

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 24TH-25TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

CLARITY (JOHN 16:1-15) HARD TIMES

V1-4 are prophetic. Jesus is telling His disciples that they and those they lead into a relationship with Jesus will suffer persecution. This is both referring to Roman persecution until 313 A.D. and the ongoing persecution up to today.

- **The willingness to suffer for Christ and His teachings is essential for true discipleship.**

PREPARING FOR THE TURBULENCE AHEAD

Christians have, and always will, suffer in two ways: **socially** ("ban[ned] from the synagogues," the center of social life) and **physically**.

- In the quiet time, Jesus prepared them for the hard times to come. **Are we preparing by the power of the Spirit in the peaceful times for the hard times that are coming?**

THE GLASS IS ACTUALLY HALF FULL

Jesus was going away, and this brought them deep sorrow. But, if Jesus didn't physically leave, the Spirit couldn't come and work in the world.

- **The Spirit is God living in the Believer. The ascension of Jesus and descension of the Spirit gives all people the opportunity to be personally led by God.**

THE SPIRIT WILL CONVICT US

Jesus tells us that the Spirit will "convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment." Conviction is both convicting and correction.

- **The Bible defines sin and righteousness, but the Spirit of God convicts us when we sin and points us to righteousness so we will not have to face God's judgment.**

THE SPIRIT ALSO WORKS THROUGH US

God reaches out to us by the Spirit, but **we are also to be full of the Spirit so He can work in our lives and convict (convince and correct) nonbelievers through us.**

- **Our job isn't to simply point out sin (the symptom of not knowing God), but the necessity and benefit of knowing Jesus.**

WE ARE ALSO TO TEACH GODLY RIGHTEOUSNESS

We live in a culture of self-righteousness, and it is destroying people. As Christians, **we're to be teaching and living out biblical righteousness in order to demonstrate the power and peace of God to the world.**

- **We are to be witnesses by how we live and by lovingly communicating truth.**

TRUTH IN DIGESTIBLE BITES

Jesus had more to teach the disciples, but He knew they could only process so much at a time. This is called progressive revelation, and the Bible in its entirety is the best example.

- We must remember this as well as we grow in relationship with others. **We must love, share truth, and be patient.**

SUFFERING AND JOY (JOHN 16:16-24)

THEY ARE STILL VERY CONFUSED

Jesus tells the 11 that they "will no longer see [Him]," but "in a little while [they] will see [Him]."

- We can understand their confusion, but Jesus was telling them to **trust Him because even though confusion and suffering were coming, the end result would be clarity and joy.**

THE WORDS OF JESUS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

As time goes on for the Christians, it will be similar to a woman in labor (v21 and Matthew 24) who suffers for a time but then receives the greatest blessing.

- **The way to hold on in times of suffering and receive joy is by the truth and promises of Jesus' Word and His Spirit.**

THE CROSS DELIVERS US NOW AND FOREVER

There will be suffering, but Christ's resurrection gives us joy in this life. A greater gift is an eternity when we won't remember the suffering of life and we will have an unquenchable joy.

- Just like a new mom doesn't think about the labor after delivering a baby, **Heaven will be a place with no sadness or pain.**

ANOTHER ALLUSION TO LIVING IN HIS WILL

V23-24 is another example of Jesus imploring His followers to pray in His will. If we will learn His will, we can ask for anything in it, and we "will receive, so that [our] joy may be complete."

- The Bible tells us what God wants from and for us. If we ask in this channel, we will receive those things.

COURAGE (JOHN 16:25-33)

TIME WITH GOD

Jesus spoke figuratively, but soon He was going to speak very plainly to His disciples. The time He was referring to was the 40 days from His resurrection to the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost in Acts 2.

- Post resurrection, the doubt and fear of the 11 turned to faith and power.

CLARITY BY THE CROSS, THE SPIRIT, AND TIME

We learn from John that understanding of God, His will, and our place in the universe are only possible by **the work on the cross, the infilling of the Spirit, and spending time with Jesus** in conversation (prayer and listening).

- **Without a relationship with Jesus, we live in confusion and chaos.**

A LIMITED DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE

V28 is simple and clear Christology (Jesus is from the Father, He came in flesh, He died for our sin, He rose from the grave). The disciples claimed to understand (v29), but **without the Spirit, they were still naive and limited.**

- **Understanding the Word only comes from Him. Without the Spirit, we miss the point.**

THE EMPTINESS OF SELF-ASSURANCE

The 11 seemed very confident in themselves, and Jesus sarcastically asked if they "now believe," knowing they were going to scatter when the pressure came.

- **Looking to our hearts or understanding for direction, answers, or assurance is a sure-fire path to failure.**

"BE COURAGEOUS!"

Jesus says we "will have suffering in this world." This works on several levels. First, **even the most righteous person will get hurt in life.** Second, **if we follow the culture of the world, it will inevitably lead to more suffering.**

- **We must understand that the Christian life is fulfilling, but also difficult.**
- But, if we have courage and follow Jesus in the face of suffering, **we have peace because His teachings, principles, and work on the cross have overcome the "ruler," chaos, and suffering of the world.**
- **Biblical living conquers evil in our lives now and Jesus conquers all for eternity.**

ALLOWING THE SPIRIT TO LEAD US

- The Spirit seeks to **convince** and **correct** because Jesus wants to save, redeem, and mold us into His image.
- If we have genuinely given our lives to Jesus, **we should welcome and listen to the conviction of the Spirit.** This compass helps us navigate the good and bad of life.
- If one is following the Spirit, they will **live by biblical teachings and demonstrate the truth and power of God** in their lives.
- Following the Spirit will fly in the face of the principles of the world and will incite **social and physical hardships on true Christians.** Are we prepared for that?

TRUTH AND PROMISES

- **We should always be growing in our knowledge of truth and how we live it out.** Jesus doesn't expect instant understanding, but our faith should always be maturing.
- **It is in the truth and promises of the Word and the Spirit that we are able to weather life and inherit a perfect eternity.**

CLARITY

- Clarity on God, how to live righteously, how to endure hardships, and find our true identity and value is only available through **the work of Jesus on the cross, the indwelling of the Spirit in us, and by spending time with Jesus in prayer, the Word, and meditation.**

COURAGE

- Strength, endurance, and the courage to live holy and help others in the face of evil are only possible by knowing that **Jesus' principles conquer those of the world and He reigns supreme forever and ever.**
- **If we are living in Christ, we have nothing to fear.**