

## John 16 Chapter Study

### INTRO

#### I. THE SIGNS Chs. 1-11

#### II. THE END Chs. 12-21

##### *E. The Last Supper Chs. 13-17*

##### **13. Enduring the Hate 15:18-16:4**

Chs. 13-17 are all set within the context of the Last Supper.

This is Jesus last moments with the disciples before He's led off to be executed by the Jewish & Roman officials.

Everything that's about to happen fits no where in the disciples' expectations & they're deeply troubled by Jesus' saying He returning to the Father and turning His mission over to them.

He tells them they won't be cast adrift to try and do the work on their own strength; He will send them the Holy Spirit who will equip them for the task.

But the presence of the Holy Spirit within them will result in a completely new relationship with God that will not be well-received by the world.

So beginning in v. 18 of Ch. 15, Jesus began to warn them about the hatred they would face.

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We ended in the middle of that section last week; it carries on into the first vs. of ch. 16 . . .

#### **1 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.**

To stagger in their walk, to falter in their steps as they follow Him.

Jesus warns them ahead of time that siding with Him is going to result in the world's hatred & opposition.

Instead of persecution being the cause of their stumbling, they were to see it as the fulfillment of His word & have their faith strengthened.

This is exactly what we see in the Book of Acts. [Acts 5:31-41]

When the apostles were harassed by the Jewish officials, it only emboldened them to speak more urgently for the Lord and to offer praises to Him for being counted worthy to suffer of Christ's name.

#### **2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. 3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.**

The synagogue was the heart and soul of Jewish social life.

It's where the entire community met & renewed their relationships with one another as the covenant people of God.

Next to execution, excommunication from the synagogue was just about the *worst* thing that could happen to someone.

Jesus warns the disciples that their union with Him will result in this drastic action.

But even worse than that – they would suffer the ultimate form of persecution – martyrdom.

There would come a time when they would be killed for nothing more than being His followers.

And those who killed them would be so warped in their thinking they would actually believe they were doing a **good** thing, an act of religious devotion, in killing Christians.

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The first martyr was Stephen.

Acts 7 & 8 tell us it was the religious leaders who stoned him to death after he'd preached them a brilliant sermon about the supremacy of Jesus.

Saul was the official sanctioning Stephen's execution, and following the act he launched on a vicious campaign of persecution against the Christians.

In a later letter, he said he was driven by a misplaced zeal for God.

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The **Inquisition** was a religious campaign or persecution against all who didn't agree with the official position of the **Roman Church**.

Tens of thousands of genuine believers were killed in the name of God during the Inquisition.

But the Roman Church wasn't the only culprit.

The **Reformers** had bloody hands as well.

**Calvin's Geneva** doled out its own share of executions in the name of God to Christians who decided to take reformation farther than Calvin had.

Martin Luther's followers did the same.

Leon Morris says, "It is a tragedy of religious man that he so often regards persecution as in line with the will of God."

**4 But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you."**

Jesus hadn't withheld this news from them for fear of scaring them off at the start.

He'd not told them about the persecution they would eventually face because while He was with them, all the opposition was directed at Him.

He had shown them how to deal with it.

Now that He's returning to the Father, and would return to them through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, they would become the objects of the world's hatred – so He's telling them now.

And again, BECAUSE He was warning them, when it came, it wasn't to freak them out but was rather to serve as a boost to their faith – that once again, what He said proved true & trustworthy.

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What happened to these men he spoke this to?

The first of the disciples to be martyred was **James**, the brother of John.

He died in 44 AD.

Herod Agrippa had just been appointed governor & wanting to appease the Jewish rulers, he caved in to their desire to stomp out the growing sect of Christians. James was arrested and beheaded.

**Philip** was beaten & crucified in Heliopolis in 54 AD.

**Matthew** was run through with a spear (halberd) in Ethiopia in 60 AD.

**Andrew** was crucified in Edessa.

**Peter** was crucified upside down in Rome during the reign of Nero.

**Bartholomew** was beaten to death in India, where **Thomas** was also killed with a

spear.

**Simon** the Zealot was martyred in Britain in 74 AD.

**John** was cruelly hounded by the enemies of Christ who tried to execute him but were unable.

Reliable tradition says that at one point they boiled John in a vat of oil but he came out untouched.

