

"Were You There" Lenten Devotional

March 6, 2024

Submitted by the Forever Young Bible Study

Scripture:

John 16: 6-33

6 Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. 7 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

16 Jesus went on to say, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."

17 At this, some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?" 18 They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'? 20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve,

but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. 23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

25 “Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

29 Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. 30 Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

31 “Do you now believe?” Jesus replied. 32 “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Devotion:

Through the valleys of life I often find myself wondering why God allows us to experience pain, since He is God and we are Christ followers then why does He allow bad things to happen to us? Then I think about how meaningless life would be if our lives were perfect every day. That the connection we long for from others and from God would not be as significant

without heart ache. Reflecting on verses above, God knew we would face turmoil in our lives; He couldn't eradicate pain entirely because we inhabit a fallen world, and suffering is one of the strongest bonds of empathy in the human experience— It unites us. But when I read these verses I am amazed at how God cares for us so deeply. Not only did He perform the ultimate sacrifice of sending His son to die for us, He anticipated that long after Jesus was gone we would need His presence in our lives. That we would need the visceral experience of joy to get through the ups and downs of our lives. By sending the Holy Spirit to guide and comfort us— God gave us all a piece of Himself. A piece that guides us through our hardships and a piece that celebrates our triumphs. I think that is amazing!

Prayer:

God we just thank You for not only sending your son to die for us but for sending the ultimate companion of the Holy Spirit. We invite the Holy Spirit into our lives and ask for it to guide us when we are feeling lost, to comfort us when we are feeling grief stricken and downtrodden, & to help us truly feel joyful in times of happiness. For we know that there is a season for everything under the sun but we also know that weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning. We claim joy in our lives and celebrate that You have already overcome the world, thank You for loving us so much to remove that burden. Help us to live everyday with that freedom. For it's in Christ's name we pray, AMEN!

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