Sunday, January 16, 2022

Lesson Text: John 16:19-33; Time of Action: 30 A.D.; Place of Action: Jerusalem

Golden Text: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

I. INTRODUCTION. There’s a time and a purpose for everything (see Ecclesiastes 3:1). The time when the disciples would endure great suffering had come. Jesus’ presence had shielded them from the fiery darts of scorn, but it was time for His return to God. He loved His disciples and was compelled to remind them of His inevitable departure and to prepare them for the conflicts to come. This disheartened them. They were worried about themselves at the prospect of losing their Leader. Their priorities may seem self-centered and shortsighted, but nevertheless entirely human. Christ offered specific knowledge of all that would come to pass; but being overwhelmed with sorrow, the disciples forgot that His stay on earth was only temporary.

II. THE LESSON BACKGROUND. This week’s lesson took place in the upper room where Jesus and His disciples had
gathered for His last Passover meal. While there, He taught them spiritual lessons by washing their feet (see John 13:1-17). He announced that He would be betrayed and Judas left to meet with Jesus’ enemies (see John 13:18-30). Jesus also declared that He would be leaving them and that Peter would deny Him (see John 13:31-38). Finally, in what we call the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus began to teach the disciples in order to prepare them for challenging days ahead (see chapters 14-16). Jesus encouraged His followers by promising them an eternal home which He was the only way to (see John 14:1-11). He also told them that their ministry would be even more productive than His if they depended on Him in prayer (see John 14:12-14). In John 14:15-26, Jesus declared the importance of obedience to Him being based on love for Him. He then promised to send them another Comforter, the Holy Spirit who would also teach the disciples and remind them of everything Jesus had taught them. In John 14:31, it appears that Jesus and His disciples left the Upper Room headed for the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane (see Matthew 26:30, 36). But on the way, Jesus continued to teach them regarding the True Vine and the branches (see John 15:1-14). He also spoke of a new closeness with His disciples; they were no longer servants, but friends (see John 15:15-17). In John 15:18-27, Jesus spoke of how the world would view believers in Christ, hating them because they hated Him. Then in John 16:1-3, Jesus told His disciples that they would be expelled from synagogues which meant being left out of Jewish society. Some of them could even expect to be killed for their faith by those who thought they were doing God a favor (see John 16:2; Acts 26:9-11). Again, He reminded them that after He departed from them (through His death and resurrection) He
would send the Holy Spirit to comfort them (see John 16:7-11). The Holy Spirit would also guide the disciples to understand things that they were not ready to understand at that time (see John 16:12-15). Then Jesus told His disciples that His time on earth was almost over and they would not see Him for a period of time, but later they would see Him which really confused them (see John 16:16-18). This is where our lesson begins.

III. JOY COMES AFTER SORROW (John 16:19-22)

A. The unasked question (John 16:19-20).

1. (vs. 19). Our first verse says “Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?” In John16:16 (which is not part of our printed text), Jesus told His disciples that in a “little while” they would not see Him, but in a “little while” they would see Him because He was going to be with the Father. But instead of asking “Jesus” what He meant, the disciples asked among themselves what did “Jesus” mean (see John 16: 17-18). Earlier that evening they had no problem asking “Jesus” questions about what He was saying to them (see John 13:36-37; 14:1-5, 7-8, 21-22), but now for some reason they were holding back from asking Him questions about what He meant by “in a little while you won’t see me, but in a little while you will see me because I am going to the Father”
(see John 16:16). It could be that they thought that “Jesus” would give them an answer that didn’t make any sense. Throughout the Gospel of John, “Jesus” had spoken in proverbs or parables, just as He was about to admit (see John 16:25). And even now in this farewell discourse (see John chapters 13-15) “Jesus” added more lessons that were beyond their understanding at this point, as He was well aware of (see John 16:12). So, in this verse, John makes it clear that “Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him.” This means that “Jesus” was well aware that they wanted “to ask Him” what He meant by His earlier statement (see John 16:16). Knowing that His disciples were discussing this among themselves, “Jesus” stated the question for them when He “said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?” The LORD was saying to His disciples, “Are you wondering among yourselves about what I meant when I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?” At this point, “Jesus” only revealed that He knew what they wanted to ask Him; He didn’t give them an explanation. But we know that when “Jesus” said “A little while, and ye shall not see me” He was referring to His death and burial; and when He said “and again, a little while, and ye shall see me” He was referring to the time He would spend with them after His resurrection. “Jesus” is describing the climactic events which would literally take place in “a little while” or the next day (see John chapters 18 and 19).

