

## TUESDAY BIBLE CLASS

A study in John 13-17

John 15:18-16:6

January 29, 2008

**Intro:** In the first seventeen verses of John 15, our Lord spoke to His disciples primarily about their relationship with Himself, but which also included their relationship with God and their relationship with each other. *Now in chapter 15, beginning with verse 18, our Lord turned to another aspect of their ministry as His apostles and friends. This continues through the first six verses of chapter 16.*

The Bible teaches that as Christians, as the people of God, we have three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the Devil. They are *a trinity of evil*. Thus, the Christian life is portrayed to us in Scripture as *a warfare*. The world is what Godet calls, “natural humanity” (p. 861). Its god is the Devil. And its appeal to us is through the flesh, our old sinful nature which remains with us unchanged and unchangeable. Concerning the world we have such passages as Romans 12:1-2 and 1 John 2:15-17 as God’s will for us. Concerning the flesh, we have Romans 6, especially verses 11-14 as guidance for our lives. But the whole chapter is important for us in dealing with our old sinful natures. With regard to the Devil we have such passages as James 4:7-10 and 1 Peter 5:8-11, as well as Ephesians 6:10-20. But the three together, the world, the flesh, and the Devil are united in their opposition to turn us away from God, from Christ, from the Holy Spirit, from God’s Word, and from each other as fellow-members of the body of Christ. They are united also to turn us to sin. If we seek to face the world in our own strength, we are doomed to failure. But if we face our enemies in the power of God, we are assured of continual victory over our enemies.

February 4, 2008

From the beginning of John 13 we have learned that our Lord gathered with His disciples, the apostles, in an Upper Room where, as His words show, He was giving the last of their preparation for the time when He would no longer be with them. This was just the evening before He would be crucified. It was here that they observed the Passover, and, although the Apostle John did not mention it, it was here that our Lord instituted what we know as the Lord’s Supper. But everything in these chapters of John, 13, 14, 15, and 16 were our Lord’s final words of preparation were given to them before He would die the next day.

They were words of encouragement and comfort. It was also a sad time for the apostles because they did not want Him to leave them, and they had not yet really understood the Lord when He spoke to them about His death. But the Lord was concerned basically about two things. He was concerned that they love each other. Cf. John 13:34-35 and a verse like 15:12. But He was also concerned that they all be obedient to the many commands that He had given them during the time that He had been with them. He left no doubt in their minds but that their obedience to His commands would be evidence of their love for Him. He had told them that He was going away, but He also promised them that He would come again to take them to be where He was. But for the present they could not go with Him.

Our Lord’s words to His disciples in the passage we have just concluded, John 15:1-17, were most amazing because they emphasized the union between Him and them, a great truth which would be taught and emphasized later especially in the epistles of Paul – a man who would become one with them as an apostle, but who was not even saved at this time.

But now, as we come to verse 18 of John 15, the Lord spoke words of warning, followed by more encouragement, concerning their sphere of ministry. It was to be, as we know, in a hostile, unbelieving, wicked world. He had told them back in John 14:30 that “the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” He, of course, was speaking of the Devil. “Prince” means the chief ruler, the one with the greatest power who would

oppose all that they would do for the spread of the Gospel. This Prince, called also in Scripture, Satan, the great Dragon, the old serpent, the one who has deceived the whole world of humanity, would be their main Enemy. See Rev. 12:9. The Apostle Paul would write later concerning “the Prince of this world, that

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

One thing that makes him so dangerous is that he is unseen. Another is that he is great in power, being a fallen angel, and great in wisdom. In both of these areas he is greater than all of the other creatures of this world. He hates the Gospel. His primary object it to keep the Gospel from everyone. He has blinded men’s minds to the truth. And because he hates the Gospel, he hates everyone who spreads the Gospel, and everyone who believes the Gospel. He hates the Lord Jesus Christ preeminently, and we can see in the Gospel records how he, the Devil, sought to do away with Christ Himself. For all he knew, since the Lord of glory had become a Man, this made Him a possible Victim of his deadly purposes.

