

Gospel John Chapter 16 -- John Karmelich

1. If you knew for sure you were going to die in a few hours, what would be your parting words to your family and friends?
 - a) What words of wisdom would you want to pass on?
 - b) Now imagine being with Jesus.
 - i) Jesus knew he only had a few hours left.
 - ii) He just spent 3 years teaching His disciples, and is now down to 3 hours.
 - c) When you read Chapter 16, try to see it from that perspective.
 - i) What was the most important things Jesus was trying to convey?
2. I would summarize Chapter 16 as “The final preparation”
 - a) Jesus prepares the disciples for the trials to come.
 - b) Jesus prepares the disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit
 - c) Jesus attempts to comfort the disciples with the promise that there is a purpose for their upcoming trials.
3. With that, let’s go to Chapter 16: “All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.”
 - a) Remember that the chapter numbers were not added until 1,300-1,400 years later.
 - i) So when Jesus says in Verse 1 “All this I have told you so that you will not go astray”, what does Jesus mean by “all this”?
 - a) These are the things mentioned near the end of Chapter 15 and continued in Chapter 16
 - (1) These are the warnings of the coming persecution and promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) That the disciples will be persecuted *because* they are followers of Jesus. This discussion is explained further in these verses.
4. Verse 2: They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. ³ They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴ I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.
 - a) Several lessons back I talked about what it mean to be “put out of the synagogue”.
 - i) This is a very bad thing to someone who is Jewish.
 - a) It means a lot more than being kicked out of the synagogue.
 - b) It meant never being allowed to socialize with your Jewish friends.
 - c) Jewish friends will treat you as if you were dead
 - (1) For those of you familiar with “Fiddler on the Roof”, the youngest daughter was ex-communicated when she married a Christian. Her family treated her as if she was dead.
 - (2) Some cults treat members the same way if they dare leave.
 - (a) The appeal of cults is that they offer a “family”.
 - (b) The threat of losing that family is a difficult choice.
 - ii) What Jesus was doing was preparing them for what lies ahead.
 - a) For those of you who have ever had a major surgery, the worse part is the fear prior to the surgery. Psychologists say that the more you explain the procedure and the risks prior to the surgery, the less nervous the patient will be.
 - b) This is what Jesus is doing here. He is preparing the disciples prior to what is going to happen.

- b) To me, one of the most radical things Jesus says in Verse 2 is a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.
- i) If you think that is strange, you need to learn your history.
 - a) Most of the early Christians were killed by the Romans because they did not believe in their “Roman” gods.
 - b) The Catholic Church has persecuted *millions* of believers as they refused to follow Jesus via the Catholic way of teaching. (This was mostly in the “Dark Ages” (part of the Middle Ages) of the church history .)
 - c) Today, there are millions of Christians who are persecuted for their beliefs. They are killed by those who believe they are offering service to “their” Gods.
 - d) This is all a reminder that we need to *thank* God for our freedom to worship Him and to continually pray for the persecuted Church.
- c) The last part of Verse 4 has an interesting statement by Jesus: “I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.”
- i) Jesus did not tell them about the upcoming persecution *during* the 3 years He was with them. He waited until the last moment to pass this on.
 - a) Jesus *knew* the persecution was going to happen. So why wait?
 - ii) If you re-read the Gospel of John, you will notice that Jesus always “takes the bullets” for the disciples. Whenever you read of the accusations against Jesus or His disciples, Jesus takes the questions head-on himself, and never passes it on to the disciples. Even after Jesus is arrested, he pleads to release the remainder of the disciples.
 - iii) Now that Jesus is leaving, He can no longer “cover” for them.
 - iv) The point is this is how God matures us as believers.
 - a) It is like training a baby to walk. First you hold their hands and help them. Eventually you let go. They fall. You try again.
 - b) When we first become believers, Jesus “holds our hands firmly”. But he wants us to grow and mature as Christians. As we mature, he holds our hands less and less, as he wants us to trust and have faith in Him.
- d) I was thinking this week about “Why *are* we persecuted as Christians?”
- i) I am convinced that *part* of the reason is spiritual warfare. Satan knows that he has a limited time on earth. There are a certain number of believers that form the “Body of Christ” (i.e. all Christians). Only God the Father knows the specific number. When that number is reached, Jesus is coming back and Satan knows his time is through. Therefore, the more Satan can keep people from becoming Christians, the longer his time on earth. (See Romans 11:25)
 - ii) There is also another reason. Jesus is teaching that we are going to become “one” with the Father and Jesus. *If* we are going to identify with the Father, then we *must* become *like* Jesus. This occasionally means suffering so *out of that experience* comes joy. This is discussed further in this chapter.
 - a) In summary, we are persecuted because we are identified with the father.
 - b) Jesus said that if we are going to follow Him, we must take up our cross—not *His* Cross—*our* own cross, and follow Him.
 - c) Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up *his* cross and follow me. (Matthew 16:24, NIV *emphasis added*)