2. (vs. 20). This verse says “Verily, verily, I say
unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” Jesus’ explanation begins with the solemn words “Verily, verily, I say unto you” or “truly, truly, I’m telling you the truth.” The truth was that it was certain that in a little while, the disciples “shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.” The word “lament” means “to mourn.” In the Gospels, weeping does not always refer to grief shown at a death (see Luke 7:13, 38), but in John, it is only used in the context of death (see John 11:31, 33; 10:11, 13, 15). Therefore, Jesus is referring to the grief they will suffer at His death. The “world” here refers particularly to the religious and civil authorities in Israel who opposed Jesus. They will think that when they killed Him, they had conquered their enemy, so Jesus said “the world shall rejoice.” Then He went on to say “and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” Yes, the disciples would “be sorrowful” and full of grief, but their “sorrow” would only last a little while and then it “shall be turned into joy.” When it came to Jesus, the “world” or the religious and civil leaders and the disciples were totally opposite, which means when Jesus died, one group would be full of “sorrow” and grief, and the other group would be filled with “joy.” Although the disciples were still confused, these two responses clarify that when Jesus said “A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me” He was referring to His death and resurrection.

B. From anguish to joy (John 16:21-22).
1. (vs. 21). This verse says “A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.” Having told His disciples that their “sorrow” would turn into “joy,” Jesus illustrated this by describing a mother’s experience when giving birth to a “child.” First He said, “A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come.” This means that when “a woman” is in “travail” or in labor, she experiences great pain writhing in anguish “because her hour” or time to give birth has come. Jesus compares the woman’s pain and anguish to the anguish and “sorrow” His disciples would feel when the LORD died. Then Jesus said “but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.” Although the labor pains are great, once she delivers the baby, she forgets the pain she experienced. This is because the pain and “anguish” she experienced during her “travail” or labor have been replaced with “joy” at knowing that she has brought a son “into the world.” The “woman” is overjoyed at holding her new “child.” Likewise, when Jesus’ disciples saw Him after His resurrection, they would forget their grief and “sorrow” and experience a “joy” that would last forever.

2. (vs. 22). This verse says “And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” Now that Jesus had illustrated the contrast between the disciples’ “sorrow” and “joy,” He continued His
explanation saying “And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” The LORD was saying that knowing in a little while they won’t see Him (when He is crucified) they were now experiencing “sorrow” or grief and sadness. Then Jesus gave them the real good news when He said “but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” After He rose from the dead, Jesus would see His disciples again and when that happened, He said that their “hearts” will “rejoice” with a “joy” that can never be taken away from them.

IV. ACCESS TO GOD COMES THROUGH PRAYER (John 16:23-28)

A. Answered prayers (John 16:23-24).

1. (vs. 23). This verse says “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” The phrase “in that day” refers to after Jesus’ resurrection (see verse 22). While Jesus was with His disciples they presented any petitions or requests they had directly to Him depending on Him to give their requests to God. Now, Jesus was saying that after He arose from the dead, His disciples would not “ask” Him anything or make any petitions directly to Him anymore. They could go directly to “the Father.” Note: It’s interesting that
Jewish people today claim that they don’t need Jesus because they can go directly to God. Undoubtedly, they have forgotten that their fathers or ancestors didn’t go directly to God, but they came to Him through numerous sacrifices offered by the priests. Then the priests went to God for them. What’s even more interesting is the tradition of the Catholic Church and Mary the mother of Jesus. If Jesus says that Christians can go directly to “the Father,” that means that we don’t need to go to Mary or any of the other saints to have them “ask” Jesus to go to “the Father” for us.

Besides, praying to Mary or any other saint is only church tradition and dogma since there is no scriptural support. The Scriptures reveal that there is no value or profit in praying to Mary or any other saint. On one occasion when Jesus was talking with the people, Mary couldn’t get to Him because of the crowd, so she sent Him word that she wanted to see Him. When Jesus received the message, He asked, “Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?” (see Matthew 12:47-48).