The Devil has countless other fallen angels who serve under his authority as demons. So the opposition to the twelve disciples was formidable and overwhelming. When we consider how weak the apostles were personally, and how inadequate their understanding was at this period of time, we can marvel that the Lord would leave His work in their hands. But I hope this will help us to see how extremely important this made the message of Lord which He had just given them. Knowing all of this, it is amazing that when Paul and his fellow servants of the Lord were in Thessalonica, those who opposed them spoke of them as men who “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). How could that be? The Apostle John explained why the Devil has not been able to stamp out the Gospel, and that today the Gospel has spread throughout the whole world. It is found in his words in 1John 4:4,

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

But the battle has been fierce. Most of the Apostles died as martyrs. And no one can number how many others have laid down their lives for the Gospel. But it is not because the Lord’s servants outnumbered the enemy, nor because they were more powerful than the Enemy. The glory belongs to God, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. Remember what the Lord told His disciples in John 15:5, “For without Me ye can do nothing.” You and I would never have heard of the Gospel if it had not been for the mighty, overwhelming, power of God which has been displayed in the lives of the people of God.

But now let us turn to see what the Lord had to say to His disciples about “the world.”

**15:18** The Lord was here assuring His disciples that the world would hate them. Who was the Lord referring to when He spoke of the “world”? He was speaking of every person who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. There is a natural aversion to the Gospel in the heart of every person who does not know the Savior. But what did He mean by “hate”? Did He mean that everyone who isn’t a Christian would like to kill Christians? No, it doesn’t mean that. There are degrees of hate just like there are degrees of love. Hatred can be expressed by simple rejection. Hatred is expressed by an unwillingness to listen to the Gospel. Hatred is expressed by a preference for other things. You people read the Bible every day, and you will take time out of your days to go to church on Sunday where you can hear the Word. You will take a big part of your day on Tuesday to come to this Bible class. You enjoy being with other people who know and love the Lord. All of this is an expression of love, love for the Lord, love for His Word, and love for His people. Choosing is a part of love; rejection is a part of hate. Of course, there are those who are strong in their opposition to Christ, others who are even violent.

But what the Lord was saying was that “if you love Me, you will find that the world will treat you like it treated

Me.” The Bible tells us about the multitudes who came to hear the teaching of Christ, but it does not emphasize how many stayed away. And it is especially important to note in the Gospels and the epistles, that it was religious people who seemed to hate the Lord the most, the scribes and Pharisees. The only person I ever met who was angry with me for speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ, was a preacher. The world in our Lord’s day rejected Christ, and the world in our day is doing the same. People will be more tolerant for false religions than they are for the Gospel. You see, love and hate have different degrees, but they actually refer to what people accept and what they reject. The Cross of Christ meant total rejection, total hatred for Christ. The Lord was telling His disciples that they could expect the type of acceptance that He had, which was none. The Lord Jesus was never voted Citizen #1 in his day, and there is something wrong if any Christian is given that supposed honor in our day. The world is not waiting to hear the Gospel, as some mission enthusiasts tell us. When anyone shows interest in the Gospel, or in Christ, or even in going to a church where the Word is preached, you can be sure that God has given them that desire. These things are not in the human heart naturally.

Look at verse 19.

**15:19** The Lord said, “If ye were of the world,” by which he meant, “If you belonged to the world, if you lived like they lived, and did what they do, and went where they go, and sought what they seek . . .” There is a lot in those words, “If ye were of the world.” And all of us used to be of the world. When that little child was born into your family, it was not only born into the world, but it was born of the world. “They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”

Why is it that you and I are no longer “of the world”? It is because the Lord has chosen us out of the world. We should not be surprised that people object to the doctrine of election. People like to feel that they are in charge of their own lives. But that is the only way our attitude can be changed about the Lord, and about the Gospel; God must change it. He has done that for me, for you, and for everyone who is truly a Christian. The Lord had just told His disciples, “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” That is what makes the difference in people. Don’t look for people to change themselves. That is not going to happen. We need to give people the Gospel, but praying as we do that the Lord will use the Gospel to make an eternal change in their hearts. What made two covetous Jews, Matthew and Zacchaeus, turn from their lucrative occupations as publicans, to follow Christ? It wasn’t *what*, but *Who!* What made a promising Rabbi, Saul of Tarsus, turn from a promising career as a Jewish Pharisee, to follow a despised Nazarene named, Jesus? It was Jesus Himself. And he wrote later, “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10).

