Gal 3:1 and "*God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,*" Gal 6:14 So though it's the object of their sorrow now, soon enough it'll be the object of their joy.

Now how does this principle apply to you and me practically? The whole growing to see the divine plan and purpose in the object of our sorrow, how it can cause us to grow, so that we'd never trade it for the world, where the object of sorrow is turned into the object of joy? By plugging into the power of prayer, that's the promise that Jesus gives us here.

Vs23-27

The basic premise here is that if you want understanding, if you need wisdom in your situation, ask the Father and He'll give it to you because He loves you, because you love Jesus Christ and believe in Him, that He came forth *from* the Father and has returned to the Father. James said, "*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*" James 1:5 and Of course he went on to say we need to believe God for it, or we needn't expect it.

But Jesus says here, “Up until this point anytime you’ve been confused about something, or had a need of some kind, you’ve just asked Me, I’ve been right here and taken care of you. But in the day that’s to come (that is the day when He ascends and the Holy Spirit is sent) I won’t be here physically for you to ask, and so ask the Father personally, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. Through Christ we have access to the throne of the Father, and though we’re to approach Him submissively and in humility, Jesus says, “I don’t want you to be afraid of Him, I’m not up there twisting His arm to accommodate your needs, the Father Himself loves you, and wants to be a blessing to you.” For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son.

Jesus is telling us here that the lights come on, and the *situation* can experience *transformation* through the power of prayer. and Vs 26 reminds us of the protocol of prayer, we pray to the Father in Jesus name. “*For through Him (that is Christ) we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*” Eph 2:18 Remember what it means to pray in Jesus name, it’s not just a blank check before God that we endorse with Jesus’ name. But rather it’s placing petitions, supplications, requests, etc before the Father that are equivalent to the nature and character of Christ, to pray in His name, is to pray in His likeness, in a manner that’s true to His person. The bible teaches us that we’re ambassadors of Christ, we represent Him to the world we come to them in His name, now if we’re not coming to them in a manner that’s consistent with His character, then we’re really not being true to His name or coming to them in His name. and It’s like that with prayer, when we come to the Father in a manner that’s true to the character of Christ, and make request that accord with His heart and His person, that type of prayer will move the hand of God, that’s what Jesus is saying.

Vs28

Jesus reassures them of the divine mission, He’s come, accomplished what He was sent here for, and is preparing to return via His death and resurrection. and We see here another claim as to His eternal nature, the fact that He is God in the flesh. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God, He was in the beginning with God and all things were made by Him and with out Him nothing was made that was made.

Vs29-32

“I appreciate the position of your heart boys, but you’re not quite where you think you’re at.” and He references Zech 13:7 here, “*Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered;*” He’s told Peter that *he* would deny Him, but now He tells them that they’re *all* about to forsake Him. But He says, “I won’t be alone, the Father will be with Me.” Isaiah tells us regarding the Lord, “*I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. ‘For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed. He is near who justifies Me; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand together. Who is My adversary? Let him come near Me. Surely the Lord GOD will help Me; Who is he who will condemn Me?’” Isa 50:6-9*

Vs33

This is really quite an amazing statement in the face of what's about to become of Him as the world has its way with Him, and yet through the very means that they seek to destroy Him He will overcome them. Christ would overcome the world, sin and death through the victory of the cross. and This is the peace that's positional, notice the contrast; we have tribulation on the one hand, and peace in the other. Tribulation is related to the statement, "in the world." Peace is related to the statement, "in Me." Jesus Christ is the only environment by which we can experience true peace, peace with God, and peace with man. Rom 5:1 tells us, "...*having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*" Eph 2:14 "*For He Himself is our peace,*" and Paul speaks there of the middle wall of separation and segregation that Christ destroys between man.

Notice something else before we close, as believers Jesus *offers* us peace, but He *promises* us tribulation. As long as we live in this world we're going to have tribulations, now we can experience the peace of God that surpasses understanding in Christ if we'll trust Him for it, He *offers* that to you and to me. But He *promises* trials, hardships, difficulties, adversity, and we spoke about this Wednesday evening. Adversity has this way of ensuring a familiarity with our carpet because it keeps our face in it so much as we're crying out to God in prayer. The bible says, "*We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.*" Acts 14:22 But even in the midst of our frustrations and desperations in this world Jesus says, "Hey, keep the proper perspective, you're in Me, and I've overcome the world."

What does that mean? It means in Christ, we're all overcomers in the trials and tribulations of this world. Now that should give you peace, you're not fighting *for* victory, you're fighting *from* victory and there's a big difference. Few scriptures and we're done. "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*" Rom 8:35-37

In regards to the things of this world that would come against you John said, "*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*" 1 John 4:4 Last one, "*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*" 1 John 5:4-5 So grab hold of the principle, you can grow through the object of your sorrow, that situation can experience transformation through the practical process of the power of prayer, and in that you can rest in the position of peace that is yours in the person of Jesus Christ

If you're here and you feel overcome by the things going on in your life, you've never invited Jesus into your heart, you've never experienced this peace that can be yours in Him, or received His forgiveness from your sin. Then I want to encourage you to consider the work that Jesus has done for you on the cross, that you might look unto Him, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has set down at the right hand of God and offers everlasting life to you today if you'll but accept Him into your life and surrender your life to Him. If you'll lose your life in Christ, He'll give you life everlasting. Talking things like this over with your friends is neat and all, but this is business you need to reason through with Christ alone, and though your sin be like scarlet, if you'll just ask, He'll make you white as snow.