This assures me that if we have to depend on Mary or any other saint to intercede for us with “the Father,” He would never give us what we “ask.” But Hallelujah, and thank the LORD that we can go directly to “the Father” with our requests, and as Jesus said, “he will give it you” as long as it is asked in the “name” of Jesus or according to His will for us. **Note:** Since there are two different Greek words translated “ask” in this verse, many interpreters believe that Jesus was talking about asking questions as well as making petitions. The first word “ask” here in Greek is “erotao” and can be used when asking for something, but more often is used for asking
questions. The second “ask” in Greek is “aiteo” and usually refers to petitions. If we interpret the first “ask” to refer to simply asking questions or “erotao,” Jesus was saying, “In that day you shall ask me nothing” or “you shall ask no questions.” The disciples had asked some ignorant questions (see John 9:2), some ambitious questions (see Matthew 18:1), some distrustful questions (see Matthew 19:27), and some curious questions (see Acts 1:6), and of course, they also asked some spiritual questions (see John 13:36; 14:5, 8, 22; 16:18). But after the Holy Spirit was poured out on them (see Acts 2:1-5), the disciples would not have to “ask” such questions because they would then have a clearer knowledge of gospel mysteries (see John 14:26; 16:12-14). There is no question that when Jesus used the word “ask” the second time, He was referring to petitions or prayers. Regardless of how we interpret the two “asks” in this verse, the truth is that we can also “ask” God questions as petitions when we pray. The disciples had been asking Jesus a lot of questions, but they had not been petitioning Him, so He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” After Jesus’ resurrection, His disciples, and all future believers would have a special relationship with Him. Going forward from the time of His resurrection and ascension, all believers would have the privilege of boldly directing their petitions and prayers to “the Father” (see Hebrews 4:16) in “his (Jesus’) name” and “he (the Father) will give it (to) you.” To “ask in Jesus’ name” means more than simply ending a prayer with the words “in
the name of Jesus” as if it was some kind of magical statement to assure that our prayers will be answered. To “ask in Jesus’ name” means that the request the believer is making to God “the Father” is made in a spirit of complete agreement with the will and purposes of God and Jesus Christ (see I John 5:14). However, that being said, in all petitions to the Father, we should include the “name of Jesus” as the basis for our privilege to be heard. To ignore or bypass the “name of Jesus,” the One and only Mediator between God and man is undeniably sinful. Even more reprehensible to God is the practice of ending our prayers with simply “amen,” because we are afraid that some unbeliever might be offended by the “name of Jesus.”

Loving the praise of men more than the praise of God was detrimental to believers in Jesus’ day (see John 12:42-43), and it is unquestionably detrimental to make the same mistake today. Note: The LORD Jesus emboldens us to come to God in all circumstances, with all our supplications and requests. Through Jesus, our petitions are accepted by God. The content of our prayer must agree with the declared will of God. It’s not God’s will for believers to ask for anything that is contrary to His majesty and glory and what pleases Him (see I John 3:22). Nor should we ask for anything that’s only for our own good (see James 4:3) since we belong to God and are dependent on Him who knows what’s best for us. When we ask according to God’s will or what glorifies Him, then we may have confidence that our prayer, which should be submitted in faith, will be heard in heaven.
2. (vs. 24). This verse says “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” Jesus continued to say to His disciples “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.” In other words, “Hitherto” or before this time, the disciples had not “asked” the Father anything in Jesus’ “name” as their Mediator; they had brought all concerns to Jesus Himself. But Jesus told them that after His resurrection and going forward, they will “ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” The word “ask” here is in the present tense meaning that believers are to keep on asking or continue praying. Jesus told them that when they asked God via their prayers, they would “receive” so “that your joy may be full.” This means that their “joy” would be complete because of their new and closer relationship with the Father that would result in answered prayer.

