SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 16

Sorrow Turned into Joy — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus told His friends the worst and the best on the same night: the world will hurt you, but My going brings the Spirit, your grief will turn to joy, and I have already won. I don't get a trouble-free life; I get peace in Him and courage because He has overcome the world.

00 The Text

JOHN 16 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 "These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling.

2 "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.

3 "These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.

4 "But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'

6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;

9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;

10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me;

11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

12 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

16 "A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me."

17 Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?"

18 So they were saying, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is talking about.”

19 Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, “Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?

20 “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.

21 “Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

22 “Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.

23 “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you.

24 “Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.

25 “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.

26 “In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf;

27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

28 “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.”

29 His disciples said, “Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech.

30 “Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God.”

31 Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?

32 “Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

33 “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.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “so that you may be kept from stumbling” — Promise / blessing
- **v2** “outcasts from the synagogue” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “think that he is offering service to God” — Sin / warning
- **v6** “sorrow has filled your heart” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “it is to your advantage that I go away” — Promise / blessing
- **v8** “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” — God — His character & actions
- **v11** “the ruler of this world has been judged” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “He will guide you into all the truth” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “He will disclose to you what is to come” — Promise / blessing
- **v14** “He will glorify Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “your grief will be turned into joy” — Promise / blessing
- **v21** “Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain” — Time / place / contrast
- **v22** “no one will take your joy away from you” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “ask and you will receive” — Command / instruction
- **v27** “the Father Himself loves you” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “I came forth from the Father” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “for you to be scattered” — Sin / warning
- **v32** “I am not alone, because the Father is with Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v33** “in Me you may have peace” — Promise / blessing
- **v33** “In the world you have tribulation” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “take courage” — Command / instruction
- **v33** “I have overcome the world” — God — His character & actions

- **v16** “little while” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v1** “These things I have spoken” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v2** “hour” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:13

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, △ He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and ☆ He will disclose to you what is to come."

FIGURE · THE HELPER IN JESUS' FAREWELL

THE FIVE HELPER SAYINGS OF THE LAST NIGHT · JOHN 14–16

14:16–17	**with you forever**	another Helper — abides with you, will be in you
14:26	**teaches & reminds**	teaches all things; brings My words to remembrance
15:26–27	**testifies**	will testify about Me — "and you will testify also"
16:7–11	**convicts the world**	concerning sin, righteousness and judgment
16:13–15	**guides & glorifies**	into all the truth; what is to come; "He will glorify Me"

Maroon = this chapter. Every saying points the Spirit's work back to Jesus — His words, His witness, His glory.

John 16 holds the last two of five promises about the Helper; read down the column and watch the Spirit's work move from the disciples' hearts out to the world and back to Christ's glory.

Setting. Still Thursday night, the last words of the farewell discourse before Jesus' prayer (ch. 17) and the walk to the garden (18:1). For the first time since chapter 14 the disciples speak — confused among themselves (vv17–18) and then over-confident (vv29–30).

Structure:

- vv1–6 — **the warning:** spoken "so that you may be kept from stumbling" (v1). Outcasts from the synagogue; killers who think they serve God (v2), because they have not known the Father or Me (v3). Told now so you will remember (v4). "I am going to Him who sent Me" — and sorrow has filled your heart (vv5–6).
- vv7–11 — **the Helper and the world:** "it is to your advantage that I go away" (v7). He will convict the world concerning sin (unbelief, v9), righteousness (I go to the Father, v10), and judgment (the ruler of this world judged, v11).

- vv12–15 — **the Helper and the disciples:** more to say than they can bear now (v12); the Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth, speak what He hears, disclose what is to come (v13); He will glorify Me, taking of Mine (vv14–15).
- vv16–24 — **a little while:** you will not see Me, then you will see Me (v16); the disciples' confusion (vv17–19); you will weep, the world will rejoice, your grief turned into joy (v20); the woman in labor (v21); I will see you again and no one will take your joy (v22); ask the Father in My name (vv23–24).
- vv25–33 — **plainly:** no more figures; the Father Himself loves you (vv25–28); "now You are speaking plainly … we believe" (vv29–30); "Do you now believe?" — you will be scattered, yet I am not alone (vv31–32); peace in Me, tribulation in the world, take courage, I have overcome the world (v33).

