

In Me You May Have Peace

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[0:00] John chapter 16 verses 25 down through verse 33. And Miss Alice is serving us today. Thank you, Alice. I have said these things to you in figures of speech.

The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.

His disciples said, Now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech. Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you.

This is why we believe that you came from God. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming. Indeed, it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone.

[1:02] Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world.

Thank you. Father, would you please bless to our hearts the reading of your word. Holy Spirit, would you please guide us into the truth that we need to hear from you today.

Lord Jesus, please be glorified by the things that are said and done from your word that are about you. Please help us as we continue in this time of worship.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. I love a good idiom. Do you know what an idiom is?

I don't want you to be confused. This is not the same as an idiot. That would be something very different, although they sound very similar. An idiom is a phrase that has a culturally accepted meaning, a meaning that if you speak the native language, you will readily understand, but the words themselves don't actually mean what the phrase means.

[2:28] It might be easier if I just offer you a couple of examples. If someone says, you're in hot water, that does not mean that you are taking a shower.

It means that you are in trouble. If someone spills the beans, it does not mean that they have made a mess in the kitchen.

It means what? You told a secret, right? You said something that you were not supposed to say. Here's one more idiom that I think is fun.

I am in over my waders. You know what waders are? Waders are like rubber coveralls that you can put on when you need to go into the lake and they only come up so far.

And if you go in too far, then you are in over your waders and you should expect all of that water to come rushing in and filling up your waders, your pants.

[3:37] Now you're carrying around all of the lake inside of your waders. I remember this because I remember helping my grandfather put in the dock and it was cold and he was wearing waders and I was not wearing waders.

And he did not go in over his waders, which was a good thing. I wonder if following Jesus feels sometimes like you are in over your waders.

Maybe you have moments of spiritual highs followed by seasons of discouragement and doubt. Maybe you feel overwhelmed by the evil in the world, frustrated by your own sin, your weakness, your failure.

Me too. Sometimes people say the only things certain are death and taxes.

But for Christians, there is one more certainty and that is trouble. But there is also great security because Christ has overcome.

[4:58] For the last several hours, Jesus has been teaching the disciples non-stop. He taught them about the Holy Spirit, the helper, the comforter will come and be with them.

The spirit of truth will help them to understand the significance of his life and his death and his resurrection. Jesus explained that he is the true vine and that abiding, remaining in him, trusting him, obeying him, this is the only way to bear fruit.

He's warned them that the world will hate them, not because they are obnoxious, but because they belong to him. They will be misunderstood, persecuted, and even killed in the name of religion.

And then Jesus said something that sounded almost like a riddle. A little while and you won't see me any longer, and then a little while and you will see me again. And the disciples are confused, and so Jesus explains to them their sorrow during this first little while will be like a woman in labor. And yet, their pain, like that woman, will eventually turn into joy. And their joy will be full because they can ask for anything in Jesus' name and expect an answer.

[6:31] This is a lot of teaching for one night. It's like drinking from a fire hose, if you like an idiom. As Jesus concludes this evening of incredible revelation, he acknowledges something intriguing.

He admits that his teaching on this particular night could have been more clear. Look at verse 25. I have said these things to you in figures of speech.

The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but will tell you plainly about the Father.

Let's remember, the disciples have expectations about the Messiah. In their minds, the Messiah conquers, the Messiah reigns, the Messiah defeats Israel's enemies.

Their expectations do not include the Messiah's death in just a few hours. And these expectations make it almost impossible for them to understand what Jesus is saying.

[7:57] And so, he has used figures of speech, metaphors, images, illustrations, the vine, the woman in labor, a little while. These are clues pointing toward a reality that the disciples are not yet able to grasp.

Why? Well, because the necessity of his death has gone over their heads. Jesus promises something remarkable to them.

He won't always speak this way. An hour is coming when he will talk with them plainly about the Father, but not until their expectations are shattered and then rebuilt around his death and resurrection.

Listen, as Jesus continues speaking, verse 26, in that day, you will ask in my name and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

For the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.

[9:27] Now, when Jesus says, I do not say that I will ask the Father on your behalf, he is not refusing to pray for the disciples.