B. Prayer gives direct access to God (John 16:25-26).

1. (vs. 25). This verse says “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.” Here, Jesus reveals why the disciples asked Him so many different questions. He said “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs.” When it came to “things” concerning “the Father,” Jesus had before this time spoken to His disciples “in proverbs,” which are wise and instructive sayings, but are also figurative and not easily understood (see Matthew 13:10-11; John 10:6). Jesus admitted that He had “spoken” to them in
“proverbs” particularly in parables and figures of speech with hidden meanings. There in the upper room, He had used a number of symbolic images to get His message across: the washing of their feet (see John 13:3-5), the Father’s house (see John 14:2), the vine and branches (see John 15:1-8), and the birth of a baby here in this text (see verse 21). In the days that followed, these images would become clearer to the disciples as they would be taught by the Spirit of God. Then Jesus said “but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.” The time when Jesus would speak to the disciples in “proverbs” or with words with hidden meanings was about to end. After His resurrection, He would “plainly” show or speak to them “of the Father.” Jesus would teach or speak to His disciples “plainly” during the forty days He was with them after His resurrection (see Acts 1:1-3). The great thing Jesus would lead them into was the knowledge of God, for He said “I shall shew you plainly of the Father.” Contrary to what many people believe, the purpose of Bible study is not simply to understand profound truths, but to get to know “the Father” better which was Jesus’ priority for His disciples. If we fail to learn more about our God through our reading and Bible study, we have gained nothing.

2. (vs. 26). This verse says “At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.” It seems from the wording here that Jesus was telling His disciples that after He ascends to the Father, He will no longer pray for them. But this is not what Jesus meant. He was not saying that He will no longer pray
for them for He will continue to intercede for them. When Jesus said “and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you,” He meant that after His resurrection and ascension, the disciples will have reached a certain maturity in prayer, so that He will not need to pray to “the Father” in their stead or for them. Of course, Jesus would continue to intercede for them and us (see Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25) because as sinners they, like us, need an intercessor, an Advocate (see I John 2:1) and a Mediator (see I Timothy 2:5). The disciples’ new maturity in prayer would be seen when they prayed directly to God.

C. Jesus’ return to the Father (John 16:27-28).

1. (vs. 27). This verse says “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” Jesus then gave the reason why He would not have to pray for His disciples in their stead and they could go directly to God themselves. He said it was because “the Father himself loveth you.” And the reason why “the Father loved” them Jesus said was “because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” The character of Jesus’ disciples is that they “love” Him, because they “believed that He came out from God.” This confirms that Jesus is the only-begotten Son of the Father (see John 1:14; 1:18). God is so well pleased with Jesus (see Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; II Peter 1:17) that He is also well pleased with those who “love” Jesus.

2. (vs. 28). This verse says “I came forth from
the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” Here, Jesus confirmed His words in the previous verse saying “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.” He came “into the world,” this “world” of sinners who He was pleased to dwell among as indicated by His incarnation (see John 1:14). Jesus’ business was in “the world” and He came to take care of it (see John 3:16-17). And now that His work was almost finished (see John 19:30) on earth, Jesus said “again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” Jesus used the word “again” to remind the disciples that He had earlier told them that He would be going away (see John 14:1-3). Jesus would “leave the world, and go to the Father” at His ascension. No one forced Him to go away. It was His own act and will to “leave the world” (see John 14:2-3), and He will not return to “the world” until He comes to put an end to it (see Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-10; 21:1; see also II Peter 3:10-13). But Jesus is still spiritually present with His church, and will always be.

V. VICTORY COMES THROUGH JESUS (John 16:29-33)

A. The disciples clearly understand (John 16:29-31).

1. (vs. 29). This verse says “His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.” In this verse, the disciples reveal their satisfaction with what Jesus had just declared when they
“said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.” The LORD had explained to them in plain language what He had meant when He spoke of going away numerous times (see John 7:33; 12:35; 13:33; 14:19). The disciples understood now because as they said to Jesus “Lo, now speakest thou plainly.” No longer would Jesus speak to them with a “proverb” or with words with hidden meanings. The point here is that divine truths are most likely to do the most good when they are spoken plainly (see I Corinthians 2:1-4).

