

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide  
SB 06.11.2023

JOY AND PEACE IN A TROUBLED WORLD – John 16:16-33

## Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel tells us, “How many of you would like to have more joy in your life? How many would like to experience more peace? We all would! The reason we all want more is because it’s difficult to hold onto the joy and peace that we find. They tend to slip through our fingers like a wet bar of soap. We may experience moments of peace and flashes of joy, but the problem is that those moments tend to be fleeting and tenuous. This world is constantly attacking our peace and trying to rob us of our joy. That’s why I’m so intrigued by what Jesus says at the end of John 16. In the passage we’re about to look at, Jesus talks about a joy that can’t be robbed and a peace that can’t be taken. He doesn’t just want to add to your joy and peace, He wants to protect them so that you always have them.” Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel’s sermon?
2. What is the difference between joy and happiness?

Sadly, our culture places personal happiness above spiritual devotion and living for self above living for Christ. This causes most people to miss out on experiencing true joy in life. It’s easy to keep our eyes focused on our circumstances if we are not centered in Christ. But while we await the assurance of His return, we are on a mission to overcome our circumstances and connect people to Him.

## Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 16:16-22

John 13–17 has come to be known as the Upper Room discourse, named this because it was Jesus’ teaching to His disciples during the Passover feast the night before the crucifixion. The main point of Jesus’ teaching in these chapters was to prepare them for everything they were about to witness and for the way it would change their lives. In the passage we will discuss today, Jesus not only talked about the sorrow the disciples would feel when He died, but also the joy and peace that would follow at His resurrection.

1. What are the indications in these verses that the disciples did not understand what Jesus had tried to teach them?
2. What do you think Jesus meant by saying that His disciples would weep and mourn while the world would rejoice?

Jesus told His disciples things that were difficult for them to understand. The word translated “understand” basically means “to see,” and signifies perception and knowledge. It was clear that they did not understand what Jesus was saying to them, but He would go on to clarify.

3. In verse 21, Jesus used childbirth as an analogy. How would you compare the way a mother feels before and after childbirth to what the disciples were about to experience?

## ***“PROMISES” in 2023***

The contrast is between the mother’s state of mind before and after giving birth. Women giving birth experience intense physical pain associated with natural childbirth. After a time of excruciating pain, though, a woman will experience joy with the child she has birthed. For the mother giving birth, the pain is not final. Joy soon follows. Similarly, Jesus warned His disciples of His crucifixion, and their pain and persecution. Nevertheless, the disciples’ sorrow would not last forever. In a little while, they would rejoice. That joy would come because they would see Jesus again. They would also experience life in Christ with the coming of the Holy Spirit.

### **4. How would you describe the joy you experience as a result of following Christ?**

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus invites us into a relationship of eternal joy with the God who created us. He grants us not just eternal life, but abundant life with Him. Our satisfaction is not in our circumstances, but in Christ.

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 16:23-33**

Along with the joy Jesus promised would come an indescribable access to the Father through the finished work of Christ on the cross. The Father will answer prayer requests that magnify Jesus and fit into His redemptive purposes—prayer that is in His name.

### **1. How does it impact your prayer life to know you have immediate access to the Father in prayer? How does speaking to God in prayer bring us full joy?**

Following the resurrection, ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Jesus told us He is at the right hand of God, interceding for believers. The Holy Spirit would be indwelling all believers, interceding for them to the Father. Believers have direct access to the Father as they pray in Jesus’ name.

### **2. Why do you think prayer is so important to us as believers?**

The privilege of prayer is one indicator of the Father’s love for His children. Jesus said that God loved the disciples because they had loved Jesus and believed that Jesus came from God. Their family relationship with God as Father came through their personal faith relationship with Jesus. Prayer serves as a conduit to God for our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Prayer also serves us well in our mission to connect others to Christ.

### **3. What did Jesus predict would happen when the disciples witnessed His arrest and crucifixion (v. 31)?**

### **4. How does that relate to Christians today?**

These disciples had lived most of the past three years in self-confidence. Several times their confidence was displayed verbally, particularly in the pronouncements of Peter. But harder times were ahead. At the cross, they would leave their Master, and after the cross, they would be scattered. But after that traumatic little while, their fear would turn to peace, because they would learn how to trust the Father. In the same way, Christians today can have confidence in Christ regardless of how poorly we are treated. Indeed, our joy is still full regardless of circumstances as we look with expectation for Jesus’ return.

### **5. Jesus nearly completed His teaching in the upper room. With what hope did He leave His followers in verse 33?**

## ***“PROMISES” in 2023***

### **Applying God’s Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

Someday soon you’re going to be in heaven and when you get there, you won’t have to ask for anything because you’ll already have everything you need. But in this season, we still have plenty of needs. So, Jesus says, ‘Just ask, and my Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.’ (v. 23) Prayer is such an incredible and underutilized gift by which God gives us access to all heaven’s resources to meet our needs down here. God knows you have needs and He wants to meet those needs. It’s His joy to answer your requests. At the end of verse 24 He says, ‘Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.’ Do you want more joy in your life? Then start praying. When God answers your prayers, it will complete your joy!

- 1. What difference does trusting in God’s love for you make as you try to persevere through difficult times?**
- 2. How can you rely on the Holy Spirit this week to help you endure “the little whiles” of pain, before you experience His peace?**
- 3. What steps can you take to be more aware of all that Christ has done (and is doing) for you in working all things for your good? How can we encourage each other in this area?**
- 4. What is one circumstance in your life in which you are longing for Jesus to overcome? What would it look like for you to claim the truth of John 16:33 as you confront that situation with trust and hope in Him?**

**PRAYER – For your closing prayer time, give your group members the opportunity to voice prayers of thanksgiving and praise to God for the good news of the gospel and the peace and joy it brings to your souls. Pray that you would cling to the gospel with confidence and hope as you fight Satan’s attacks this week in the victory Christ has already achieved for you. Pray with longing for the blessed time when Christ will return.**

**“When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.” {James 4:3}**