

A. John 16:16-22 – Jesus’ death and resurrection foretold in a riddle

1. John 16:16 – “ *A little while and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while and you will see Me* .” Jesus’ comments often **confused** the disciples, and this was no exception. How would they see Jesus, and then not see Him, and then see Him again for a little while?
 - a. Now that the crucifixion is in the **past**, this riddle is easily understood. As we look back, we understand what Jesus meant, but at the time, the disciples were sad and confused.
 - b. Jesus meant that while He was **buried** in the ground, they would not see Him, but after His resurrection they would see Him again for a little while. This statement referred to His various appearances during the 40 days before His ascension back to heaven.
2. John 16:17 – *Some of His disciples then said to one another, “What is this thing He is telling 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’?”* Instead of asking Jesus what He meant by this, they **discussed** it among themselves. Human reasoning is not sufficient for understanding the mind of God.
3. John 16:18 – *So they were saying, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is talking about.”* They did not understand what Jesus meant by “A little while.” The whole thought of Jesus leaving elevated the disciples’ **anxiety**.
4. John 16:19 – *Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, “Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?”* Jesus is omniscient. He **knew** their every thought and question. Psalm 139:1-4
 - a. There are three **elements** to this riddle so far are:
 - 1) Right **now** you disciples see Me...
 - 2) In a little **while** you disciples will not see Me...
 - 3) And then **again** for a little while you disciples will see Me...
 - b. This riddle did not fit their long-term expectations. A messiah takes over, He does not come and go. Next Jesus added more **intrigue** to His riddle.
5. John 16:20 – “ *Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.*” Jesus expanded His first riddle with yet another riddle. Jesus explained that while the world would rejoice, the disciples would mourn. Later their mourning would turn to **joy**.
 - a. The elements of this deeper riddle are:
 - 1) The disciples will **weep** and mourn...
 - 2) The world will **rejoice**...
 - 3) The disciples will **grieve**...
 - 4) The disciples’ grief will **change** to joy...
 - b. As Jesus was arrested, tried and crucified the disciples wept, but the world cheered. Later when Jesus rose again, their grief suddenly **shifted** to great rejoicing.
6. John 16:21-22 – These thought-provoking riddles reflected the Lord’s habit of using the everyday, **ordinary** events of life to teach extraordinary truth.
 - a. John 16:21 – “ *Whenever a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.*” Jesus used an ordinary life event to explain His riddle. He used **childbirth** as a metaphor.
 - 1) A mother’s labor pains are intense and overwhelming. What makes her forget the pain? The moment she sees her newborn child she immediately **forgets** the pain.
 - 2) Jesus predicted that this would be the experience of the disciples. During the crucifixion and burial they would suffer great anguish, but as soon as they saw the resurrected Lord Jesus their sorrows would quickly **vanish** away. Luke 2:35
 - b. John 16:22 – “ *Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.*” Sometimes the pain of sadness can be so great you can hardly go on. We can think all is lost, but inevitably, just when we are certain all hope is gone, suddenly the **light** shines again. 2 Corinthians 4:17

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- 1) For now, the disciples were in deep distress. To counter their depression, Jesus assured them they would see Him again very soon. Jesus knew they would once again celebrate with true joy and gladness. He also knew their joy would **continue** forever. 2 Corinthians 6:10, Galatians 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 2) After the resurrection, when they saw Jesus again, everything in their world changed. The light shone again. Jesus had told them that no one would be able to wipe their joy away. Even though from that point onward they faced death by persecution, over and over again their joy remained sure and **complete**.