2. (vs. 30). This verse says “Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.” Since Jesus had now plainly explained what He meant by His departure from the earth to be with His Father, the disciples said “Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee.” In other words, they were now convinced that Jesus knew everything and it wasn’t necessary for anyone to ask Him any questions about Himself. Because Jesus “knowest all things,” His disciples said “by this (or this is why) we believe that thou camest forth from God.” Since only God is omniscient or “knowest all things,” the disciples’ confession that Jesus also “knowest all things” acknowledges the deity of Christ. Therefore, what made them sure or convinced them that Jesus was God was His omniscience. **Note:** Those who know Jesus Christ best know Him by experience, and this proves that He had a divine mission and He was a divine Person. As the Word of God, Jesus “knowest all things”
and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (see Hebrews 4:12-13). Jesus’ omniscience confirmed the disciples’ faith just as it did the woman of Samaria when Jesus “told her all the things that ever she did” (see John 4:29), and Nathanael when Jesus “saw him under the fig-tree” (see John 1:48-49). The best of believers can only answer what is spoken to them, but Jesus can answer what we are thinking, those things that we may be afraid to ask Him just as the disciples were (see Mark 9:31-32).

3. (vs. 31). This verse says “Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?” After hearing all that He had said when explaining what was once hidden from them in “proverbs” or parables (see verse 30), “Jesus,” observing the disciples’ confidence in confessing that they understood everything that He had told them, with a gentle rebuke, “Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?” or “so now you believe?” This question was necessary because in a few hours when “Jesus” would be arrested, the disciples’ faith would be severely tested (see Mathew 26:55-57; Mark 14:46-50; John 18:1-7, 12-13, 15-17, 25-27). Like the disciples, there will be many times when our faith will also be tested; when we will learn whether our faith is sincere or not; whether we “now believe” or not. When our faith is strong, and when we have good reason to think that we can stand, we should still take heed lest we fall (see I Corinthians 10:12).

B. Peace is the final result (John 16:32-33).
1. (vs. 32). This verse says “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.” Here Jesus reveals why He asked them the question “Do ye now believe?” (see verse 31). He said “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.” With the word “Behold,” Jesus was calling on His disciples “to pay close attention” or “to listen closely.” Then He told them why it was so important for them to pay close attention to what He was about to say. It was because “the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.” Jesus and His disciples were still in the upper room preparing to go out to the Garden of Gethsemane (see Matthew 26:36; Mark 14:32; John 18:1) where He would be betrayed and taken into custody. That time was so close that Jesus considered it already done, for He said “the hour cometh, yea, is now come.” The phrase “ye shall be scattered” was a prediction of their fall. It showed that no matter how confident they were now of their own faith, in a short time they would all desert Jesus, which was fulfilled that very night, when He was seized by a party of the guards, and “all his disciples forsook him and fled” (see Matthew 26:56). When they were scattered “every man to his own” means that every disciple went his “own” way where he would be most safe. Each disciple wanted to secure himself and return to his “own” safe life (see John 21:1-3). As they would scatter, from one another for their own safety, probably without any care or concern for each other, Jesus said “and
shall leave me alone.” Instead of deserting Him, Jesus’ disciples should have been witnesses for Him at His trial; they should have ministered to Him in His sufferings; but they were ashamed of being associated with Him, and afraid of sharing His sufferings with Him, so they left Him “alone.”

The truth is that those who seek their own things more than the things of Christ, and whose happiness is wrapped up in the things of this world, will rarely if ever, consider suffering for their faith. In most of His suffering, Jesus was not “alone.” But Jesus’ cry of distress and anguish on the cross, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (see Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34), makes it clear that Jesus endured a real separation from the Father. This was the climax of what He endured as our sin-bearer (see I Peter 2:24). But even though Jesus said that His disciples would “leave me (Him) alone,” He assured them that He still had comfort when He said “and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.” Jesus was assuring His disciples that He would not complain about their deserting Him as if that would cause any real damage to Him. In fact, in their absence He was certain of His Father’s presence, for He said “the Father is with me.” Note: God was never with anybody like He was with Jesus in His sufferings, for even then Jesus was still “in the bosom of the Father” (see John 1:18). No, God’s divine nature did not desert Jesus’ human nature. Instead, “the Father” supported the Son and gave an inestimable, and an invaluable worth to His sufferings (see I Peter 1:18-19). “The Father” had promised to preserve the Messiah (see Isaiah 49:5-8), and this emboldened Him (see Isaiah 50:4-7). Even when Jesus complained about His “Father” forsaking Him, He still called Him “My God.”
Jesus was so assured that He would be with God after His resurrection that before He died, He committed His Spirit into “the Father’s” hands (see Luke 23:46). We know that “the Father” was well pleased with Jesus, for God’s constant presence accompanied Him throughout His ministry from the beginning to the end (see John 8:29), and certainly God would not leave Him “alone” now. The constant presence of God is also a privilege enjoyed by all believers. Because of our union with Christ, when we feel like we are “alone,” like Jesus, we are “not alone,” for the LORD has promised “never to leave us or forsake” His own (see Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5).

