

Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) There are so many things which distract us from our relationship with Jesus Christ. The disciples were men who were constantly distracted by their own appetites, desires, fears and ambitions. How do you see these same types of difficulties plaguing your walk with Christ?
- B) The disciples did not have the Holy Spirit in their lives through the pages of John's gospel. Perhaps they were "saved" in the sense that anyone was saved under the old covenant, but they were clearly not yet what they would become. How is your life different because you have the personal presence of God's Holy Spirit indwelling your life? What difference does the Spirit make in your day-to-day life?
- C) Jesus seems to say that being a true believer has more to do with requesting things from God in Christ's name (John 16:23-24) than asking self-serving questions. What implications does this teaching have for the way you live your life? How does Jesus Christ's teaching on this subject affect/transform your prayer life?
- D) Jesus assures His disciples they would face tribulation in this world for their faith, but to take heart, He had overcome the world (John 16:33). This is a great verse for Christians to cling to during times of trouble and difficulty. Are you facing some of those times in your life right now? Share with your group what is happening in your life right now which fulfills Christ's prediction that you would also face tribulation. Pray together for each person in your group and for the situations which are difficult to face. How can your group be a day-to-day encouragement of Christ's conquering power for one another this week?

Overcoming

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 4th, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU, SO THAT IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE. IN THE WORLD YOU HAVE TRIBULATION, BUT TAKE COURAGE; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.
~JOHN 16:33 (NASB)

1) Peek-a-Boo Reversals

- A) After assuring the disciples of the coming presence of the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-15), Jesus continues to prepare them for His imminent death (peek-a-boo passage -- 16:16), which only confuses the disciples (16:17-18).
- B) Jesus, knowing that His disciples were confused and wanting to explain Himself to them (16:19), lists two "reversal metaphors" to clearly illustrate the point...
- i) Funeral metaphor (16:20). Weeping/grief vs. rejoicing/joy.
 - ii) Childbirth metaphor (16:21). Labor pains vs. joy of motherhood.
- C) What is Jesus' point? The point is that your temporary grief will be replaced by eternal joy because Jesus Christ will reverse that which causes grief (death), and instead bring new life (birth) (16:22).

2) A New Way To Pray

- A) Up to this point, the disciples have only been trying to figure out what was going on (questioning -- 16:23). "In that day" (the age after Christ's return), there will be no more questions for the disciples, they will understand Christ's teaching and purposes (cf. 15:14-15, friends vs. slaves).

- B) The new age will not be marked by questions about Christ, but rather "requests" directly to God in Christ's name (16:23-24). The transition is remarkable -- from "dazed and confused" to "action and purpose."

- C) The prayers "in My name" are reflective of "abiding" (cf. vine metaphor -- John 15:1-11) and produce purposeful prayer (requests more than questions) which result in "full" (or complete) joy for the believer (16:24)!

3) Obscure Sayings Will Become Clear!

- A) The new age will be marked with clarity in Jesus' teachings, which have often been figurative (parables, enigmatic sayings, dark sayings -- 16:25) will now abound with clarity of revelation regarding God the Father.

- B) God's love is unique toward those who have a relationship with Jesus Christ (16:26-27). God Himself will answer requests offered in Christ's name! This doesn't represent distance between God and man, but a new age of intimacy which has not yet existed!

- C) Jesus emphasizes the dawning of the new age by reminding His disciples that He is leaving them to go be with the Father, from which He originally came (16:28), for their benefit (the Holy Spirit, cf. 16:7; and intercessory work of Christ on behalf of the believer (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25, 1st John 2:1).

4) A Couple Sandwiches Short Of A Picnic...

- A) The disciples, thinking that Jesus' teaching is now more understandable, profess their belief at His "new" approach (16:29-30).

- B) Jesus, in a rather exasperated phrase (16:31), tells His disciples they will soon be scattered and go home but He will be fine because He and the Father are in unity with one another (16:32).

- C) Jesus reiterates that He has taught these things to the disciples so they would have peace (16:33). This overarching theme of joy in the midst of circumstances has been focus of this chapter (cf. 16:1, 12, 22, 33).

- D) Jesus guarantees the disciples they will face "tribulation" (cf. persecution in 15:18-20), but to take heart (be encouraged), He has overcome (conquered) the world (16:33).

- E) "It is part of the character and genius of the Church that the its foundational members (the disciples) were discredited men; it owed its existence not to their faith, courage, or virtue, but to what Christ had done with them; and this they could never forget" --J.I. Packer, Tyndale Bible Commentary