B. John 16:23-26 – Prayers answered in the name of Jesus

1. John 16:23 – “*In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you.*” The phrase “in that day” referred to Jesus’ ascension **back to heaven** to His Father’s house.
 - a. When Jesus went back to the Father, He was no longer able to meet their needs in person. They would not be able to ask Him direct questions. Instead He commanded them to prayerfully depend on the Father, approaching Him in His holy **name**. Jesus assured them that the Father would listen and answer.
 - b. This would mark a new way of communicating with God. After Jesus’ ascension when they could no longer talk to Him directly, in the **authority** of Jesus’ name they could bring their requests to the Father and He would answer. John 14:13-14, 15:16
 - c. Israel had never prayed to God in someone’s **name**. This was brand-new church-related doctrine that they’d understand better after the church began.
2. John 16:24 – “*Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.*” This statement shows that our **permission** to pray and make requests of the Father is based on Christ’s name and authority.
 - a. The disciples had never before asked God the Father for anything based on Jesus’ merits or authority. When Jesus first taught them to pray, He did not mention praying in His name. Now, as He was about to leave them, Jesus encouraged the disciples to **boldly** pray for any and everything they needed, and to do so in His name. Luke 11:1-4
 - b. Jesus wanted answered prayers to fill the **void** His departure would create. If they prayed in the name of Jesus, from the throne above, God would respond to the disciples’ requests and their needs would be readily met.
3. John 16:25 – “*These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.*” Although up until this time Jesus had often spoken to them in riddles or parables, but now He promised to speak to them **clearly**.
 - a. Jesus did not say when this would happen, but we know that when the Helper, God the Holy Spirit came with His teaching ministry, He **clarified** many of the symbolic sayings the Lord used, such as “the Father’s house” and “the vine and branches.”
 - b. Jesus was still purposely keeping some things a **mystery**. Later, most of Jesus’ teaching would be further developed in the epistles. Throughout our lifetime, the Holy Spirit continues to show us the meaning of Christ’s and the apostles’ teaching. Thank God for this amazing ministry. Ephesians 1:9, 16-19; Colossians 1:26-27
4. John 16:26 – “*In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf ...*” In plain language Jesus said, “In the future you can directly approach the Father in my name, and I won’t need to ask Him for you.” Now believers can address prayers **directly** to the Father in Christ’s name or authority. Ephesians 3:14
 - a. A new dispensation was drawing near. Jesus was preparing His followers for that coming eventuality. After He ascended, they would make requests to the Father **through** the Son in prayer.
 - b. We do not pray to Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Our prayers are directed to the Father in the name of the Son. We now have direct **access** to the Father. Hebrews 4:15-16, 10:19-22

C. John 16:27-33 – Jesus the ultimate overcomer

1. John 16:27 – “*... for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.*” One reason God the Father loved the disciples was because they **loved** Christ and believed He truly was from God. Clearly Jesus did not cast doubt on the faith or love of the disciples.
 - a. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God loves you. God the Father dearly loves all those who love His Son. Against the current of the times, these disciples **risked** their future when they believed Jesus came forth from the Father above. Even though many of their dreams were never fulfilled in time, they were not disappointed.

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- b. This verse is directly tied to the previous one where Jesus promised them that they'd be heard by the Father Himself. Now He added the **bonus** of the Father's love due to their love of Jesus and because they believed Jesus was from the Father.
2. John 16:28 – *"I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father."* Since Jesus **came** from heaven. His departure from here would mean He was returning to His first abode, the Father's house. He left heaven and to heaven He would return.
3. John 16:29 – *His disciples said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech."* The disciples said they now understood Jesus' teaching. This was a good start. Understanding comes before **faith** (Rom. 10:17) and faith before actions (2 Cor. 4:13).
4. John 16:30 – *"Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."* Now that the disciples realized Jesus was **omniscient** (in verse 19 He read their minds) and indisputably wise (Rom. 11:3336), they believed He was God-incarnate, having come forth from heaven above.
- a. Contrary to this clear testimony, the disciples would soon forget Jesus' statements and even **struggle** to believe the women who would later testify of His resurrection. Matthew 28:1-10
- b. Thankfully, future **doubts** did not nullify the legitimacy of their present faith or the permanency of their salvation. Any one of us can become unbelieving believers since we all occasionally struggle with doubts.
5. John 16:31 – *Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"* Although Jesus confirmed their faith in John 16:27, He was totally aware of their frailty. He knew that even though the disciples were strong in faith now they would soon abandon Him and be scattered. Their faith would be severely **tested**. Matthew 26:31, James 1:2-4
6. John 16:32 – *"Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."* The prophesied **hour** included the time of Jesus' arrest plus all other events leading to His crucifixion. At that hour His disciples would desert Him. Matthew 26:56
7. John 16:33a – *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace."* Jesus' prophecy showed His disciples that He knew they were going to fail Him, but even with that knowledge, He still cared about them. No amount of bad behavior can separate the believer from God's love. This kind of security and peace is only found in Christ. Romans 8:38-39
8. John 16:33b – *"In the world you have tribulation..."* Jesus used the word *tribulation* THLIPSIS in John 16:21 to describe the anguish a woman experiences in childbirth. The word means **trouble**, persecution, or affliction, and that is exactly what we can expect from this world. John 15:18-19, 16:2
9. John 16:33c – *"...but take courage; I have overcome the world."* We can have confidence and courage in the face of this world's harsh persecution because Jesus Christ overcame this world during every moment of His earthly life – even **before** the cross. 1 John 5:4-5