We know from elsewhere in Scripture that Jesus intercedes for us. But what Jesus says here is even more wonderful.

He does not need to talk the Father into responding to their prayers. Jesus does not need to go to the Father and say, you know, Father, could you answer that request?

for me? This one time? Jesus doesn't need to do that. Why not? The Father himself loves you.

The Father is not reluctant. The Father is not distant. The Father is not waiting to be convinced by the Son. The Father himself loves you.

[10:38] Let that sink in for a moment. God loves you. loves you. Maybe you have heard a well-meaning but somewhat careless preacher say something like this.

You are sinful, but here's the good news. God loves you because Jesus died for you. Is that the gospel?

Did Jesus have to convince the Father to love you by dying on the cross? God or as John 3 16 says, did God so love the world that he sent his only son?

The cross did not make the Father's love possible. The cross is what made the Father's love visible. loves love the Father himself loves you.

We'll come back to that in a moment. Kids, have you ever thought that you understood something really well as it relates to school?

[11:54] And then you have to go and take a quiz or a test or a final or write an essay or something like that and you realize, oh, I did not, I did not understand that topic at all.

That's the disciples. That's the disciples. Listen to what they say in verse 29. His disciples said, ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech.

Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you. This is why we believe that you came from God.

You can imagine how the disciples feel in this moment. They think that they've got it. They think that they understand. Now it all makes sense.

I almost wish our translation said, aha, right? It's that light bulb going off moment. They think that they are picking up what Jesus is laying down.

[13:04] But they are still misunderstanding him. How do we know? Because Jesus said up in verse 25, the hour is coming.

It hasn't come yet. We know what that hour is. It is the hour of the little while. It is his death. They are not yet understanding him.

They are still standing on the far side of the cross and their expectations of the Messiah are still very much intact. And without his death and resurrection, they simply cannot understand what he is saying to them.

but their presumption exposes something important. The foundation beneath their belief is thin ice. In just a few hours, their confidence will collapse and yet, even while correcting them for their presumption, notice how kind Jesus is with their fragile faith.

[14:15] Verse 31, Jesus answered them, do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone.

Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. Before he explains their coming failure, notice this question that Jesus asks, do you now believe?

That question doesn't apply just to the disciples, it also applies to us. Do you now believe? believe? Not simply did you believe once in the past, do you now believe? By grace alone is your faith in Jesus alone.

Jesus says, the hour is coming, indeed it has come. in other words, the moment when the disciples abandon Jesus to save their own skins will arrive very soon.

[15:46] It is even nearer than the hour of his death, which Jesus says has not arrived yet. But he says, this hour is coming, indeed it has come.

The men who promised they would never leave him will leave him. But he is not truly alone. Because the father is with him.

The disciples don't understand everything yet. They've been thrown into the deep end and they are barely keeping their heads above water.

But their faith, it's in the right person. Jesus knows they will scatter. And so he comforts them in advance.

Listen to his final words in this section, verse 33. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.

[16:56] In the world you will have tribulation. but take heart. I have overcome the world.

What is the world? The world is people and power structures organized around values and priorities that treat God as unnecessary and unwelcome.

if the world treats God as unnecessary and unwelcome.

It should not surprise us when Jesus says in the world you will have tribulation.

Trouble. if the world's values and priorities are out of alignment with God's glory, then the disciples should not be surprised by opposition, adversity, persecution, even death.

[18:14] death. But then comes one of the most hope-filled phrases in this entire passage.

Jesus says, but take heart, I have overcome the world. Jesus speaks of his victory even before going to his cross because in his mind his death and resurrection are as good as done. I have overcome the world. And through his victory he says something that is so comforting, in me you may have peace.

Notice where the peace is found in me. Not because the world stops opposing you, in me. Not because you get everything right all the time, in me. Jesus says, though you will have tribulation, in me you may have peace.

[19:50] The world may oppose the disciples, but it cannot defeat the one who has overcome it.

some people believe that following Jesus means living your best life now, in terms of health and wealth and social influence.

peace. Some people believe that Christians should rarely, if ever, suffer. That sickness and adversity, poverty, persecution, that those things reflect a weak kind of faith.

some people believe that it's possible to reach a state of sinless perfection before Jesus returns, to arrive at a place where you just stop sinning.

