

Peace, Tribulation, & Overcoming the World

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Bible Text: John 16:33

Preached on: Sunday, July 15, 2012

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Let us join our hearts in prayer this morning.

Dear heavenly Father, most gracious and holy Lord, we thank thee, Lord, for this time to come together that, Lord, thou has brought us here. We ask thy blessing upon this hour and the hour to come that thou would, indeed, breathe thy very life upon these messages. Breathe thy life upon our souls and awaken us, oh Lord. Oh Lord, if it be pleasing to thee this day to set the table, to bring thy people to banquet at thy table and, Lord, may even just a crumb fall from thy mighty power, by thy mighty power and by thy love for thy people this day. Lord, I pray that you would be with those who are not with us, but yet with us on the phone now, Lord, that you would bless their time with us joined together by thy Spirit and may you be glorified this day. And, Lord, I pray that you would come to my soul. Quite it now. Show me, Lord, the one thing needful and, Lord, may you come and preach thy Word to my soul that thy people, too, would be fed this day according to thy will. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

I would be lying to you. I would not be telling the truth if I told you that this hour the Lord has called me up here this morning. I don't have that I don't have any tribulation going on in my soul. I have... facing the week, the next eight days with, I know two of us in here, two of our flock will be having surgery. The Lord has ordained one of them being my daughter who has never had anything in her life and being a dad sometimes those things weigh very heavy on me. I didn't expect it to be this morning, but it is. And I pray that the Lord in his faithfulness will bring forth his Word and speak it to my soul and also to yours.

If you would, with me, turn to John 16 verse 33, precious words to the child of God when he brings us here. Also hard words to understand in God's perfect providence how he works these events.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.”¹

And I might add right there, there is no other way to have peace. It must be in him. And then he tells us:

¹ John 16:33.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation.”²

It is a funny thing about the Lord’s wills and shallts. They will not be broken. They will not be altered and they will stand forever. The people of God when they see those words in his Word and he speaks them to their soul, they know it is the Lord’s Word. And it will take place. And that is what makes this verse hard, because at the beginning we understand that when the Lord speaks to us we have peace. And then right after that he tells us that something works hand in hand with that peace and that is tribulation. You can’t have one without the other.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation.”³

And then he says something that I have got to say has been a mystery to me a lot of my life.

“...ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer.”⁴

The Greek says to be encouraged. Lord, how can I be encouraged that I will have tribulation? My flesh draws up when I hear those words. It wants to run. It wants to say, “Lord, isn’t there a better way?”

“...but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”⁵

So today I want to talk about the three divisions in this verse. I want to talk about that things that the Lord speaks to his people.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.”⁶

What are these things that the Lord speaks to his people? What are these things that the Lord speaks to the souls of his people? Well, we don’t have to go far. We just turn back in our Bibles a couple of chapters to where the Lord began this discourse and understand when the Lord began this. He began it right before that very... we would call dreadful hour before he went into the garden, before he would pray to the Father to keep his people.

Jesus said these words.

“These things I have spoken unto you.”⁷

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

If you turn back to where the Lord began this discourse, it began in chapter 14 and it ends with let your heart not be troubled. I mean, it begins with let you your heart not be troubled and then it ends with be of good cheer. So the Lord shows us that he is the author of that faith that lets our hearts not be troubled. And these are the things that the Lord must speak to our souls. And I am not going to read both chapters. I am going to pick out a couple of things in each one of them that the Lord speaks to the child of God's soul, before the time of tribulation, during the time of tribulation. And we must talk about what that tribulation is.

But if you look at chapter 14 he begins:

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”⁸

And then he tells us something of our eternal security. And that is when he says to us, “be of good cheer.”

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.”⁹

Our peace is not in the things of this world. It is not in the time. It is not in the events. It is not in ourselves. And when the Lord says:

“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself.”¹⁰

Do you see the eternal security in that passage that the child of God has, that is Savior has prepared a place for him? And I pray that for the two that are going through this time and those of us that are around them, those of us that are near and dear to them, those of us, too, that our souls are heavy that the Lord reveals that eternal security of not only of ourselves, but our loved ones, that he has revealed himself in them and that that peace, when it comes to their soul, they know that they are safe and secure in Christ.

I watched my daughter for the last week go through her ups and downs. And the last couple of nights ago was very, very, very troublesome time, but yesterday I saw a lot more peace. And I asked her that. I said, “Do you have peace now? I mean, do you see?” I said, “It comes a time when the Lord brings you to these times that he gives you that peace in it and then you are ready, you are ready for that event, because you know that he is with you.”