He died of old age in Ephesus in the 90's.

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I find it highly significant that James, the **first** of the apostolic martyrs, is the **only one** of the original disciples who died **in Jerusalem**.

The rest died in far flung places, put to death by people they were trying to share the love & truth of Christ with.

They were faithful to Jesus' command **to go** & make disciples of **all nations**.

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It's crucial we realize that what Jesus said to those first followers has equal application to us, His later followers.

All around the world at this very moment, Christians are hated, are being persecuted, and in some places are being put to death, for nothing more than their union with Christ.

I got a report this week from Mike Greenberg, Jenny's husband, who has ties to an Arab Christian group in Gaza.

Mike works for the company that makes the Evangicube.

They'd partnered in ministry with this little group that was trying to be a light for Christ in the midst of the darkness of Islam there in Hamas-Central.

This week, their building was firebombed.

Slogans praising Allah & blaspheming Christ were spray-painted on the walls.

Though we rarely hear about it, in Saudi Arabia, converts to Christ routinely disappear, never to be heard of by their relatives & friends again.

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Jesus now moves from speaking about the persecution they will inevitably endure, to the resources they will have to overcome it.

#### **14. The work of the Holy Spirit • Part B 16:5-15**

**5** "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'"

This is curious, because in Ch. 13 we find this exchange had taken place just a few minutes before . . .

**36** Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." **37** Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake."

So how can Jesus say here in v. 5 no one had asked Him where He was going?

Had Peter just done so?

While it certainly looks that way at first blush, what Jesus says here makes us revisit Peter's question.

On closer examination we realize Peter wasn't really asking about where Jesus was going; he was upset about being separated from Him.

His concern was to maintain proximity to Jesus, not on where Jesus was going.

That's born out by the exchange that follows and that Peter doesn't press the question – "Yeah, but WHERE ARE YOU GOING?"  
If Peter HAD really asked that, when Jesus says this here in v. 5, Peter would have piped up and said, "Uh huh – I just asked that a few minutes ago."

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The point is this – the disciples were so troubled & upset about being separated from Jesus they weren't really listening to what He was saying about where He was going and why.

As the time was short, they needed to snap out of their self-imposed funk & pay close attention to what He was saying because it was crucial.

**6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.**

There it is – they were majorly bummed out because He said He was leaving.

But if they'd been paying closer attention they would have heard Him say where He was going; He was returning to the Father.

Because of that, they would gain something that would MORE THAN compensate for His leaving – the Holy Spirit!

**8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.**

Jesus had just told them of the hatred & persecution they would face from the world.

He didn't want to leave them with the impression that the struggle would be all one sided, with all the weight on the world's side.

While the world was venting it's hatred on the disciples, the Holy Spirit would be convicting that same hateful world.

The Holy Spirit is a Comforter to the believer but a Convictor of the unbeliever.

While the Holy Spirit is the *Divine Defense Attorney* of the one who's born again, He's the *Prosecutor* of the once born.

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Jesus breaks down the conviction of the Spirit into 3 realms; sin, righteousness, & judgment.

In our modern Western mindset, we tend to read vs. 8-11 *linearly*, sequentially, with conviction of sin coming first, followed by righteousness, & finally judgment.

But that isn't the way Jesus means this.

This isn't a step by step process of conviction Jesus is giving here, like some kind of spiritual blueprint.

His point is that the Holy Spirit works on the conscience of the lost bringing them to the awareness that they're not only wrong in regard to persecution, they're *fundamentally wrong*, broken, & unable to please God.

He points out their sin while at the same time stirring up an inner sense of the way they *ought* to be.

This sense of "oughtness" – this awareness of what is right & their inability

to live it brings them to a crisis of choice, of judgment.  
And it all focuses on one thing, one choice – what they're going to do with Jesus.

The Spirit's conviction zooms in so that sin, righteousness & judgment all come down to one thing – surrender to Christ or not.

**12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now.**

Because they weren't born again.

They couldn't be because Jesus hadn't yet gone to the cross or risen from the dead.

But when they were indwelt by the Spirit, then a new capacity to understand would be granted them.

And the additional lesson Jesus had for them could be imparted.

