

## The Encouragement of the Spirit

**Read:** John 16:16-33

**Main idea:** Regardless of circumstances, a true disciple finds liberating and lasting joy in Jesus as he or she lives out and shares the gospel.

**Key Verses:** “Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” (16:23-24 ESV)

### Key Principles:

- For the disciples, Jesus warns them that from this point forward, persecution and martyrdom are more likely to happen than not.
- History reveals that each of the apostles experienced severe physical persecution and all but one died as a martyr.
- Their faithfulness was possible because of the work that Jesus did for them and the work that the Holy Spirit did in them.
- Our greatest joys often arise out of our deepest moments of sadness because the light shines brightest after the storm.
- Because our joy is rooted in the belief that we will see Jesus, no amount of torture or persecution can steal it from us.
- Because of our faith in and love for Jesus, we can now experience the love of God because we have been reconciled to Him and nothing can ever change that fact.

### Discussion:

1. How would you respond if you knew that you would face physical attacks because of your faith? What does this type of pressure do to a person?
2. Has God ever brought joy out of your sorrow? If so, when and how?
3. Why do you think that Jesus guarantees that the disciples' joy cannot be stolen? How does that help you in your time of struggle?
4. What are some ways that Satan might attack your joy? How does looking to the cross and empty grave preserve your joy in the midst of those attacks?
5. How does prayer make your joy overflow? Why does our mission make prayer a necessity?
6. Think of something in your life right now that is seeking to destroy your joy in Christ. How does the gospel answer its accusations? How does the Holy Spirit help you?

### Prayer:

- Pray that we would reflect upon the person and work of Jesus for our joy and security.
- Pray:
  - That we remember that sorrow lasts for the night, but joy comes with the morning.
  - That we trust in the promises of Jesus that there is nothing that can steal our joy.
  - That we remember that our joy is founded upon God's faithfulness and presence.

**Encouragement of the Spirit**  
John 16:16-33

- I. You can have joy in times of sorrow. 16:16-22**
  - 1. Don't let confusion steal your joy. 16:16-19
  - 2. Don't let pain steal your joy. 16:20-21
  - 3. Don't let uncertainty steal your joy. 16:22-24
  
- II. You can have joy in times of doubt. 16:25-28**
  - 1. God reveals what you need to know. 16:25
  - 2. God provides what you need to receive. 16:26-28
  
- III. You can have joy in times of tribulation. 16:29-33**
  - 1. Do you believe in Jesus? 16:29-31
  - 2. Do you follow Jesus? 16:32-33

NEXT WEEK:  
**An Abundance of Grace**  
2 Corinthians 8:1-9