



March 8, 2026

A Few Last Words Before I Go
Sorrow Will Become Joy

John 16:16-24

1. **Sermon Outline:**

- a. The Necessary Sorrow of Jesus' Crucifixion Would Become Joy at His Resurrection
 - i. Jesus told His disciples what they would experience in the days ahead
 - ii. The sorrow of the cross is necessary for the joy of the Resurrection
- b. For Disciples Today, the Sorrows from This World Will Become Joy When Jesus Returns
 - i. The time between Christ's Ascension and His return will be marked by sorrow for followers of Jesus
 - ii. However, there will be infinite joy when Jesus returns
- c. Stay Faithful, Share the Gospel, and Pray!

2. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. **Monday:**

- a. Begin by reading and meditating on John 16:16-24 several times.
 - i. The first time you read the passage, what stands out about this brief exchange between Jesus and His disciples?
 - ii. As you read it a second and third time, do you see new or different truths that jump out at you?
- b. Remember, these verses that we are focusing on this week are just a short part of the passage we started studying at the beginning of the year, in which Jesus is preparing His disciples for His imminent death on the cross. During this discourse, He reminds the disciples of what is going to happen to Him several times (most recently in 16:5), but what else does He tell them about their future in verse 16:2?
 - i. How do you think the disciples were feeling after having just been told what their future would be like?

- ii. From a purely human perspective, how would we expect a group of Jews, to whom the synagogue was the center of their life, to react to the fact that they would be kicked out (and probably killed)?
- iii. How does Jesus tell them, as hard as it may have been to believe, that they will respond? Read Acts 5:40-42. How accurate was Jesus? Read 16:12-15 from last week. How does it explain what will occur in the disciples' lives?

4. *Tuesday:*

- a. Read and meditate on John 16:16-18.
- b. One of the keys to understanding what Jesus is teaching in this passage is how we understand the phrase the disciples struggled with, “in a little while”. Given what we know about how events unfold over the next few days, what is the most obvious answer?
 - i. While most Bible scholars will support the position that “in a little while” referred to the period between Jesus’ death and resurrection, some see “I am going to the Father” as an indication that it refers to the time between His ascension and His second coming.
 - 1. How does John 20:17-18 support or refute such an interpretation?
 - 2. While it is hard for us as humans to view 2000 plus years as “in a little while,” how do Hebrews 10:36-39 and 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 provide a better understanding of the time period we are in waiting on His second coming?
 - ii. Other scholars see Jesus' analogy to the sorrow and pain of childbirth as relating to many similar passages in the Old Testament, especially Isaiah 26:16-31, and therefore view Jesus’ words as having both a near-term and a future application. In what way does such a view have more value to us today than it would have to the disciples?

5. *Wednesday:*

- a. Read and meditate on John 16:19-20.
- b. How does Jesus begin His explanation (verse 20) after showing that He knew what was bothering the disciples in verse 19?
 - i. “Truly, truly” occurs 25 times in John’s Gospel and normally introduces statements of major theological importance, particularly promises regarding eternal life and discipleship. What promise does He give the disciples this time?
 - ii. The first sentence (phrase in some translations) hardly seems like a promise we would like. What fundamental truth of our Christian faith does Jesus remind us in this sentence (see John 15:19, 17:14-16, Romans 12:2, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:1-2, Hebrews 11:13-16, and 1 John 2:15-

17)? Based on Jesus' statement, if we are really living as Jesus' disciples, how should we expect to be treated?

- iii. How does the second sentence of verse 20 completely change how we understand the verse?
- iv. For the disciples, how/when was Jesus' promise fulfilled (see John 20:20)? How/when is Jesus' promise fulfilled in our lives (see Romans 15:13, Galatians 5:22, Philippians 4:4, 1 Peter 1:8)?
- v. While the Bible clearly teaches that we should experience joy now, it also tells us we will experience difficulty, even persecution, in this life. How should we view joy at such times (see Matthew 5:12, Romans 5:3-5, 1 Peter 1:6-8, and James 1:2)? How does/should our response to suffering differentiate us from the world and be a witness to our unbelieving friends?