Charles Simeon had this to say about this verse:

“The whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19), all being equally alienated from God, however they may differ from each other in their moral conduct. But God has from eternity chosen a people, whom He has given to His dear Son, and whom in due time He calls by His grace, and brings out of nature’s “darkness into the marvelous light” of His Gospel. These, when called, are made sensible that they owe the change, not to any merit or power in themselves, but altogether to the effectual working of His grace: and they acknowledge thankfully their obligations to Him, saying, “By the grace of God I am what I am” (Vol. 14, p. 79).

And we have more of the same in John 15:20.

**15:20** The Lord told His disciples to *remember* what He was saying to them, because it is so easy for us, living in a fallen world, to forget the wide gap that exists between us and an unregenerate world. Bishop Ryle mentioned how important this word, remember, is:

We ought to observe carefully how strongly this lesson about the world is laid down by our Lord. It

was doubt-less spoken for all time, and with a special reference to believer's slowness to realize it. If there is anything that true Christians seem incessantly forgetting, and seem to need incessantly reminding of, it is the real feeling of unconverted people toward them, and the treatment they must expect to meet with. Wrong expectations are one great cause of Christians feeling troubled and perplexed. That word "remember," – "do remember," – has a mine of meaning in it (Vol. 2, p. 357).

In explaining what the apostles were to expect, there were two things for them to keep in mind:

- 1) "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" – rejection!
- 2) "If they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also" – acceptance!

There are two sides to the coin. Often, perhaps more often than not, the message will be rejected. But just as there were those who trusted in the Lord and believed His message, so there would be for the apostles, and for us, those who will be the grace of God, listen to the Gospel and be granted faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. What a great encouragement this is. Our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

**15:21** Notice that the Lord Jesus Christ is the issue. People often talk about God who deny that Jesus Christ was, and is, the Son of God. This is going on from liberal pulpits all of the time. The Lord readily admitted that He was the problem, but then He went on to say that those who reject Him, do so "because they know not Him that sent Me." So the rejection of Christ means that they do not know God. Cf. John 14:6. So the person who claims to know God, but rejects the Lord Jesus Christ, is self-deceived. Earlier in John's Gospel we find these words of our Lord in John 5:22-24:

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

**15:22** At this point the Lord spoke of another important truth which all of us are inclined to overlook. This has to do with the effect that the preaching of the Gospel has upon the hearing of the Gospel. In our country in past years, and even in the present, there has been much preaching of the Gospel. But people are inclined to feel that even if they hear the Gospel, they can turn away from it and there will be no difference for them than if they had never heard the Gospel. *But that simply is not true.* Hearing the Gospel put the hearer under a direct responsibility to God. If, after hearing the Gospel, he rejects the Gospel, he is guilty of a most serious sin. It is not that he was not a sinner before, but now he has added to his sins the greatest of all sins, which is the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The person who has not heard the Gospel and the person who has heard it, but rejected it, will both end up in hell, but the one who has heard it and rejected it will experience a greater judgment than the person who has not heard. Hearing the Gospel places a person immediately under a greater obligation to God. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48m). Bishop Ryle said, "To be able to say, "I know," and yet not to say, "I believe," will place us at the lowest place on Christ's left hand, in the great day of judgment" (Vol. 2, p. 360).

And then the Lord reiterates in verse 23 what He had said in verse 21. Repetition in Scripture is always for emphasis, and to stress the importance of what has been said. So we have repetition in verse 23.

**15:23** Men claim that they can love God, but hate Christ. Our Lord said, "He that hateth Me hateth My Father also."

What could be clearer? Charles Erdman says on this point:

In no other part of his Gospel has John declared more clearly the sinful nature of unbelief, and the peril

of rejecting Christ; for to deny His claims and to refuse to become His disciple is to hate God and to condemn one's own soul (*The Gospel of John*, p. 130).

It would be impossible to think of anything more serious than this. It is a sin with eternal consequences.

**15:24** Verse 22 has to do with the teachings of the Lord. This verse has to do with His mighty works. So those to whom these words were originally spoken had not only heard the Lord's own words, but they had seen His works, the many, mighty miracles which He had performed which John tells us in John 20:30 and 31, were done "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name." God had given many the twofold privilege of hearing His messages and also of seeing His miracles, so their condemnation was doubled, and in the final analysis from the divine point-of-view, which is the only one which matters, they by their actions were showing that they hated both our Lord and His Father. It seems like those who have the most reasons to believe are often among those with the greatest rejection – both of the Son and of the Father.