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95):

- "Me" ×17 — vv3, 5 (×2), 9, 10, 14, 16 (×2), 17 (×2), 19 (×2), 23, 27, 32 (×2), 33.
- "Father" ×12 — vv3, 10, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 27 (×2), 28 (×2), 32.
- "go / going" ×9 — vv5 (×2), 7 (×3), 10, 17, 28 (×2).
- "see" ×8 — vv10, 16 (×2), 17 (×2), 19 (×2), 22.
- "world" ×8 — vv8, 11, 20, 21, 28 (×2), 33 (×2).
- "these things" ×7 — vv1, 3, 4 (×2), 6, 25, 33; the formula "These things I have spoken to you" ×4 — vv1, 4, 25, 33.
- "little while" ×7 — vv16 (×2), 17 (×2), 18, 19 (×2).
- "grief / grieve / sorrow / pain / anguish" ×6 — vv6, 20 (×2), 21 (×2), 22; "joy" ×4 — vv20, 21, 22, 24; "rejoice" ×2 — vv20, 22.
- "hour" ×5 — vv2, 4, 21, 25, 32.
- "ask / asks / asked" ×5 — vv5, 23, 24 (×2), 26; "question" ×3 — vv19, 23, 30; "in My name" ×3 — vv23, 24, 26.
- "disclose" ×3 — vv13, 14, 15; "truth" ×3 — vv7, 13 (×2); "Mine" ×3 — vv14, 15 (×2).
- "figurative language / figure of speech" ×3 — vv25 (×2), 29; "plainly" ×2 — vv25, 29; "believe" ×3 — vv9, 30, 31.

Contrasts: offering service to God ⟷ not knowing God (vv2–3). I go away ⟷ the Helper comes (v7). You will weep ⟷ the world will rejoice (v20). Grief ⟷ joy (vv20–22). Pain ⟷ birth (v21). Figurative language ⟷ plainly (v25). Scattered and leaving Me alone ⟷ I am not alone (v32). In Me peace ⟷ in the world tribulation (v33).

Shape of the chapter: from night to morning — warning and sorrow (1–6), the Spirit's work in the world and in the disciples (7–15), grief turning to joy (16–24), and peace in the Victor (25–33). It begins with "kept from stumbling" and ends with "take courage."

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus' going away was not loss but gain: it sent the Spirit, it turned grief into joy, and it won the victory over the world. In Him I have peace even when the world gives me tribulation.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:7

"But I tell you the truth, ☆ it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, △ I will send Him to you."

FIGURE · THE SPIRIT'S THREEFOLD CONVICTION

"HE … WILL CONVICT THE WORLD" · JOHN 16:8–11

CONCERNING	BECAUSE … (the reason Jesus gives)	WHAT THE WORLD IS SHOWN
SIN (v9)	*"they do not believe in Me"*	unbelief is the root sin — the one that condemns
RIGHTEOUSNESS (v10)	*"I go to the Father and you no longer see Me"*	the rejected Man was right — the Father received Him
JUDGMENT (v11)	*"the ruler of this world has been judged"*	Satan's verdict is in — and his followers share it

Henry: the Spirit's method is "first to convince, and then to comfort."

Read each row across: what the Spirit convicts the world about, the reason Jesus gives in His own words, and the verdict it brings home.

FIGURE · A LITTLE WHILE, AND AGAIN A LITTLE WHILE



The disciples could not see the timeline; we can — two short "little whiles" separate the upper room from the empty tomb, and the joy that follows is the joy of asking in His name.

Why is it better that Jesus go away (v7)? Because the Helper comes only if He goes — the cross, resurrection and ascension come before Pentecost (Acts 2:33). Sproul: "it is expedient or necessary for Him to go away so that the disciples may be filled with the Holy Spirit," and "What sounds like an absolute disadvantage, Jesus promises will turn into an advantage." Henry: Christ in the flesh was in one place; "his Spirit is every where, in all places, at all times." Guzik: "Jesus meant that the presence and work of the Holy Spirit would actually be better for believers." Notice the same words in Caiaphas's mouth (11:50): "it is expedient for you."

