

Turning Sorrow Into Joy

John 16:16-33

In Jesus' farewell discourse to his disciples (John 13-16), he addressed a number of issues. He announced his imminent departure from the earth (13:33; 14:1-6). He urged his followers to obey his commandments (14:12-15; 15:1-11), to love one another (15:12-17), and to beware of the hostility of the world (15:18-27). Afterwards, the disciples were confused and sorrowing about Jesus' teaching. They were afraid.

Rather than leave the disciples with heavy hearts, Jesus explains that their grief will be turned to joy. *Grief turns to joy when we focus on Jesus' promises, present our requests in his name, and understand the depths of the Father's love.* We can experience the joy, love, and peace that God offers.

☐ Jesus can transform our grief into joy (16-24)

- The disciples were confused (16-19)
 - Jesus pointed out that the disciples would not see him after the crucifixion, but would see him again after the resurrection (16).
 - The disciples were confused and kept quizzing each other about what Jesus meant (17-19).
 - Jesus knows the questions we have and even the ones we are afraid to ask.
- Jesus can transform our grief into joy (20-22)
 - Jesus' death would mean sorrow for his followers, but rejoicing for his opponents (20).
 - Jesus used the illustration of a pregnant woman giving birth to explain the process of pain being transformed into joy (21).
 - Jesus applied the illustration to his disciples and said that they would experience great joy after the resurrection (22).
- Prayer can bring us great joy (23-24)
 - Jesus again repeats the instruction to bring our prayer requests to the Father in Jesus' name. The result of answered prayer will be great joy.

☐ **Jesus can move us from tribulation to victory (25-33)**

- We can be confident about the Father's love (25-28)
- Previously Jesus taught cryptically in figures of speech. After the resurrection and ascension, Jesus and the Holy Spirit would help the disciples understand the meaning of what Jesus taught earlier (25).
- The Father will grant our prayer requests because he loves us, and because we loved Jesus and believed his message (26-27).
- Jesus clearly says he is returning to heaven (28).
- We need to believe the truth (29-32)
- The disciples now felt Jesus had clearly answered their questions about where he was going. It helped them to believe Jesus was from God the Father (29-30).
- The events surrounding Jesus' arrest and crucifixion would show that the disciples' faith was still weak. While the disciples would desert him in his hour of testing, Jesus knew that the Father would not desert him (31-32).
- We can experience peace knowing that Jesus is victorious (33)
- While we may experience turmoil because of opposition, we can experience peace because of Jesus' victory on the cross.

☐ **Principles to Practice**

- We can experience the joy, love, and peace that God offers.
- We can experience joy when we present our requests to the Father.
- We can experience God's love when we trust God's promises.
- We can experience peace when we remember that Jesus was victorious.