

## In the Eye of the Storm John 16:33

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Read Vs. 29-33

#### B. Eye of the Storm

1. At the center of a tropical storm is a place of calm called “the eye.”
2. On every side the wind is howling, the rain falls in driving sheets, & the lightning crashes.
3. But in the very center of the storm there’s relative peace.
4. Jesus warns His followers that as they follow Him, the world will howl its hatred & batter them with trouble.
5. But He promises to be the eye of their storm.

#### C. Set The Scene

1. This is it! After this, Jesus offers a brief prayer, then they leave that room where they’d just eaten the Passover meal together.
2. They walk through the streets of Jerusalem, out the gate that leads toward the Kidron Valley there on the east side of the city, down to a favorite little spot of Jesus’ right at the base of the Mt. of Olives called Gethsemane.
3. It’s there Judas will lead the temple police who will arrest Jesus & haul Him off to a sham trial before the high priest.
4. So this wraps up Jesus’ instructions to them.
5. He knows what’s coming & how the disciples weren’t prepared for the Cross.
  - a. Not for lack of trying on His part;
  - b. He’d tried again & again to warn them of the severe trial they were about to face.
  - c. But they’re expectations for Him as the Messiah didn’t include death.
  - d. They couldn’t hear His warnings because those expectations & desires got in the way.
6. So Jesus ends with these words to let them know He knows all about how they’ll desert Him in just a couple hours.
  - a. When He’s arrested & hauled off to trial, they’ll scatter.
  - b. When they find themselves in hiding, feeling like pathetic wimps for deserting Him, He wanted them to recall how He’d foretold it;
  - c. He knew ahead of time & invited them back, anyway.
  - d. His love & acceptance meant failure would not be the end of their story.

### II. TEXT

#### A. V. 33

1. Look at v. 33 again -

**These things I have spoken to you . . .**

2. What things? V. 32 - that they would all leave Him.

**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.**

3. He holds the door of return open to them.
  4. He wants them to be confident in the knowledge that even when they blow it, if they will just turn around and come back, He’ll restore them.
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5. Maybe that's you today.
    - a. You once followed the Lord, but something happened, some great trial crashed into your life & sent you spinning off into doubt.
    - b. Circumstances seemed completely contrary to all the expectations you had about the way God ought to do things.
    - c. So in your disappointment, you deserted Him.
    - d. Maybe your marriage or engagement blew up.
    - e. It might be a huge business failure.
    - f. Maybe there was some relationship melt-down or your health fell apart.
    - g. Could be the church you were attending imploded & left you disillusioned.
    - h. Perchance some who called themselves Christians burned you.
  6. Whatever trial it was that cause your faith to dry up, Jesus holds the door of return open to you, just as He did those first disciples who deserted Him. Come back.
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### **B. Three Contrasts**

1. Jesus gives 3 contrasts here in v. 33.
  - a. "In Me" vs. "in the world"
  - b. "You may have" vs. "You have"
  - c. "Peace" vs. "Tribulation"

**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**

2. The word "world" Jesus uses here doesn't mean the physical planet, the Earth.
  - a. The word refers to an *ordered system*.
  - b. The NT uses this word to refer to *all that comprises* the human race in league with the devil to oppose God.
  - c. It's the sum of all we call society;
    - 1) It's politics, economics, fashion, media, government, philosophy, & religion.
    - 2) Roll all of that into one & you have "the world."
    - 3) The NT tells us the *ruler* of this world, the behind-the-scenes manipulator of this system is none other than the devil.
    - 4) He keeps things popping to distract people from thinking about eternity.
3. As the followers of Christ, we *exist* in that world but we don't really *live* in it. We don't draw our life, meaning, & purpose from it.
  - a. Our life is Christ, we draw our identity from Him.
  - b. Through the Cross, what we had & were in the world has died.
  - c. Through the Resurrection, we've entered into a whole new realm & system called the Kingdom of God.
4. Jesus speaks of this here when He says –
 

**In Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation.**

  - a. He repeatedly warned the disciples that because of their connection to Him,
  - b. Because faith in Him lifts them out the world's corrupt system into a whole new way & life, the world would show the same kind of hatred & opposition to them it had to Him.
  - c. He repeats that warning here.