What does the Spirit convict the world of (vv8–11)? *Elenchō* means to expose and prove guilty, not merely to accuse. **Sin** — "because they do not believe in Me"; Guzik: "It is unbelief, the rejection of Jesus, which ultimately proves one to be guilty." **Righteousness** — "because I go to the Father": the Father's receiving Jesus vindicates the Man the world condemned; Spurgeon also hears the righteousness Christ gives, which "makes him righteous on the spot." **Judgment** — "because the ruler of this world has been judged" (12:31); Spurgeon: "the Lord Jesus overthrew the devil for you." Henry: the Spirit works "first to convince, and then to comfort."

"Guide you into all the truth" — to whom (v13)? First to the apostles: Jesus has more to say than they can bear, and the Spirit will remind (14:26), guide and disclose "what is to come" — which is why we trust the New Testament they wrote. Guzik adds, "In another sense the Holy Spirit continues today to personally lead us into truth." That guidance never adds to Christ or contradicts Scripture; Spurgeon: "The Spirit never says one thing at one time and another thing at another." Its test is v14: "He will glorify Me."

What is "a little while" (vv16–19)? Most naturally, the hours until the cross and the three days until Easter (20:20, "The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord"). Henry hears layers: the resurrection, the coming of the Spirit, and Christ's second coming. As a futurist I take the first meaning as primary and the last as a true echo — the whole church now lives in a "little while" before He comes (Hebrews 10:37).

Grief turned, not replaced (vv20–22). The cross that caused the grief became the cause of the joy. Guzik: "God's work was not to replace their sorrow with joy, but to turn sorrow into joy." The woman's labor shows it: the pain

itself brings the child. Henry: "Believers have joy or sorrow according as they have or have not a sight of Christ." Sproul: their mourning gives way "to a great and fulfilling joy."

Asking in His name (vv23–27). "In that day" — after the resurrection and the Spirit's coming — they will pray to the Father directly in Jesus' name. That doesn't mean Christ stops interceding (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1); it means the Father does not need persuading. Guzik: "Jesus makes it clear that the Son did not need to persuade an angry Father to be gracious." "The Father Himself loves you" (v27).

"Do you now believe?" (v31). The disciples' confession is real but premature; within hours they scatter (Zechariah 13:7). Henry hears a gentle check on overconfidence. Jesus is not alone even when they leave Him, "because the Father is with Me" — Guzik: "In the loneliest moments imaginable, He understood that the Father was with Him."

"I have overcome the world" (v33). Perfect tense, spoken before the cross. Guzik: "Peace is offered to us, but tribulation is promised." Spurgeon: Christ conquered as our Head, so we overcome in Him; Sproul: "Christ, by His resurrection, has overcome the world" (Renewing Your Mind). Henry: "Never was there such a conqueror of the world as Christ was." John's first letter gives the application: "this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Word study (Greek):

- **stumbling — *skandalizō* (G4624):** to trip up, cause to fall (KJV "offended").
- **outcasts from the synagogue — *aposynagōgos* (G656):** only John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2.
- **service — *latreia* (G2999):** priestly, sacrificial worship.
- **advantage — *sympherō* (G4851):** to be profitable, expedient (11:50; 18:14; 16:7).
- **Helper — *paraklētos* (G3875):** one called alongside; advocate.
- **convict — *elenchō* (G1651):** expose, prove guilty (3:20; 8:46).
- **ruler — *archōn* (G758):** prince, ruler of this world (12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
- **guide — *hodēgeō* (G3594):** lead the way (Acts 8:31; Rev 7:17; LXX Ps 25:5).
- **little while — *mikron* (G3398):** a short time; ×7 in vv16–19.
- **grief — *lypē* (G3077):** sorrow, pain of heart (vv6, 20–22).
- **joy — *chara* (G5479):** gladness that no one can take away.
- **anguish / tribulation — *thlipsis* (G2347):** pressure, affliction (vv21, 33).
- **figurative language — *paroimia* (G3942):** proverb, veiled saying (10:6).
- **plainly — *parrēsia* (G3954):** openly, boldly (Acts 4:13, 29, 31).
- **scattered — *skorpizō* (G4650):** dispersed (Zech 13:7).
- **take courage — *tharseō* (G2293):** be of good cheer (Matt 9:2; 14:27; Acts 23:11).
- **have overcome — *nikaō* (G3528):** conquer; perfect tense *nenikēka* (1 John 5:4).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Forewarned is forearmed** — "These things I have spoken to you" ×4.
2. **Religious zeal can kill** — *latreia*, and Saul of Tarsus (Acts 26:9).
3. **Caiaphas and Jesus used the same words** — "it is expedient for you" (11:50; 16:7).
4. **The Spirit proves the case** — first to convince, then to comfort.
5. **Unbelief is the sin the Spirit presses** (v9).