5. Verse 5: "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶ Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. ⁷ But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.
- a) First of all, there appears to be a contradiction. Jesus says here in Chapter 16, Verse 5: "none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'"
 - i) In John 13:36 Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." (NIV)
 - ii) Dr. J. Vernon McGee gave a great response to this point. "It is true that Simon Peter had asked Him where He was going, but Peter had asked the question of a little child. He is saying that none of them has really discerned what is going to take place. None of them has asked intelligently, with spiritual perception."
 - b) Jesus continues to teach his disciples with confidence.
 - i) Not confidence in them, but confidence in the Spirit soon to come.
 - c) Verse 7 says: Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you;
 - i) Why was it necessary for Jesus to go away in order for the Counselor (i.e. The Holy Spirit) to come?
 - a) Because as long as he was with them in person, his work was localized.
 - (1) Jesus could only be in one place at one time on earth.
 - b) In heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the father making intercession for us.
 - (1) Hebrews 7:25 says "Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he *always* lives to *intercede* for them". (NIV *emphasis added*)
 - (2) Since it is Jesus' role to be at the right hand of God making intercession for us, He needs to be next to God, and not on earth.
 - c) Also, the Holy Spirit could not come *prior* to Jesus' resurrection as His primarily role is to convict non-believers of "The Gospel". The Gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. His other primarily role is to teach believers the truth of Jesus. "The church" did not exist prior to Jesus' resurrection.
6. Verse 9: When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; ¹⁰ in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- a) The Holy Spirit does 3 things to non-believers.
 - i) guilt in regard to (1) sin, (2) righteousness, and (3) judgment
 - b) "The word "convict" is a legal term that means to pronounce a judicial verdict by which the guilt of the culprit at the bar of justice is defined and fixed."
 - a) (Source "Expositor's Bible Commentary" - Zondervan Publication)
 - c) The Spirit does not merely accuse men of sin, he brings to them an inescapable sense of guilt so that they realize their shame and helplessness before God. (same source)
 - d) This is how evangelism works. It is not Billy Graham, Greg Laurie or another evangelist doing the work. It is the Holy Spirit convicting them in their hearts.
 - e) Despite the conviction, it is still up to the individual to *make* the commitment.
 - i) God will not violate our free will.
 - ii) If God *forces* us to make a commitment, then it is not free-will. How can you freely love somebody if you are being *forced* to love someone?

- f) But a lot of people ask: Doesn't the Holy Spirit convict us of sin once we're Christians?
- i) Yes, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit does not drive us away from God.
 - ii) It is the condemnation of Satan that makes us ashamed to talk to the father.
 - iii) Satan condemns so you don't pray and don't spend time in the word.
 - a) (Again, Satan's motivation is he doesn't want us to be a good witness!)
- g) Back to the 3 actions of the Holy Spirit. The first was convicting the world of guilt.
- i) The second is one of "righteousness".
 - ii) The word righteousness has a negative connotation today.
 - a) People associate it with being "stuck up" or "conceited"
 - b) Righteousness is actually a good thing.
 - (1) Synonyms are "holiness" or "made-whole".
 - iii) We tend to forget that God is perfect. A perfect God wants perfect standards for our lives. Since we could never live up to that, Jesus paid the price *for us*. But that does not mean God wants us to keep on living the way we used to.
 - iv) The function of the Holy Spirit as indicated by righteousness is that the Holy Spirit *enforces* the absolute standard of God's character, to which all thought and action must be compared.
 - a) God wants to *transform* us. God wants to mature us to be in the image of His Son.
 - b) "God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to *be* sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV)
 - c) "And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him. (2 Corinthians 3:18b The Living Bible)
 - d) Peter understood this too. "Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. (1st Peter 2:16 NIV)
 - e) "He was raised from the dead that you and I might not only have our sins subtracted, but so that we might have His righteousness added." (Jon Curson)
- h) The 3rd action of the Holy Spirit is in regards to judgement.
- i) Jesus teaches we are either His, or of "The World". There is no other category.
 - a) There are two judgements. One for believers and one for non-believers.
 - (1) To the believer Jesus said:
 - (a) "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done." (Revelation 22:12 NIV)
 - (2) To the NON-believer:
 - (3) And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were *judged* according to what they had done as recorded in the books. (Revelation 20:12 NIV)
 - (a) I put *emphasis* on the word "judge". That is what Jesus meant by this verse in John 16:11.
 - (b) "and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. (John 16:11 NIV)
 - ii) Here are two good quotes about non-believers and the conviction of the Spirit as to judgement.
 - a) "They are trying to play the game of life without any reference to the One who sets the rules." (Ray Steadman)
 - b) "Unbelief is a state and there is no remedy if you refuse to trust Christ." (J. Vernon McGee)

