JOHN 16

Sorrow Turned into Joy

the Helper who convicts and guides, the little while, and the Victor over the world

> *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."*
> JOHN 16:33

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 16 is the end of Jesus' farewell teaching; chapter 17 is His prayer, and 18:1 takes Him across the Kidron to the garden where Judas will find Him.

2. Jesus speaks this way "so that you may be kept from stumbling" (v. 1).

3. The center of the chapter is the Spirit.

Kept from Stumbling

Jesus tells them the worst before it comes — and sorrow fills their hearts

JOHN 16:2

"They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.

DAVID GUZIK

Warned so they would not stumble; Saul of Tarsus proved it; still true today.

R.C. SPROUL

The Trinity before the persecution; a fullness of sorrow saturating their hearts.

MATTHEW HENRY

He told them the worst of it; villainies are not consecrated by God's name.

σκανδαλισθῆτε

SKANDALISTHĒTE · "BE KEPT FROM STUMBLING"

Skandalizō comes from skandalon, the trigger-stick of a trap or a stone that trips the foot — our word "scandal."

The Advantage of the Helper

Better that He go — the Spirit will convict the world and guide the disciples into all the truth

JOHN 16:13

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

DAVID GUZIK

Better for believers; unbelief the root sin; the Spirit reveals Jesus.

R.C. SPROUL

Expedient — the ascension had to come before Pentecost; the Spirit defends us by convicting the world.

C.H. SPURGEON

The Spirit doesn't make sinners comfortable; He guides into truth, not just to it.

MATTHEW HENRY

Grievous things are often expedient; first convince, then comfort.

συμφέρει ὑμῖν

SYMPHEREI HYMIN · "IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE"

Sympherō, "to bring together, to be profitable."

The Spirit's threefold conviction

"HE … WILL CONVICT THE WORLD" · JOHN 16:8–11

CONCERNING	BECAUSE … (the reason Jesus gives)	WHAT THE WORLD IS SHOWN
SIN (v9)	*"they do not believe in Me"*	unbelief is the root sin — the one that condemns
RIGHTEOUSNESS (v10)	*"I go to the Father and you no longer see Me"*	the rejected Man was right — the Father received Him
JUDGMENT (v11)	*"the ruler of this world has been judged"*	Satan's verdict is in — and his followers share it

Henry: the Spirit's method is "first to convince, and then to comfort."

Read each row across: what the Spirit convicts the world about, the reason Jesus gives in His own words, and the verdict it brings home.

The Helper in Jesus' farewell

THE FIVE HELPER SAYINGS OF THE LAST NIGHT · JOHN 14–16

14:16–17	with you forever	another Helper — abides with you, will be in you
14:26	teaches & reminds	teaches all things; brings My words to remembrance
15:26–27	testifies	will testify about Me — "and you will testify also"
16:7–11	convicts the world	concerning sin, righteousness and judgment
16:13–15	guides & glorifies	into all the truth; what is to come; "He will glorify Me"

Maroon = this chapter. Every saying points the Spirit's work back to Jesus — His words, His witness, His glory.

John 16 holds the last two of five promises about the Helper; read down the column and watch the Spirit's work move from the disciples' hearts out to the world and back to Christ's glory.

A Little While

Grief now, joy that no one can take — like a mother after the birth

JOHN 16:16

"A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me."

DAVID GUZIK

Sorrow turned, not replaced — like a mother's labor; open access in His name.

R.C. SPROUL

Not seeing, then seeing again; mourning giving way to a great and fulfilling joy.

MATTHEW HENRY

Joy follows the sight of Christ; His returns are returns of joy.

μικρόν

MIKRON · "A LITTLE WHILE"

Mikros, "small, little," used here of time.

A little while, and again a little while



The disciples could not see the timeline; we can — two short "little whiles" separate the upper room from the empty tomb, and the joy that follows is the joy of asking in His name.

I Have Overcome the World

Plain words about the Father, a faith about to scatter, and peace in the Victor

JOHN 16:33

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

DAVID GUZIK

No angry Father to persuade; peace offered, tribulation promised; a conqueror.

R.C. SPROUL

Plain speaking; scattered but not alone; Christ by His resurrection has overcome.

C.H. SPURGEON

No balm like Himself; He struck selfishness to the heart; we overcome in our Head.

MATTHEW HENRY

Peace in Christ the only true peace; never such a conqueror of the world.

παροιμίαις … παρρησίᾳ

PAROIMIAIS … PARRĒSIA · "FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE … PLAINLY"

Paroimia is a proverb, a figure, a veiled saying — the word for the shepherd discourse (10:6) and here for the vine, the little while and the woman in labor (16:25, 29; elsewhere only 2 Peter 2:22).

What to carry from this chapter

1

Forewarned is forearmed.

Four times Jesus says “These things I have spoken to you” (vv. 1, 4, 25, 33).

2

Religious zeal can kill.

Latreia (v. 2) is temple service.

3

Caiaphas and Jesus used the same words.

“It is expedient for you” (11:50) and “it is to your advantage” (16:7) are the same Greek.

4

The Spirit proves the case.

Elenchō is to expose and prove guilty.

More to carry

5

Unbelief is the sin the Spirit presses.

"Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me" (v. 9).

6

Into the truth, not just to it.

Spurgeon: man can guide us to a truth, but only the Spirit can guide us into it.

7

An absolute disadvantage turned into an advantage.

Sproul: "What sounds like an absolute disadvantage, Jesus promises will turn into an advantage."

8

Grief turned, not replaced.

The thing that caused the grief — the cross — becomes the cause of joy.

Talk it through

1. What trouble has come into my life that Jesus actually warned me about — and did it shake my faith or confirm His word?

2. Where do I need to believe that Jesus' "going away" — something I would never have chosen — is to my advantage?

3. When has the Holy Spirit convicted me — not just made me feel bad, but proved the case? What did He show me about sin, righteousness or judgment?

4. What grief am I carrying that I need to see as labor pain rather than a dead end?

5. Jesus says "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name." What have I stopped asking the Father for?

CLOSING

John 16 does not pretend the night is short or the world is kind. It promises a Helper who convicts and guides, a grief that turns into joy, and a peace that holds in tribulation. The One who said "I have overcome the world" walked out to the garden the same night — and on the third day the little while was over.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.