**13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.**

Jesus tells them the development of what we call the Christian Faith would be a dynamic process that would grow over time.

The additional lessons He would give them through the Spirit would help them grow in their understanding of what to do & where to go.

So in that sense, we need to realize that the process of revelation goes on.

The NT we hold in our hands is a partial fulfillment of what Jesus said here.

But there's no reason to believe that when the Early Church Fathers closed the Canon of Scripture, that was the end of the Spirit's guiding the people of God.

There are some today who say, “Let's get back to the words of Jesus only! Let's jettison the apostles and just focus on Jesus.”

In light of what Jesus says here, that's terribly misguided.

Why, if it weren't for the Apostles, we'd not know what Jesus said.

His life & teaching come to us today through their ministry.

Let me say that again – Jesus' life & teaching come to us *through the disciples*.

Not just those first 11 guys, but all disciples, because the Spirit indwells us all.

God wants to use me to bring the life & teaching of Jesus alive to you.

But God wants to use **YOU** to bring it alive to me.

**14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.**

The Spirit aims at one thing – to glorify Jesus.

And according to all we've read in John so far, Who's glory does Jesus aim at?

The Father's.

Who do the Father & Son send when they want to help believers live the life?

The Spirit.

And what does the Spirit aim at? Jesus.

Who does Jesus aim at? The Father.

Who does the Father send to us? The Spirit.

What's the point? Our whole lives ought to revolve around one thing – the Glory of God!

### **15. The resurrection foretold 16:16-22**

**16** “A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.”

Jesus is of course referring to the crucifixion and resurrection.

**17** Then some of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?” **18** They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.”

They believed Jesus was the Messiah, and the cross nowhere fit into their expectations of His fate.

Because they were filtering everything through those misplaced expectations, they were confused by these words.

**19** Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’?”

**20** Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

The crucifixion would crush them while the world would celebrate.

But the resurrection would turn the tables.

**21** A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. **22** Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

Birth is a great illustration of how anguish can turn to joy.

An important lesson to draw from this is that the very thing that causes the initial pain is what produces the joy.

As we abide in Christ & live in this fallen, contrary world, God will work through the inevitable sorrows we experience to produce an even greater joy.

### **16. The resurrection applied 16:23-33**

**23** “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. **24** Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Since we covered these 2 verses in depth on Sunday, we'll leave off further comment tonight.

**25** “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the

**time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father.**

Once again, because they weren't born again, Jesus had to wrap His lessons in words that pointed to a coming fulfillment.

Very soon, that day of fulfillment would arrive and the things that had seemed enigmatic would all be clear to them.

**26 In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; 27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. 28 I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."**

In giving them His name, Jesus didn't want them to think that they would be asking Him to act as an intermediary between them & the Father.

Jesus didn't want them to see Him as merely some kind of new priest Who would insert another layer between them and God.

They needed to know that He was removing the layers so that they could have direct access to God. He *is* that access!

To know Him is to know & experience God.

**29 His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! 30 Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God."**

They say, "Oh! Now we get it! You really are the Messiah. We've got not more questions or concerns."

Did they really get it? Probably not. How could they, they weren't born again?

But this is so typical in a teacher, student relationship.

The student says, "Okay, I get it." When in fact he/she doesn't.

We say that because we don't want to look dumb.

The teacher says, as Jesus says here, "Okay, let me make this simple for you."

As they then go on to explain, inwardly we say to ourselves, "You call this simple? I still don't get it."

But we can't admit that so we say, "Oh! I get it"

**31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"**

Read it this way, "Really? You think you get it now?"

**32 Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.**

See, they didn't really get it. They didn't yet grasp Who He was.

If they did, they would not have scattered when the arrest in the Garden came.

When the arrest came, Jesus' friends, the disciples would all split & leave Him alone.

But he wouldn't really be alone because He knew the Father would still be there.

This is something we all need to hold on to.

For there will come times in all our lives when we feel alone, as if no one loves or cares for us.

Our friends might desert us and not a single soul is left by our side.

In that hour of darkness, when loneliness threatens to overwhelm us, remember this – God is there.

He has made you a promise to never leave nor forsake you.

He's your best friend & closest companion.

**33 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."**

[Sunday]