7. Verse 12: "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.
- a) When Jesus says the Holy Spirit will guide us in all truth, what does he mean?
 - i) Does He mean they would know every mystery of the Universe? No!
 - ii) It is a reference to Scripture, and *truth about our lives*.
 - iii) In Verse 1 of this chapter, Jesus started a discourse to *prepare* His disciples over what is going to come. The good news is that God wants to do the same for our lives. That is what daily Bible reading is all about. A chance and place for God to communicate to us what He wants for us.
 - iv) "Just reading the Bible is not the complete answer; the Holy Spirit must be our Teacher as we read." (J. Vernon McGee)
 - v) "It is his (Holy Spirit's) function to make that message explicit." (F.F. Bruce)
 - vi) If you are not doing a daily Bible-reading time, start with this prayer. Father, show me today, through the Holy Spirit the things you want me to know *today*.
 - a) There are all sorts of good through-the-Bible reading programs. In my opinion the best ones are the ones where you read a little of the Old Testament and a little of the New Testament every day.
 - b) My method (which is common) is 3 bookmarks. One for the Old Testament, one for Psalms/Proverbs and one for the New Testament. I read some of each of these groups every day.
 - b) Verse 14 says the function of the Spirit is "He (Spirit) will bring glory to me (Jesus)."
 - i) This is why we do not pray *to* the Holy Spirit.
 - a) The function of the Spirit is to give glory to God (through Jesus)
 - b) Remember that the Holy Spirit works through prayer, Bible reading, prayer and time with other Christians. All this brings glory to Jesus.
 - c) "God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2b-3, NKJV)
 - c) Verse 15 says "All that belongs to the Father is mine."
 - i) This is another statement of Jesus making Himself equal with God
 - d) Verse 15, part two says "That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."
 - i) Everything that "is", belongs to Jesus!
 - ii) "For by him (Jesus) *all* things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created *by* him and *for* him." (Colossians 1:16 NIV *emphasis added*)
 - iii) "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"-- but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches *all* things, even the deep things of God." (1 Corinthians 2:9-10, NIV *emphasis added*)
8. Verse 16: "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."
- a) Jesus wasn't worrying that the disciples weren't getting it. It is only the work of the Holy Spirit that people who are blind begin to see. That's why Jesus didn't worry.

9. Verse 17: Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father?'" ¹⁸ They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying." ¹⁹ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?"
- a) Three times in four verses John repeats the phrase "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me" (Verse 16, 17 & 19)
 - i) Why such a big emphasis on this phrase that it is repeated three times?
 - ii) I believe it is because the writer (John) did not want us to miss an important point.
 - a) Jesus is talking about the death & resurrection.
 - b) Without the resurrection, we are all wasting our time as Christians.
 - c) It is the fact of the resurrection that validates the claims of Jesus.
 - d) The resurrection means God accepted Jesus sacrifice on our behalf.
 - iii) There is another point to the phrase "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me", that is important to us.
 - a) As one grows as a Christian, there are "silent" periods where you don't feel the presence of God around you. This does not mean God has abandoned you. It simply means God wants you to trust Him. This is why he assures us in His written word of our eternal salvation and how much he Loves us.
 - b) There are going to be times in our Christian walk when "we will see him no more, and then after a little while, you will see me".
 - (1) In extreme cases, this applies to periods where death is eminent for a Christian.
 - (2) But I believe it also applies to those "drought" periods where you don't feel God's presence. This is simply a time of testing where God wants to build your faith.
 - b) One last point about these verses. Notice in Verse 18 it says "They (the disciples) kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying.
 - i) "The disciples were talking *about* Jesus when they should have been talking *to* Jesus (Jon Curson)
 - a) Sometimes we make the mistake of talking *about* Jesus (i.e. complaining) about our problems when we should be talking *to* Jesus about them.
10. Verse 20: I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. ²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. ²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.
- a) First of all, I still find it *amazing* in Verse 20 that Jesus says the world will *rejoice* because of Him leaving.
 - i) The world does not *want* to be convicted of sin. They celebrate when the accusers of sin stop accusing them.
 - ii) C.S. Lewis said once "The gates of hell will be locked from the inside."
 - a) This meant that people *choose* to reject God. They are happy when no one is convicting them of their sins.
 - iii) I always found it fascinating that the only celebration during the whole Tribulation scenario laid out in the Book of Revelation is when the two witnesses for Jesus are killed (Revelation 11:10).