**15:25** None of us had the privilege of seeing the Lord Jesus in the flesh. None of us had the privilege of hearing the wonderful truth that He taught. None of us had the privilege of seeing the amazing miracles which He performed before the thousands of people who were witnesses to His presence, His teaching, and His miracles. He could boldly face His enemies, and challenge them with the question recorded for us in John 8:46-47:

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

The best His enemies could do was to force some to be false witnesses. But our Lord never sinned in act, word, or even thought. As the Son of God He was totally incapable of sin. And so the prophecy of Psalm 69:4 was fulfilled in Christ, "They hated Me without a cause." They killed Him because of the sin that was in their own hearts, and their hatred of Christ proved their hatred of God as well.

We haven't seen the Lord, nor heard His messages, nor witnessed His miracles, but we have a more sure word of prophecy. We have an infallible record of the Lord Himself, His words, and His works. So having heard His Word, and also having read much of it for ourselves, we, too, are without excuse. Our faith can be as firm through the Word as was the faith of those who actually witnessed the Lord's ministry, or heard those who were present when the Lord was on earth, and who heard Him teach, and saw the marvelous works which He did.

Ever since the Lord began to speak specifically of the world in verse 18, our attention has been focused upon both the Father and the Son. We have seen the total agreement between the Father and the Son, and that it is impossible to believe on the Son without believing on the Father. But now in the last two verses of chapter 15 our attention is focused upon the Holy Spirit.

**15:26** Twice before in this message to His apostles the Lord had spoken of the Holy Spirit. See John 14:16-17, and then in verse 26 of the same chapter. (Read them.) Now we come to a third. Notice that this is one of those special verses in which all three Persons of the Godhead are mentioned. The Lord Jesus was going to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles, which He did. And He mentioned that the Holy Spirit would proceed from the Father, with the Father's full approval and blessing. And what would He, the Holy Spirit, do? "He," our Lord said, "shall testify of Me." This means that the Holy Spirit would confirm the testimonies of the Father, and of the Son which He had given about Himself, and would fully support all that the Father and the Son had said with reference to salvation. Thus we have from the Father, the Son, and then from the Holy Spirit the infallible testimony that Christ was the Son of God, that the only way to know the Father was through the Son, and that the knowledge of both concerning salvation and the forgiveness of sins was given on the highest

possible authority! But something else would follow, as we learn from verse 27.

**15:27** Now the connection here is between the Holy Spirit and the apostles. The calling of the apostles was to be life-long witnesses of Christ, which also they were to be witnesses of the Gospel. Ryle describes their mission in these words:

They would have to bear testimony to facts which many would not believe, and to truths which the natural heart would dislike. They would often have to stand alone, – a few against many, a little flock against a great multitude. None of those things must move them. They must count it no strange thing to be persecuted, hated, opposed, and discredited. They must no mind it. To witness was their grand duty, whether men believed them or not. So witnessing, their record would be on high, in God's book of remembrance; and to witnessing, sooner or later, the Judge of all would give them "a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4) (Vol 2, p. 362).

I think that it was Arthur Pink emphasized that we, the witnesses of Christ and the Gospel, must take care that when people hate us for the Lord's sake and the Gospel's sake, that there will be no cause in us for their hatred. We witness not only by our words, but first and foremost, by our lives, by what we are. If our lives are a contradiction to the profession we make with our lips, it is always our lives that will speak the loudest to others.

February 11, 2008

The Lord Jesus here indicates in the last two verses of chapter 15 that along with the opposition of the world, believers will be blessed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And it will be through the comforting ministry of the Holy Spirit that believers will continue to bear witness. The Holy Spirit is behind all true witness of Christ and the Gospel. As the Holy Spirit testifies to us of Christ, we are going to be faithful in testifying of Christ to the world. If it were not for the Holy Spirit, and His ministry to us and to all other believers, the testimony of believers would have been silenced long ago. But as a result of the Spirit's witnessing to us of Christ, the Church's witness of Christ will never be silenced. Some may die for the faith, but there are always others who will fill their places.

**16:1** There really should be no chapter division here because the Lord was continuing what He had to say to His disciples about the opposition they were to expect from the world.