She said to me, “Dad, I think I am there. I think I have been brought there. I am at that time.”

⁸ John 14:1.

⁹ John 16:33.

¹⁰ John 14:2-3.

These are the things that Jesus said, “These are the things I have spoken unto you. These are the peaceful things in Christ.”

It is to know that he will receive us unto himself. He has ordained this path that we walk in and he has ordained it for our good. This peace in tribulation must come together. To experience the Lord’s peace, you must be troubled in your soul. Those that walk through this life like it is just nothing but a bed of roses and don’t have trials and don’t have tribulations and don’t know how God brings them to themselves is just that. They have lived a life of fluff. That fluff must be tried. The Lord says, “You shall have tribulation.” Make no mistake about it. Every child of God will go through this tribulation.

“I will come again, and receive you unto myself.”¹¹

And then we go down to verse six.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life.”¹²

We see that our Lord is our all in all. He has got to bring us there to the table to see that he has set the table for us, that he has shown us that he is the way in this life and that way is the way that he has ordained. He has got to come to our soul and tell us that it is truth, because in these times no matter what the event is, Satan is going to make it a lot more terrorizing than it is. That is what he does. He tells you that Christ is not with you. He tells you that he will forsake you. He tells you that you are going to go through it on your own. He tells you with the specter of death hanging over your head that that is what is really going to happen. That is what he tries to speak. But he can’t touch the soul.

But our Lord can touch the soul. He can come to our soul and say, “Be still. I am the way. I am the truth and I am the life. I have ordained this in your life.”

Those are the things that when we read these thing,

“These things I have spoken unto you.”¹³

We have to go back. What did you speak to your disciples? Think about their place. Jesus just told them, “Your whole world is going to be turned upside down. I am leaving. I am going away. I am going to the cross.”

Don’t you think that their souls had great trepidation? Don’t you think as they followed this man for two and a half three years and they saw that they he was the Son of God and then he would be taken right out of their life? And the Lord says, “Listen. These are the things I am speaking to you. And the peace that you will have is in me, because you are in me. And when I die and I rise again, you will be there with me, too.”

¹¹ John 14:3.

¹² John 14:6.

¹³ John 16:33.

That is the peace that Christ gives to his people.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”¹⁴

And then look at 18 which we have preached on before.

“I will not leave you comfortless.”¹⁵

I will not leave you an orphan. Up to that very moment, up to that very time the Lord says, “I will not leave you comfortless.” Even though we may be put out, we may not know what is going on to our bodies and who is doing it and what is going on, the Lord still hasn’t left us. He is not sleeping.

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”¹⁶

I will come to you the moment you open your eyes. I will show you that I brought you through it. I will show you my peace. I will show you at the one end that I am with you walking you through it. That is the way it comes.

“Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me.”¹⁷

This world will not see me anymore, disciples, but you see me. How? Is it a physical? Is it wearing a cross around you? Is it taking a picture of him? No. Those are empty symbols that this world hangs on to and makes them into idols. But Christ comes to the soul of his people

“...because I live, ye shall live also.”¹⁸

I said this being my oldest daughter, my oldest child, 16 years and I have got to say of those 16 years that she has had on this earth, she really hasn’t experienced much hardship, not physical wise. Not many, not much of those things like some of my other children have been in the hospital. Some of them have went through things. So this is major to her and it becomes major when Satan is telling you all these things.

“... because I live, ye shall live also.”¹⁹

It is a promise. That is a promise that he preaches to the souls of his children. And if that is not enough we turn over to 15, chapter 15 and we see the union we have in Christ. We love the vine and the branches. Verse five says:

¹⁴ John 14:6.

¹⁵ John 14:18.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ John 14:19.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me...”²⁰

Even when we go through these times, whether you be the one going through it, you be the one in the waiting room, you are still abiding in Christ as a body and that is something the world can't take away from us and that is something Satan can't take away from us.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”²¹

You say, “Well, wait a minute. I thought you were telling me how Jesus said this is where my peace is.”

That is right. It is total surrender and dependence upon this Savior who has conquered the world, who has said... who does say to us, “Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. I have put it under my feet. I have conquered Satan. I have conquered sin. I have conquered death.”

“...for without me ye can do nothing.”²²

And, you know, there is a lot of striving. There is a lot of trying to keep our minds and there is a lot of ... one of the things I have heard, actually both of them that are going through these things in the next eight weeks, both of them have said to me that they try not to think about it.