And if you're not there yet, well, then you're probably not much of a Christian. if you hold ideas similar to these, then when trouble comes, you may begin to wonder, did something go wrong?

[21:24] Did something go wrong with my faith? Have I failed? Am I really a Christian?

Maybe God has abandoned me. But Jesus is clear. In the world, you will have trouble.

Not might, not perhaps, not possibly, you will. Instead of being surprised by it or perplexed by it or giving into doubt because of it, let's expect trouble.

Expect to be hated and marginalized and mocked and rejected, persecuted, even killed. Now, expecting trouble does not mean living in fear.

and it does not mean trying to escape away from the world, you know, form your own little commune or go up and live on a mountain where you can just get away from all of the world's influence.

[22:40] As lovely as that sounds sometimes. Expecting trouble simply means believing what Jesus says in this text.

Now, the question then becomes if you expect trouble then what will give you peace?

A healthy family? A new job? A different politician? selling your home?

And moving on? A Christian nation? Some of these may be more noble than others. Some of them may be more attainable than the rest. But none of them, none of them will give you true peace.

Jesus says, in me you may have peace. peace. Notice Notice! where the peace is found.

[23:57] Not in circumstances, not in politics, not in prosperity, not in influence, not in good health, in me.

So expect trouble and find your peace in Christ.

Like the disciples, your faith may feel small. It may feel fragile. It may feel like it is held together by duct tape and binder twine.

But take heart. You are not saved by the power of your faith, but by the strength of your Savior.

You don't need to pretend that life isn't hard, and you don't need to try harder to feel brave. To take heart means this, live courageously because Jesus has overcome the world.

[25:13] Live like Jesus has already overcome the world. That's what it means to take heart. Ground your confidence for living by faith in his victory glory and not in your own ability or your own spirituality.

Finally, many of us grew up singing, Jesus loves me, this I know.

Do you remember that one? but what about the father? Do you wonder about his love?

Are you suspicious of his love? Do you suspect that Jesus must have had to twist his arm to get him to love you?

Do you think you have to earn it? Do you fear that you may lose it? If we get this wrong, then we turn the gospel on its head, and we will stumble through life in cycles of discouragement and doubt.

[26:56] But Jesus says the father himself loves you. I think we should preach this one sentence sermon to our hearts multiple times a day.

When you fail, the father himself loves me. when your faith feels so weak, the father himself loves me.

When you are facing temptation, the father himself loves me. When you feel like you can't go on, the father himself loves me.

When it feels like the weight of the world is on your shoulders, the father himself loves me. When you feel all alone, the father himself loves me.

This is not love you must earn. This is not love that you need to maintain. The father graciously delights to love those who belong to his son.

[28:17] So rest. rest in his love. The disciples will scatter.

But their weakness and failure will not be the end of the story. And with the arrival of the Holy Spirit, they will live and love and testify with clarity and conviction about the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Like the disciples, you and I will face moments when we are in over our waiters.

Moments when it feels like we are punching above our weight class. we are feeling overwhelmed and so unsure. In those moments, your Savior Jesus doesn't say to you, figure it out.

Just try harder. Why can't you be stronger? He says, rest in the Father's love. Expect trouble.

[29:40] Find your peace in me and take heart because the one you follow, your Lord, your Savior, your Redeemer, and your friend, he has already overcome the world.

Let's pray. Father, we are grateful to receive your word. Thank you for preserving it for us.

Thank you, Holy Spirit, for helping us to understand this portion of scripture, and thank you for shining the spotlight on Jesus.

We know that it is your purpose to glorify him, and I pray that in this time of preaching that Jesus has been glorified, that we have followed your example, Holy Spirit, in shining the spotlight on Jesus.

He is our hope. He is our satisfaction. He is the anchor for our souls. It is in him that we may have peace.

[31:08] Would you please help us to live courageously in light of the fact that Jesus, our Savior, has overcome this world.

Thank you for your goodness to us. Help us to believe and to obey the truth that you have put in front of us this day.

We love you and we are grateful to be your people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Let's gather in the back and let's celebrate the Lord's Supper together.