Bishop Ryle said of Christ, "He never kept back the cross, or concealed the difficulties on the way to heaven (II, 373). Often believers who are young in the faith, are surprised by the rejection that they experience from the world, and so we all need to be prepared for trouble from the world. A lot of preachers, and other Christians today, have learned to guard themselves from the world's opposition, but it is always done at the expense of watering down the Gospel message. It is done by the prosperity Gospel which many are preaching today. It is done by churches which concentrate on entertainment. It is done when preachers fail to speak of sin and every man's need of repentance.

**16:2** They shall put you out of the synagogues." This is what most devout Jews feared more than anything else. To them it was like being cut off from God and whatever ideas they may have had about salvation. "Out of the synagogues" is one word in the Greek, and so it shows how prominent this idea was in the minds of Jews who had listened to the teaching of the Lord.

This is what we read in John 12:42-43:

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: (Continued on next page.)

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

You probably remember the story of the man who was born blind, and the Lord had healed him. It caused quite a stir among the Leaders of the Jews who did not believe that it had happened. And so they called the parents to talk to them. This is what we read in John 9:18-22:

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

We have this word also in John 12:42-43

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

We are even told in John 19:38 that Joseph of Arimathea who, after our Lord was crucified, went to Pilate requesting that he might take the body of the Lord for burial, was a disciple, "but secretly for fear of the Jews." Nicodemus was probably in that same category for a time. It probably explains why Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, came to the Lord at night to talk with Him. The fear of man has kept many a person from expressing any interest in the Lord.

But in many cases people were not only put out of the synagogues, but they were put to death. "Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Stephen was the next in line.. But his death was undoubtedly one of events which the Lord used to bring Saul of Tarsus to Christ and to salvation. Some of our politicians are afraid to say much about Christ even though they profess to be saved. It would cost them too much in votes. The battle lines are drawn in our own day, and we may live to see them get tighter and tighter. This is one major reason that there is not more witnessing going on in the lives of those of us who know the Lord. We may not be put to death, or even arrested unless we do stupid things, but we can lose friends, and be the object of ridicule and/or the loss of friends.

Pink quoted a man by the name of George Brown who had this to say about being put out of the synagogue. He said that it

was more than simply to be excluded from the place of public worship. It cut a man off from the privileges of his own people, and from the society of his former associates. It was a sort of moral outlawry, and the physical disabilities followed the sufferer even after death. To be under this ban was almost more than flesh and blood could bear. All men shunned him on whom such a mark was set. He was literally an outcast; in lasting disgrace and perpetual danger. Those familiar with the history of the dark ages, or who are acquainted with the effects of losing caste among the Hindoos will be able to realize the terrors of such a system (quoted by Pink in his commentary on John, Vol. 3, p. 43),

Pink added, "Sometimes the degradation of excommunication was the prelude to death" (*Ibid.*)

**16:3** We often ask ourselves, Why is this? Why do people hate the Gospel, hate to be told about their sin, hate even any reference to God or to Christ? The Lord gives the answer here, pure and simple, as we sometimes say. The Lord said, "And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me." This is a part of human nature. Even many religious leaders who talk about God, but have

nothing good to say about the Lord Jesus Christ, do not really believe the truth about God, the truth of God which is revealed in the Word. This is what the Lord was talking about back in 15:21, and again in 15:24. What a basic truth this is about man's makeup. Unbelievers can talk very piously about God, but it is a God of their own making – not a holy, righteous, God, a God Who is so holy that He cannot stand to look upon sin, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul writing to Titus has this to say in Titus 1:15-16:

15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

**16:4** “These things, which are translation of one Greek word in the Greek Testament (ταῦτα), appear thirty-eight times in the Gospel of John. In fact, this is the third time they appear in the first three verses of this chapter. See vv. 1, 3, and then twice here in verse 4, then again in verses 5, 25, and 33. Not all of them have to do with what the Lord said, as they do here in this chapter, but many of them do. They emphasize the importance of what the Lord was saying, and even the timing of them. It is a word which directed special attention to what the Lord was saying. Ryle commented as though the Lord was telling them, “Nothing unforeseen, nothing unpredicted . . . happens to us. Our Master told us it would be so” (*Op. Cit.*, p. 375). There is a saying that goes, “To be forewarned, is to be forearmed.” And He wanted them to remember that He had told them how things would go with them.