It is funny. My daughter tells me that. “Dad, if I try not to think about it, I am ok.”

And then every night it seems like we have a Bible study and we open up the Word, she is in tears, because you can try to push things out of your mind and you can try to push them as far as... that is your flesh. That is telling your flesh everything is going to be all right. But the Lord comes. When the Lord comes to your soul he shows you and he comes in his Word and he speaks in that still small voice and he makes you to lie down in that green pasture and he makes you submit to his will.

I know that when I heard about this on the horizon my very first thought was to do everything in my power to make sure she didn't have to go through this. And I quickly learned my power wasn't great enough. I can't keep her from it. I can't keep me from going through it, my wife from going through it, the other ones here from going through it. Without him we can do nothing. We can't have peace. We can't surrender ourselves. We can't make ourselves sit down. We can't just say, yes we accept it and go on. We can't block things out. But he can. And he can show us where our peace is in him.

And then we come to four verses in a row, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

²⁰ John 15:5.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”²³

Does this bring you peace? These are the things that the Lord has ordained that in him you have peace, that you see that your Savior in his sacrificial life and his sacrificial love laid down his life. And that very thing that burdens you right now and that very thing that seems to hold its hands out upon you and... and grabs hold of you, he went to the cross to defeat that. He laid down his life for his friends. He has to speak that to your soul that you are one of those friends, because that is where the rest of this comes from. He says it.

“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”²⁴

And, see, that is where the Lord brings his people. We may kick against the pricks. We may kick against the goads. We may try to run. We may try to hide. The Lord brings us to his feet. He brings us to show us that he died for us. He brings us to see that he paid the ultimate price and he brings us to see that he went first.

Many of these hardships that we have that are physical upon us I know that it is much said in the lives of my children, my wife and I... We always... The Lord is faithful to bring us there to say, “This isn’t nails.” Our Lord went through so much more than what he is calling me to go through and there is a lot of comfort there. There is a lot of comfort knowing that he went through it and he went through it for me and he went through it to show me the greater way to go through it is in him, through him and by him.

“Ye are my friends.”²⁵

And in 15 he says:

“Henceforth I call you not servants.”²⁶

And for Christ to say that to your soul, that he calls you not a servant:

“...for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends.”²⁷

See, there is a close relationship that in tribulation the Lord bring us. That is what the tribulations are for, to show us this communion and union we have in Christ, to show and reveal how close we really are to our Savior. And, you know, and when we back away from it and we see all the things that we have done to try to cultivate this relationship, we know it is not of us. We know we can’t come to him. We know that we don’t willingly say, “Yes, Lord, I will do this.”

²³ John 15:13.

²⁴ John 15:14.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ John 15:15.

²⁷ Ibid.

I have been in my life I have crossed a lot of people that way when they come to today's verse and they see, "Yeah, be of good cheer," and they walk around all happy and they are flying around saying, "See? The Lord said be of good cheer. We are just... oh, look we are going to have tribulation. Let's have a party."

Foolishness, absolute foolishness.

It is not a giddy happiness. It is the joy of the Lord which is our strength.

"I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."²⁸

There is that revelation. There is how the Lord prepares his people. I have made him known to you. I have made him known that I am with you. I have made it known to you that you are my child.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."²⁹

And what a great comfort that is. Because, as I said a few minutes ago, we are not going to choose this path. Our flesh would run from this path into {?} no. Can't we have peace without tribulation? The Lord says, "No. It is needful to reveal more of me to your soul, your rebellious soul, your wandering soul, your soul that might just be wanting to put its feet in this world."

We are always reminded by tribulation and the things that the Lord brings into our life that this is not our home. The Lord sends them so mercifully and so mightily to show us that our home is with him. It is not here in the world. It is not to cling to the world. But it is with him.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."³⁰

Do you see that union? Do you see how the Lord brings you to see that everything is stored up in him? That everything comes from him that you have need of? All for his glory.

The last place I want to look in 16 look at verse 13.

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."³¹

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ John 15:16.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ John 16:13.

As I alluded to when these times come, when the Lord brings these times—and they will come—Satan comes with them. The old man comes with them. The world comes with them and says, “No, no, no. If you choose this, this is a better path. If you go this way, this is better. Oh, no, certainly the Lord doesn’t... oh, what sin did you commit that you are being punished for?”