6. *Thursday:*

- a. Read and meditate on John 16:21-22.
- b. Although we briefly considered one of the Old Testament passages that uses the childbirth analogy on Tuesday, today read these additional passages: Isaiah 21:2-3, 66:7-10, Jeremiah 13:21, Hosea 12:13, Micah 4:9-10. How do you think these frequent uses of the same analogy may have affected how the disciples understood Jesus?
- c. What does Jesus promise will overcome their current sorrow in verse 22?
- d. How does the final phrase of verse 22 show us that there is something greater at work than the disciples just seeing the risen Lord? How does this phrase relate to Romans 8:37-39? How do these verses relate to or explain why "no one will take away" our joy: Romans 6:9-10, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Hebrews 7:24-25, and 1 Thessalonians 4:17

7. *Friday:*

- a. Read and meditate on John 16:23-24.
- b. Again, Jesus uses the "Truly, truly" phrase. What important new principle is Jesus highlighting in verse 23 (compare Hebrews 10:19-23)?
 - i. Under the law God established with Moses in Leviticus (see especially 16:11-19), who was allowed to approach God in the Most Holy Place? What was the result of trying some other way (see Leviticus 10:1-3)? For over a thousand years, how had the average Jew accessed God?
 - ii. How did Jesus' death (and resurrection) change this (read Matthew 27:51, Romans 5:1-2, Ephesians 2:18, 3:12, Hebrews 4:14-16, 9:11-12, 10:19-22, and 1 Peter 3:18)?
 - iii. How does this completely change the way we worship and live?

- c. Is Jesus giving us a “blank check” in verses 23 and 24 when He tells us that if we ask “in my name” we will receive (compare 1 John 5:13-15)? Does He mean that if we just close our prayer with the tagline “In Jesus name,” we will get whatever we ask? Why or why not?

8. **Saturday:**

- a. Read the entire focal passage, John 16:16-24, concentrating on how Jesus’ message should influence your life as a Christian.
- b. While John clearly places great emphasis on the experience of physically seeing the risen Lord (see 1 John 1:1, 1:3, 3:2, and 4:14), what takes the place of that physical sight in those who lived later (see John 17:20, Romans 10:14, 1 Corinthians 3:5-9, 1 Peter 1:6-9)? What does that suggest about what should be one of our most important priorities as a Christian (Romans 10:17, 15:4, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17, and James 1:22-25)?

9. **Application:**

- a. Although we will all face trials and suffering in this life, Jesus death and resurrection not only provide for the forgiveness of our sins and a promise of life everlasting with Him, but also for the ability to live this life joyfully. Since joy is one of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), living otherwise indicates a deficiency. Certainly, we are not expected to relish suffering, but with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we can still be joyful in Christ.
- b. Now that we personally have direct access to the Father it is imperative that we spend time in prayer. This cannot be an occasional activity (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and must include giving thanks for both the trials and the blessings (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

10. **Pray:** With the events occurring in Iran, this is a good time to remember that we are told to love and pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:43). There are 85 Unreached People Groups (UPG) in Iran, totaling over 91 million souls, all are bound for an eternity away from God. Besides praying for these groups in general, here are three specific UPGs to remember:

- a. **Kurds** (Kermanshahi, Sorani, and Kurmanji): The 8.1 million Kurds live primarily along the western and northern borders of Iraq and are over 99.9 % Sunni Muslims, although often somewhat influenced by Zoroastrianism.
- b. **Luri** (Feyli and Southern): Nomadic shepherds living in the Zagros mountains and the southwest part of the country. Primarily a mixture of Shia and Shi’ite Muslims, as far as is known 100% of the 3.7 million Luri are Islamic.
- c. **Zartoshi**: One of the many small UPGs, the 16,000 Zartoshi are 100% followers of the Zoroastrian religion. As a small group spread across several regions in central Iran, they are particularly difficult to reach, and there is currently no known effort to bring the Good News to them.