2. (vs. 33). Our final verse says “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” The goal of everything Jesus said to His disciples on this night in the upper room before He was betrayed (see John chapters 13-17) was to bring them “peace,” for He said “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.” Having “peace” in Christ is the only true “peace,” and believers have it in Him alone, for the prophet Micah prophesied that “…this man shall be the peace” (see Micah 5:2-5). It is the will of Jesus for His disciples to have inner “peace” regardless of whatever their troubles may be on the outside. Through Jesus we have “peace” with God (see Romans 5:1) and therefore, in Jesus we can have inner “peace.” But at this time, it was not Jesus’ intention to give His disciples a full view of what it meant to have “peace” in
Him because in a few weeks, on the Day of Pentecost they would know the full meaning of it by the outpouring of the Spirit. At this time the LORD’s intent was only to give His disciples comfort for the present knowing that His departure from them was really the best thing for everyone. Then Jesus said “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” The LORD was telling the disciples that while they were “In the world” they would not have outward “peace” and they should never expect it. Although the disciples were sent to “preach the gospel of peace” (see Romans 10:15), Jesus warns them that they “shall” or will “have tribulation” or trouble on earth brought on by mankind. Note: It is true that believers in Jesus Christ will face “tribulation” in this “world.” Men and women persecute them because they live to please a holy God, and God corrects or disciplines them because they fail to please Him (see Hebrews 12:6-9). Men and women design ways to cut believers off from the earth, and God designs by affliction, ways to make them ready for heaven. Therefore, between mankind and God, believers “shall have tribulation.” Having warned His disciples to expect future “tribulation,” Jesus then says something strange. He said “But be of good cheer.” The Greek word “tharseite” is often translated as “be of good cheer,” but it actually means “be of good courage” or “to take heart” indicating that everything will work out.” In the midst of the “tribulations” of this “world” the LORD commands His followers to “be of good cheer” or to take courage; to continue to delight in God (see Psalms 37:4; 37:23) regardless of what is happening, and still always rejoicing, always cheerful (see II Corinthians 6:10), even in “tribulation” (see Romans 5:3). But just in case the
disciples thought it strange for Jesus to encourage them to “be of good cheer” in times of “tribulation” or trials, Jesus gives them the basis for His encouragement when He said “I have overcome the world.” By faith believers understand that Jesus’ victory is our victory. He overcame the prince of this world (see Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 20:10), cast him out (see Isaiah 14:12-17), and He “bruises Satan under our feet” (see Romans 16:20). Jesus overcame the children of this world, by converting many to the faith and obedience of His gospel, making them the children of His kingdom. The LORD overcame the evil things of “the world” by submitting to them; he endured the cross, despising it and the shame of it. There has never been nor will there ever be a conqueror of “the world” like Jesus Christ was is, and will be. We ought to be encouraged by that and “be of good cheer.” As children of God, we too “have overcome the world,” and we do it by faith (see I John 5:4), for “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (see Romans 8:37).

**VI. Conclusion.** In this week’s lesson, Jesus explained to His disciples that the pain they would feel at His death would be replaced by joy at His resurrection. Just as the same baby that causes a birth mother pain was also the cause of her joy, Jesus’ death would bring eternal joy in His accomplishment of salvation for you and me. But even though we are saved, sanctified and full of the Holy Ghost, Jesus declared that we will have tribulation or trouble in this world. But we should be encouraged because through His death and resurrection, Jesus overcame the world and His victory guarantees our
victory. Yes, even though being in Jesus we will have troubles, we can be of good cheer because we can also have peace.