

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY

"The Gospel of John"

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Lesson 63: John 16:21-17:5

"your sorrow will turn into joy"

This reminds us, that when we address tragedies, especially with children and youth, we should not only offer accurate information, but also the Christian, faithful worldview about it, too. Some current stats:

- a. 80% of teenagers says they're following COVID news closely and worry is high.
- b. 61% are worried they, or someone in their family, will be exposed to the virus.
- c. 63% are worried about its effect on the family suffering financially with it.
 - a. Help people see that thriving through tragedy is dependent on "**hope**," not "optimism." (*"The Stockdale Paradox"* – POW during war – Tim Elmore)
 - i. **Optimism** – a superficial wish that the hardship will be over "soon," and everything will return to the "way it was." Often limited to:
 1. Wishful thinking
 2. Power of positive thinking
 3. Dependent on struggles diminishing.
 4. Short-term events
 - ii. **Hope** – facing the harsh realities of how things are, while never letting go of the belief that God:
 1. **Knows**
 2. **Is in charge, and**
 3. **Calls us to be His own, in the midst of the hardships, and as His own, we are His beloved.**
 4. Hope grows out of struggle, with "eyes" on something greater than self: God's promises in Jesus Christ.
 5. **Romans 5:3-5.** *Not only so, but we^[a] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*
 - b. Always end your conversations, about the tragedies, with:
 - i. "God knows;
 - ii. He's in charge; and
 - iii. He calls us to be His own – His beloved."
 - iv. Nothing can change this Truth!

²¹ (AN) 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. ²² (AO) So also you have sorrow now, but (AP) I will see you again, and (AQ) your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³ (AR) In that day you will (AS) ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, (AT) whatever you ask of the Father in my name, (AU) he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. (AV) Ask, and you will receive, (AW) that your joy may be full.

- a. "she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy" – the "arrival" redeems the painful journey as a kind of memory, which is packaged in "joy."
- b. "no one will take your joy from you." – the world, the devil, and/or our own sinful impulses try to rob you of your joy. Jesus' resurrection is the anchor to joy in life. Joy-robbers can be powerful, so remind yourself of God's promises:
 - a. Doubt in God's promises of loving you.
 - i. **John 3:16.** *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*
 - b. Your own heart "accusing you" of sins you've committed, which you feel God won't or can't forgive.
 - i. **1 John 3:19-21.** ¹⁹ *This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God.*
- c. The chronically bad news you feed on.
 - i. **Philippians 4:8.** *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*
- d. Angry habits which take a 'joy-focus' away: gossiping, resenting, refusing to forgive, verbally abusing others, comparing, etc.
 - i. **Ephesians 4:26.** *"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,*
- e. "In that day you will...He will...you will" – referencing the Day of Pentecost, when at the Spirit's coming, "nothing" will need to be "asked," as the "Spirit will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13).
- f. "Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." – a promise for them at Pentecost: the fullness of the joy in their hearts will be infectious and will overcome whatever fears they may harbor.

²⁵ "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. (AX) The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; ²⁷ (AY) for the Father himself loves you, because (AZ) you have loved me and (BA) have believed that I came from God. [a] ²⁸ (BB) I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now (BC) I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

- a. **“figures of speech...tell you plainly”** – (“utter frankness”) – On the Day of Pentecost, when the Spirit fills them, there will be a great openness in the minds of the disciples – to understand everything Jesus came to do – without having Jesus physically present to explain it or for them to know it.
- b. **“you have loved Me and have believed...now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”** – though Jesus will be physically leaving them, they will not be abandoned by Him.
 - a. **“loved...and believed”** –
 - i. **Question:** What is the difference, which that makes, when dealing with life’s struggles, uncertainties, or situations over which you have little or no control?
 - b. **“going to the Father.”** – as Jesus would soon rise from the dead and ascend into Heaven, so the Christian can make that claim in death!

²⁹ His disciples said, **“Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not ^(BD)using figurative speech!** ³⁰ Now we know that ^(BE)you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that ^(BF)you came from God.”

³¹ Jesus answered them, **“Do you now believe? ³² Behold, ^(BG)the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when ^(BH)you will be scattered, each to his own home, and ^(BI)will leave me alone. ^(BJ)Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. ³³ I have said these things to you, that ^(BK)in me you may have peace. ^(BL)In the world you will have ^(BM)tribulation. But ^(BN)take heart; ^(BO)I have overcome the world.”**

- a. **“Now we know”** – Jesus’ disciples ‘get it!’ intellectually and make a confession of faith/knowledge (*“this is why we believe”*). Their hearts are in the right place; their intent to be true to Jesus is sincere.
- b. **“Do you now believe?”** – In this moment of group confession of faith, they feel very committed!
- c. **“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come”** – Jesus knows what’s about to happen! In their moment of testing, they will fail: scatter, run home, abandon Jesus!
 - a. **Zechariah 13:7.** *Awake, sword, against my shepherd against the man who is close to me!* declares the LORD Almighty. *“Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered,*
- d. **“Yet I am not alone”** – the presence of His Father will sustain Jesus!
- e. **“that in Me you may have peace.”** – in their guilt for abandoning Jesus, His presence and forgiveness will give them peace.
- f. **“take heart, I have overcome the world. – (“conquered”)** - resurrection is the victory over Satan and the “world.” Christians are living in a defeated world; don’t get too in love with it.