6. **Into the truth, not just to it** — and He always glorifies Jesus (v14).
7. **An absolute disadvantage turned into an advantage** (Sproul).
8. **Grief turned, not replaced** (Guzik).
9. **The mother's anguish and the world's tribulation are one word** — *thlipsis*.
10. **Victory in the perfect tense** — *nenikēka*.

Cross-references: Ps 25:5; Isa 26:17–19; 66:7–14; Zech 13:7; Matt 9:2, 22; 14:27; 26:31; John 3:20; 8:46; 9:22; 11:50–51; 12:31, 42; 14:16–17, 26, 30; 15:18–27; 18:1, 14; 20:19–20; Acts 2:33; 4:13, 29–31; 5:41; 8:1–3, 31; 23:11; 26:9–11; Rom 8:34, 37; Heb 10:37; 1 John 2:1; 5:4; Rev 7:17; 21:4.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:24

"Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full."

Promise to trust — "it is to your advantage that I go away." I have prayed for Jesus to just show up and fix things the way I want. He tells me something better is already here: the Helper living in me. When I feel like He's far away, I will remember that His going away is how the Spirit came to me — not a loss, an advantage.

Command to obey — "ask … so that your joy may be made full." Jesus says, "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name." Too often that's me — I worry, plan and complain, but I don't ask. This week I will write down three things I have stopped asking the Father for and ask Him every morning, in Jesus' name, believing the Father Himself loves me (v27).

Sin to confess — over-confidence and running. The disciples said, "Now we know … we believe," and within hours they scattered, "each to his own home." I know that pattern: big words in the group, then running when it gets hard. I confess it, and I take comfort that Jesus told them ahead of time and took them back afterward.

Truth to live in — grief turned into joy. Many of the men I walk with carry real grief — a child they can't see, years lost, a wife who left, a father who died before they got right. Jesus doesn't say the grief is fake or that it will be swapped for something else. He says it will be *turned* — like a mother whose pain becomes the joy of a child born. I want to hold my grief like labor pain, not a dead end.

Example to follow — "not alone, because the Father is with Me." Jesus faced the loneliest night in history knowing the Father was with Him. When I'm in a cell, a hospital room or an empty house, I'm not alone either.

Courage to stand — "take courage; I have overcome the world." I am promised tribulation and offered peace. The peace is in Him, not in my circumstances. When the world pushes on me this week, I will say out loud: "He has overcome the world."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What trouble has come into my life that Jesus actually warned me about — and did it shake my faith or confirm His word? (16:1–4) *"These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling."*
2. Where do I need to believe that Jesus' "going away" — something I would never have chosen — is to my advantage? (16:6–7) *Sproul: an absolute disadvantage turned into an advantage.*
3. When has the Holy Spirit convicted me — not just made me feel bad, but proved the case? What did He show me about sin, righteousness or judgment? (16:8–11; 8:46) *First to convince, then to comfort (Henry).*
4. What grief am I carrying that I need to see as labor pain rather than a dead end? (16:20–22; Rev 21:4) *Grief turned into joy — the woman in labor.*
5. Jesus says "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name." What have I stopped asking the Father for? (16:23–24) *"Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full."*

6. Where am I feeling alone and scattered this week — and what does it mean that Jesus was "not alone" and has "overcome the world"? (16:32–33; 1 John 5:4) *Peace is offered, tribulation is promised (Guzik).*

Worship. The Father sent the Son; the Son went back to the Father; the Spirit came from the Father in the Son's name to glorify the Son. The night of the cross was a little while, and the morning came. Jesus spoke victory before the battle, and the empty tomb proved He was right.

Prayer. Father, thank You that You Yourself love me. Lord Jesus, thank You for telling me the truth ahead of time, and for going away so the Helper could come. Holy Spirit, convict me where I need it, guide me into the truth, and show me Jesus. Turn my grief into joy. Teach me to ask in Jesus' name again. When I want to run and scatter, hold me. Give me peace in You and courage in the world, because You have overcome the world. Amen.

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