- b) In these verses, Jesus compares the upcoming sorrows to a woman giving birth.
 - i) Jesus is saying that the sorrow will be the thing that causes joy.
 - ii) *Not* that after the sorrow, the joy will come.
 - iii) The sorrow comes from the disciples thinking that Jesus death is the end of his ministry. The disciples will soon realize that it was all necessary and part of God's game plan.
 - iv) A good example of this is the story of Joseph in Genesis. Joseph went from being a good-son to one sold in slavery by his brothers, to being put in prison on false charges, and eventually becoming the 2nd most powerful man in Egypt.
 - v) When Joseph saw his brothers after many years, he said:
 - a) "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." (Genesis 50:20 NIV)
 - b) Joseph's sorrow *was turned* to joy. Joseph realized it was all part of God's plan.
 - vi) The lesson for us during times of sorrow is that it is part of God's plan. We can't see why we are going through this trial, but God can.
 - a) A great prayer to pray in times of sorrow is "Lord, we don't know why you are putting me (us) through this right now, but teach us the lessons you want us to learn from this experience, so that it may to your glory".
 - c) Remember the disciples left everything to follow Jesus.
 - i) The principle is simply this.
 - a) "The object of your pain *presently* will produce great joy *eventually*." (Jon Curson)
 - b) It is not substitution, but a transformation!
11. Verse 22b-23: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. ²³In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.
- a) When Jesus reappeared to His disciples, they did not ask a lot of questions.
 - i) (They were still dealing with the shock of seeing Him again!)
 - b) What Jesus is saying is "In that day" (i.e. when I have come back from death and you have the assurance of my presence with you through the Holy Spirit),
 - i) then you will not ask me for anything, you will address your requests direct to the Father in my name.
 - c) Verse 24 says "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.
 - i) When you pray to Jesus you want to pray to conform to His nature.
 - a) For example, If someone cuts you off in traffic, you can't pray for God to drive that person off the road!
 - b) Answered prayers are ones that Glorify God!
12. Verse 25: "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."
- a) Jesus is saying to the disciples you will no longer have to ask questions directly to me, but you can ask them to the father themselves.
 - i) He may have been reassuring them that although they ran away during the time of the trial, the Father still loves them and wants them to come to Him.
 - ii) That is a good re-assurance for us when we mess up!

- b) This reminds me of an illustration I once heard by Christian marriage-counselor and author Gary Smalley.
 - i) Gary Smalley took out a whole bunch of household extension chords and said "We try to get our happiness by plugging into a lot of different outlets.
 - a) He meant being happy by achieving success, fame, money, etc.
 - ii) The problem is that we are not *wired* for this type of electricity.
 - iii) Gary then pulls out a 220 Volt extension cord. (For those who don't know, 220V plus are a different type of extension cord than "normal" 110V kind. If you have an electric washing machine, go look at that plug. It is a 220 V plug and requires a special outlet.
 - iv) In order to achieve the peace and joy Jesus is talking about, we need that 220 volt plug that only works to God. (In this analogy, Jesus is the extension cord between us and God!)
 - c) One more point from Verse 27: The disciples must not be led to think that Jesus has to persuade the Father to answer their prayers.
 - i) The Father is only too ready to answer Christians' prayers because as Jesus has assured them of his own love, so Christians may be assured of the Father's direct and personal love for them.
 - ii) Answered prayer is a token of the Father's appreciation of their love for his Son and belief in Him.
13. Verse 29: Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech." ³⁰ Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God." ³¹ You believe at last!" Jesus answered.
- a) Verses 29-31 is the disciples are *starting* to get it. But it is still more "head knowledge than heart-knowledge".
 - b) Verse 31 is one place where I disagree with the NIV translation.
 - i) The NIV translation says "You believe at last!" Jesus answered.
 - ii) NASB, NKJV, KJV and NRSV *all* put Verse 31 in the form of a question.
 - a) These translations say: Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"
 - b) The Living Bible says "Do you finally believe this?" Jesus asked.
 - iii) The majority of translations see this as a question by Jesus.
 - a) Jesus read their hearts better than they knew.
 - b) "They got it in their head, but not in their heart" (Ray Steadman).
14. Verse 32: "But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. ³³"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
- a) The world which inflicts tribulation on them is His enemies as well as yours.
 - b) He was completely aware of their impending failure.
 - c) But Jesus reassures them with (essentially) the same words that opened Chapter 14.
 - i) He said let not your hearts be troubled. I have overcome the world.
 - d) The Christian race is the only race in the world which begins at the finish line. We don't fight for victory. We fight from victory. The battle is already won. He has already overcome. (FF Bruce)
15. Let's Pray: Father, we thank you for the victory you have already provided for us. Help us to remember that you have *already* paid the price, and all we have to do is claim the victory. Let the Holy Spirit work through us to teach us the things you want us to know and learn. Help us father to walk in your joy, and remember that you mean our sorrows to *turn* into your joy. We ask these things in Jesus name, amen.