But the Spirit of Truth comes. The Lord gave us this Comforter as he went as he gave and he poured out upon his disciples. He gave it for a reason, to lead us into all truth. And that... that the Holy Spirit, the triune Lord puts down those lies, puts down Satan and bins, casts out the strong man and puts him far away. And only he can do that.

So these aren’t all the things that he Lord spoke to his people, but these are some of the things that he has spoken unto us.

“...that in me ye might have peace.”³²

So he drives us out of every thing of self. He drives us through all the places and all the imaginations that we have in self and he drives them all out of us to bring us to him, but he does that through tribulation.

You know, I have read this verse thousands of times, probably. And I have always, you know, as I have come to it I love the first part.

“...in me ye might have peace...”³³

But that middle part, if we could just somehow throw it out of here.

There is a very comforting reason that it is in there. And that is because of my rebelliousness, because of my nature to wander.

You know, it is an amazing thing. When the Lord brings us through a tribulation do you know where we go? We go right back to the world. We go right back to the comforts of the world. But, you know, he is faithful again. It takes many days and it takes many hours. It takes many weeks. It takes many months. It takes many years in the child of God’s life that the Lord continues to bring tribulation and trial to wean us from this world, to show us it is not our resting place and to show us that our rest is in him.

Oh, in this world you shall have tribulation and, you know, if we could just throw that word shall out and put may in there. You say, “Well, that is a lot better, because that means that I possibly could go through my life and just be like in this little bubble and the Lord would just keep me and sustained in him...” I was taught that once in my life, too. And, boy, the life doesn’t prove that out, does it?

The longer you live on this earth the longer the Lord starts to wean you from it. You start

³² John 16:33.

³³ Ibid.

to see the necessity of it, the necessity of him to bring you these distresses and these tribulations.

So what are these tribulations? Well, the first one—I have jotted down six—of how tribulations come. The first one is it could in connection with the world. We don't think about that much, but our jobs, our vocation brings our souls great tribulation.

There is many times that things in our life whether it be in our... in the business side of our life or whatever it is, it brings great unrest in our souls. That is ordained of the Lord. You shall have tribulation and there is a purpose in that to show us that that is not our life. It may be the lives of other people here on this earth. It may be all that they have. And we see that in many people. That is all they have. They work around the clock for money, more name, more greed, more message, more legacy. Whatever it is. But for the child of God the Lord sends him tribulation in that very place. He sends him tribulation in the work place. He sends him tribulation in the supermarket. He sends him tribulation in the activities of this world to wean us from those things, to make those things to die to us.

But as we have already hinted on today, he also sends tribulation in our close family members. Being a dad of four that is four opportunities for tribulation, not to mention my beloved wife. And I have seen others that I love in this room and how it has affected them as things as the Lord has brought tribulation into their life by the distress that has been caused to the one they love, ones they love. And that is needful, too.

It is amazing how these two things fit together. We can't experience the Lord's peace until we see the Lord's tribulation. And it is from him. The devil didn't do it. Satan didn't do it. This is ordained by our loving Lord to bring us close to his side.

How will we know that in him we have peace? How would we understand as Paul says the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus? How would we ever know that? How would we ever experience that peace that is in Christ? How would we experience ourselves being in Christ without this tribulation and the tribulation to our loved ones?

You know, there is no escaping that in our own wisdom there is no escaping it in our mind and the ways we make to escape it. But the Lord brings his people through it.

There is also tribulation in the evil of this world.

You say, "Well, that is easy to say and easy to see."

Yes, but it defiles us. It defiles the people of God when we are caught up with the evil in this world, whether it be TV programs, whether it be things on the internet. You may think that you are strong enough to overcome them. You may think that, oh, it is ok. It is expedient for me to look at these things. But the cause great tribulation to your soul. It causes our souls great tribulation to see reports on TV. It causes our soul tribulation to

read accounts of things that are going on in this world. It causes us great fear. We tremble at it because we look at ourselves and our family and say, “Well, what does this mean for us in five years, in 10 years? What does this mean for my grandkids or my children? What does it mean for them?”

And our souls start to shake and start to tremble. These are all the ways that the Lord brings tribulation into the child of God’s life. And then there is the persecution that we don’t like to talk about. We don’t like to talk about persecution because we immediately think of martyrdom. And we think of the way it was years ago.

That has not been ordained in our time yet. It has not been something that the Lord has called this people to do, to lay down their life, to stand in the truth in the face of death. It hasn’t.

So do we suffer persecution? Yes, we do in great word. We do in the thoughts of man. We do in the devices of man, in the things that they work behind the scenes that they believe they are doing that they will get us. And that causes our soul great tribulation.