- d. Their presence in this world will inevitably result in tribulation.
  - 1) This word refers to a hard pressing.
  - 2) Jesus isn't warning them of an occasional headache or hangnail.
  - 3) He's saying their presence as His followers in this world is going to result in serious trouble.
- e. But in the very midst of it, they can have total peace in Him.
- f. He is the eye in the midst of the storm.
- 5. But that peace isn't *automatic*.
  - a. Jesus conditions it on where His followers align themselves.
  - b. When tribulation heats up, they'll have to make a choice on where they're going to live,
    - 1) In the midst of their circumstances,
    - 2) Or in faith in Him.
- 6. Right after Jesus said this, they went out to Gethsemane.
  - a. When the world came clamoring into the Garden with tribulation, the disciples freaked out & ran off.
  - b. They lost their faith for a time; circumstances eclipsed the promise of God.
  - c. But later, they remembered, repented, & returned to the Lord.
  - d. History tells us all but one of the disciples died a martyr's death.
  - e. As James, the *first* of the apostles to be martyred, was being led to the place of execution, his accuser, a man who'd been bribed to level a false charge against him, stepped out of the crowd that lined the way, and took his place at James' side.
    - 1) He was so convicted by the peace & love that radiated from the face of James as he strode boldly to his death, that he confessed his crime,
    - 2) And accompanied James to the place of beheading where he also was put to death.
  - f. Many are the stories of the saints in the first 3 centuries whose peace in the face of death resulted in the conversion of hundreds of thousands of others.
  - g. One early Church Fathers said that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

### **C. Victory!**

**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**

- 1. The *reason* we can have peace in the midst of hardship is because Jesus defeated Satan.
  - 2. The cross, the very thing that stumbled the disciples, was the means by which Jesus conquered sin & death & released humanity from spiritual bondage.
  - 3. Even though the cross was *yet future* when Jesus said this, because He was surrendered to the Father's will, He speaks as if it was *already done*.
  - 4. He demonstrates the kind of faith & confidence we can have *because* of the cross.
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- 5. Satan is a defeated foe.
    - a. Why then does the world still give us grief?      Why does the storm still rage?

- b. Why does Jesus warn His followers that as they follow Him, they'll experience tribulation in the world?
6. If you've ever been to a farm & watched a chicken butchered you have a great picture of what's going on with the world.
    - a. The farmer grabs the chicken, puts it's lil' head on the chopping block, raises the cleaver & swings away.
    - b. When he sets the chicken down to clean up, it wobbles to its feet & takes off running round the yard, flapping it's wings & making a bloody mess.
    - c. It's dead – it just doesn't know it yet.
  7. At the cross, Jesus cut the world's head off.
    - a. Humanity's rebellion against God is doomed, it just doesn't know it yet.
    - b. The world runs around, making a lot of noise & mess, but its end is inevitable – it's gonna' get fried like a barnyard chicken.
    - c. One day soon, the Victorious Jesus will come to enforce His victory and put down the last hold outs in mankind's long insurrection against God.
  8. When Constantine came to power as Emperor of Rome, the Empire was a mess.
    - a. There were several guys all vying for control.
    - b. But a large number of the military supported the courageous & brilliant Constantine.
    - c. His chief rival in Italy was Maxentius, who marched out of Rome to meet him at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.
    - d. Constantine was victorious, & all of the Empire fell to his control with Maxentius' defeat at that bridge a few miles from Rome.
    - e. Before he ever entered the capital, Constantine was the defacto ruler.
    - f. As he made his way slowly toward the center of power to claim his throne, many of the soldiers who'd fought against him defected to him.
    - g. Many of the people of Rome, hearing Constantine was the victor, ran out to join his party as it made it's way to the City.
  9. The Cross was Jesus' Battle of the Milvian Bridge where he defeated Satan.
  10. He has yet to take possession of that which rightly belongs to Him.
  11. But He's on the way, & now is the time for those who were once against Him to join Him.

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12. That word "overcome" is the Greek word 'nikao.'
    - a. We get the word 'Nike' from it; it means '*victory*.'
    - b. A shoe company uses that word as a *hook* to sell athletic shoes.
    - c. Their symbol is a swoosh. Their motto is "Just do it."
  13. The *real* symbol of victory is the cross. And our motto is, "*He* did it!"

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. *Let's Live it!*

1. *Because* He did it, let's *live* it!
  2. One day, Jesus will return & enforce His victory over all creation.
  3. As great as that day will be, what Jesus is saying here is that we don't have to wait for it to enjoy His victory.
  4. We are those who can have that day right **NOW** if we will live **IN HIM**.
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5. Story of the storm on Galilee & Jesus walking on water – Peter.
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6. The storm is raging all around us. This world is a sorry mess.
  - a. Because of the Cross & Resurrection, because of Christ, we can live in peace, safe from the ravages of the storm.
  - b. Example of visiting Russia – our hotel room.

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7. While we *live* in this world, we don't have to **live it**.
  - a. So what if the divorce rate is 1 in 2?  
We can have marriages that are pure joy!
  - b. So what if perversion is rampant & disease is spreading like wildfire?  
We can enjoy the pleasure of what God intends for a husband & wife without an ounce of fear or shame.
  - c. So what if gossip, envy & strife are tearing relationships apart all around us?  
We can enjoy a community of love & respect unstained by petty selfishness.