D. Conclusion to the "After Supper Discourse: Episode two"

1. Jesus loved the world so much that He died for everyone, even for those who were His avowed enemies. Today, our Lord Jesus Christ commands us to love at a humanly **impossible** level. He set the standard much higher than our human determination or personal willpower can perform. John 13:3435, Galatians 6:2, Matthew 22:39, Luke 6:35
2. Only through the **power** of the Holy Spirit are we able to fulfill His command to love. We are fully incapable of loving at this level through human wisdom or strength. John 14:15-17
- a. Because we need the Holy Spirit, we must first be **saved**. Salvation comes through faith alone in Christ alone as we trust in Him alone as Savior. Galatians 3:26
- 1) After salvation we live by the **same** faith that saved us. Colossians 2:6
- 2) As we grow, we learn to **abide** in Christ by faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 2:20b
- b. To abide in Christ is equivalent to living by God's grace through faith. As we walk **dependently** on the indwelling Holy Spirit, we learn to abide in Christ. Galatians 2:20b, Romans 1:17, 8:9
- c. Here is a list of **synonyms** for abiding in Christ (not intended to be exhaustive).
- 1) **Looking** unto Jesus. Hebrews 12:1-2.
- 2) **Walking** by or according to the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16, Romans 8:14
- 3) Being **filled** with or by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18
- 4) Allowing the *Word of Christ to dwell richly within you*. Colossians 3:16

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- 5) The Lord Jesus Christ living in and **through** us. The mystery of godliness is Christ in us making us holy and godly in our daily conduct. Romans 8:9-11, Colossians 1:27, Philippians 1:21, 3:9; 1 Timothy 3:16
 - 6) Christ dwelling at **home** in your hearts through faith. Ephesians 3:16
 - 7) Entering into His **rest**. Hebrews 4:1, 10
 - 8) By faith **presenting** the members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness to God, reckoning ourselves to have died with Christ to sin, and to have been raised to newness of life. Romans 6:11-14
 - 9) Walking in the **light** by being in fellowship with Christ. 1 John 1:4-7
- d. Abiding in Christ and confession of sins are not synonymous. We confess our sins when we realize we have not been abiding. To abide in Christ is to **consistently** depend on Christ. The abiding believer looks to Christ by faith on a moment-by-moment basis. Romans 8:10-11, Hebrews 12:12
- 1) When we **realize** we have not been walking by the strength and guidance of the Spirit, but rather according to our sinful flesh, we must confess our sins. 1 John 1:9
 - a) Confession of sin is **necessary** but should not be equated with abiding in Christ.
 - b) Using the metaphor of living or abiding in a home, confession would be the **doorway** back into the house of fellowship. Once we are in the house, we should abide or remain in fellowship by faith, relying on the Holy Spirit's enabling power.
 - c) Using this metaphor, we enter the house by confession of sins, but abide in it by ongoing faith or **dependence** on God. Galatians 2:20b, Colossians 2:6
 - d) In a human context, we would never feel like we were **enjoying** communion or friendship if we sat around confessing our sins to each other all the time.
 - e) Confession restores a broken friendship, but abiding is living, growing and enjoying **camaraderie** together. Jesus stressed this truth in John 15. Luke 15:11-32, Ephesians 3:16-19
 - f) We will fail many times and have to confess our sins, but if confession were the same as abiding in Christ, our walk would not be **enjoyable**.
 - g) John wrote in 1 John 1:9 that **if we sin**, we are to confess it, but also as we see in 1 John 2:1, the goal is for us not to sin. John's purpose in writing the book of 1 John was for us to have fellowship with the person Jesus Christ, not to teach us about confession of sin. 1 John 1:1-3
 - 2) When we confess our sins as God commands in 1 John 1:9, we then have the potential to go on to enjoy abiding fellowship with Christ as taught in John 15:4-5. As we clock time abiding in Christ, we grow, **mature** and learn to truly love one another just as He loved us.
3. We cannot bear **fruit** unless we abide in Christ, enjoying fellowship with Him. John 15:1-8
 4. Abiding in Christ places us in direct opposition to the world in a powerful way. In that position, we enjoy Christ's enabling **power** to live the Christian life. John 15:18-19
 5. As we obey Christ's command to abide in Him, by His strength we become **victorious** over the world's allure. John 16:33.
 6. As we walk depending on the Holy Spirit, our Lord becomes **glorified** through our lives as we become increasingly fruitful. Galatians 5:16-23
 7. The ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit **empowers** us to be fruitful. He gives practical victory over the world in our daily life and ultimately God gets the glory. Ephesians 5:18, Colossians 3:16