The Lord is bigger than that, too. And then there is persecution within the Church, not persecution, tribulation within the Church, division, our tongues how we talk with each other, our flesh rises up, the lack of love that comes forth. Then you get home and you are left to yourself and the Lord brings conviction in your life. And there is great sorrow.

That is tribulation. It is tribulation in your soul for what you have done. It is tribulation over sin.

Yeah, he is the healer of that, too.

And then the last one I will mention is our bodies. This body that the Lord has ordained for us to live in, this body that is fearfully and wonderfully made can cause us great tribulation, because we don’t have control over it. And, see, the very sin that entered into the world—and this is another one of those great benefits, so to speak of falling in Adam. It is not a benefit. It is a curse. Our bodies are broken down, because of sin. They decay. Disease comes and it causes our souls to have great tribulation. And all of this is necessary, all of these avenues that the Lord uses is necessary to bring us out of this world.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”³⁴

That is the wisdom of God in tribulation.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer...”³⁵

³⁴ Romans 8:28.

³⁵ John 16:33.

I tell you. Every time I read it, it just astounds me. Be of good cheer. All that tribulation I just talked to you about, be of good cheer. Be encouraged, but not in the tribulation. Be encouraged that he has overcome it. Be encouraged that he has overcome the world.

And I want you to see something here. The fact that he overcome the world shows you it is an enemy. The fact that the overcome and will destroy this world tells you it is an enemy. Don't let Satan tell you otherwise.

It is a great blessing when the Lord brings us to see the colors of this world as they truly are. Really, what is this world to us? But when we are left to just live in it day to day, we become attached to it and then the Lord in his great love sends tribulation to show us we don't want to live in this world. We don't want our clutches in this world. And, oh, if the Lord is pleased, if the Lord... if he is pleased to do so today, if he could bring us to what Hosea wrote in Hosea 14.

“Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?”³⁶

Oh, Lord, if you could come with that power and wean us from this world and, Lord, that testimony would be on our lips, what do I have to do anymore with these idols? What do I have to do anymore with these things that weigh down my soul?

I thought about that this morning as I was walking and running around here this morning trying to prepare and find everything. The Lord brought that to me. You know, encumbered about many things. But there is one thing needful. And that needful thing is the Lord Jesus Christ.

All of these tribulations and all of these anxieties and all of these things that we have in our life, they shall not have dominion over us, because he has overcome the world. All of the allurements of the world, all of the enslavings of sin and the bondage that it has, it can't have dominion over us, because he has overcome the world. May the Lord reveal that to you today.

And I don't know why, but I am going to leave you with this verse and it is in Luke 9:11. You know, I read it a couple of days ago and it just seems to be kind of an out of place verse, but experientially, oh experientially it is beautiful. If the Lord is pleased to show you the beauty in this little verse and it just seems to be in the middle of nowhere. You know, it is in between... in 10 it said:

“And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. And the people, when they knew it...”³⁷

³⁶ Hosea 14:8.

³⁷ Luke 9:10-11.

And that is my prayer today. Oh, Lord, show us that you have ordained this tribulation. Show us that our peace is in us. Lord, we know it. And how do we know it? Jesus said in John 6:63:

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”³⁸

He speaks it to your soul.

“And the people, when they knew it, followed him.”³⁹

When we know the Word... when he come to our soul, this is how when he speaks it to... when he speaks the voice to the sheep, the sheep follow him and they follow him and they followed him and he received them. There is a beauty... there is some beauty, beautiful depth in that passage.

When Satan lies to you, when the lies of this world come, he receives his children. He receives them and he doesn't turn them away.

“And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.”⁴⁰

He speaks to us the kingdom of God and he heals us when we have need of healing.

Everyone in this room that is a child of God has need of healing. You will be shown you have need of healing. And you know I am not talking physical here. We have that, too. I am talking about your soul. And what an experiential passage this is. Oh, Lord, if you could just reveal it today, that little morsel to know that our peace is in thee and, Lord, that you have overcome this world and that we have overcome it in you.

Dear heavenly Father, most gracious and holy Lord, may you come with power, may you come with love and may you come with thy mercy to our souls this day to reveal that we are in thee, that, Lord, you have ordained tribulation, but, Lord, may you preach that cheer and that encouragement to our souls that thou hast overcome this world. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

³⁸ John 6:63.

³⁹ Luke 9:11.

⁴⁰ Ibid.