The thought behind the Lord's words here that He had not told them these things before like He was telling them now, was because while He was with them, He was the special object of man's hatred. But now that He was going away, the hatred that had been directed toward Him, would be directed toward them. They were being moved out of the training camp into the battle field. And so it was! And so it still is today. But when we think of the salvation of the Apostle Paul, how quickly the Gospel turns hate into the deepest kind of love. And this is why love among brethren is such a mark of salvation, as the Lord had told His disciples in John 13:34, 35. All of the pieces were beginning to fit together for the apostles.

**16:5** There seems to be a note of disappointment in what the Lord said here, and possibly a word of rebuke. They wanted Him to stay with them even though they had wondered why they could not go with Him. But they did not understand that the Lord had come to earth on a mission that the Lord had sent him to accomplish, now what that mission was, nor that going to the One Who had sent Him, meant that at His going His mission would be fulfilled. It seems that they missed a golden opportunity to ask the Lord questions which He seems to have wished that they would have asked.

It seems that the Lord had been disappointed that they had not asked Him more questions. I suppose you have seen the cartoon where something bad had happened to a man, and he looked up to heaven and asked God, “Why me?” And the answer came back from heaven, “Why not?” God wants us to come to Him with our questions. In the reading of the Psalms, it is good to note the questions which the Psalmists asked. The Lord answered men's questions while He was here on earth even when He knew the questions were not sincere, like, “What is the great commandment in the Law?”

**16:6** Back in John 15:11 the Lord had said to His apostles, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” But now He says in John 16:6, “But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.” How do we put these two verses together? It surely speaks of some kind of a failure on the part of the apostles. I will agree with you that there was much that the Lord had said, both before they all got to the Upper Room, and while they were there, that would have the power to make them sad. *But the Lord did not want to make them sad, or to remain said if they were sad*



*when they arrived in the Upper Room.* Hadn't some of His words to them been, "Let not your heart be troubled . . ." What were some of the things that He had spoken to them about that would have made them happy? One of them was that He had said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." There is nothing that ought to produce greater joy in our hearts than this promise from the Lord.

Even His return to the Father was to produce in them joy. See John 14:28.

There was another part of what He said to them that should have given them great joy, and it ought to give us great joy, and that was all that He told them about the Father. And there is such an intimate relationship between the Son and the Father, that you can't know the Son without knowing the Father. So knowing Christ brings peace (see John 14:27 and 16:33), and with peace we have "good cheer" which is joy.

Even their abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus, should have given them joy. He might be leaving physically, but not in actual reality. They had been joined to Christ like branches are joined to the vine.

And then, too, there was the joy of fellowship with the Father in prayer. We have had several prayer promises in this message the Lord gave to His apostles. But a good one is still ahead of us. See John 16:24.

There are probably other reasons in these chapters as to why we should be a happy people. But it is also true, as the Lord said in the last verse of this wonderful message that "in the world ye shall have tribulation." This world is not our home. We are no longer *of* this world. People we love die, and it makes us cry and cry and cry. We fail the Lord by sinning against Him, and we cry about that too – or we should be sad about that if we aren't! We get sick. We hurt because we have pain. "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward," and we Christians are not exempt.

But through it all our joys are greater than our sorrows. In fact, we can have joy and peace in our hearts when it seems that everything is going wrong around us. I am terribly concerned about our country. We have done so many bad things nationally, and we are still doing them. No nation has ever turned away from God and still survived. But our joy is in knowing the One Who is in total control over the affairs of our nation *and the whole wide world!*

*But as we come to the end of this part of the Lord's message to His apostles when He spoke to them about the world, sorrow is going to be turned into joy as we learn more about the Holy Spirit.* So it really could be that our best days are ahead. We don't know what the Holy Spirit may do. But what we need to understand is that, if it is in the providence of God to give us special blessing, true blessing, nothing and nobody will be able to stand in His way. And remember that great joy always accompanies great blessing. Don't look to the Democrats, you will be disappointed. And don't look to the Republicans; they will fail too. Let's keep our eyes on God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They cannot fail, and they will not fail. We are headed for a place where there is fulness of joy, and the Lord wants us to be tasting of that even now. May it be so.