

“The Gift of Peace” John 16:25-33 Shane Hatfield 4/4/21

If you have a Bible, open up to John 16. We’ll be using the English Standard Version. We have been studying this portion of Scripture for some weeks now. It’s called the Farewell Discourse. These are Jesus’ final words to His disciples before He heads to the cross and the grave. What we have seen all along the way is that Jesus is preparing the disciples for His death, resurrection, and ascension. He’s trying to prepare them for all these amazing gifts that He is going to give them through His resurrection and ascension. With all these gifts, He gives them simple commands to follow so that they can receive these gifts and experience them. He calls them to believe in Him, to abide in Him, to love in Him and to pray in Him. And tonight will be no different. We’re going to see how Jesus overcomes the world through the resurrection, and how that gives us peace, and it gives us courage. If you’re a little one out there and you want three things to listen for, let me give you three things to listen for: a lion, a victory, and a dare. Let’s listen to God’s word. Hear the word of the Lord from John 16:25-33.

²⁵ “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; ²⁷ for 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 have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

²⁹ His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! ³⁰ Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” ³¹ Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? ³² Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. ³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

All men are like grass and their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers, and the flowers fade, but not the word of God, it stands forever. Let’s listen to it.

When I was a kid, I spent pretty much all my time reading, if I was reading, it was either Sports Illustrated magazines or comic books; that’s it. I really didn’t know other books existed until I became a youth minister, and everybody talked about these Chronicles of Narnia books by this guy named C.S. Lewis. They just talked about them all the time, and the movies were coming out, and I was like, ‘Okay, if I’m going to be a youth minister, I guess I’ve got to read the Chronicles of Narnia.’ So, as an adult, I read them, and they’re good! And probably the most famous one is called “The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.” It tells the story of four children: Lucy, Susan, Edmund and Peter, and their journey to the magical world of Narnia. Narnia is filled with magical creatures and magical things, but when they get there, it is under a curse, the curse of the White Witch in which it’s always winter, but never Christmas. This Witch is cruel and mean and she captures people; she turns them into stone. Well, while the children are there, their friend, Mr. Tumnus, is captured by the Witch and turned into stone, so they’re trying to figure out, ‘How can we save our friend?’ And Mr. Beaver tells them, ‘Well, you’ve got to go to see Aslan.’ Aslan is the only one who can help you. So, they go to see Aslan and in the process

of going to see Aslan their brother Edmund is actually tricked by the White Witch into becoming a traitor. She tempts him with Turkish delight, which I'm not sure why, because Turkish delight is not any good, but that's a tangent. She tricks him into becoming a traitor, so now he's captured by the White Witch, and they go to Aslan and they plead with him, 'Please save our brother! Please save Tumnus!'

So, Aslan goes to the Witch and he has a conversation with her and then, the next day, he meets the Witch at the table, and the Witch and her army proceed to kill Aslan the lion, the great king of Narnia, and the children are just devastated that Aslan is dead. Well, the next day, they are surprised and elated and shocked to find out that Aslan died, but he rose from the grave. He was resurrected. And not only was he resurrected, but he went on the war path to defeat the Witch and her army. He killed the Witch. They defeated the army. Winter was no more in Narnia. Everyone who was changed to stone was back to life and they were freed. It was through Aslan's death and resurrection that Narnia was transformed, and the White Witch was overcome. And this is what Aslan says after he broke the curse: "Though the Witch knew the deep magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know. Her knowledge goes back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little further back, into the stillness and darkness before time dawned, she would have read there a different incantation. She would have known that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the table would crack and death itself would start to work backwards."

Lewis has, in this story of Narnia, and this story of Aslan the lion, given us an allegory to understand the person and work of Jesus. Through His sinless life, and His sacrificial death, our sins have been paid for. Our rebellion against God has been paid for. Through His resurrection, the curse on this world has been broken, the curse that happened in the fall that caused Satan, sin, and death to rule over all things and bring all the tears and all the sadness and all the brokenness in this world. When Jesus was resurrected, death began to work backwards. Life began to take over in this world, and in our lives. When Jesus overcame the world through His resurrection, He gave us a victory, and that victory gives us peace, and that peace gives us courage. That's what I want us to see tonight as we look at this passage. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have peace, and because we have peace, we have the courage to live a life of joy and love and happiness with our God and King. So, we're going to look at three things tonight. We're going to see that the resurrection overcomes the world, and the resurrection gives us peace, and that peace gives us courage.

The first thing we're going to see is that the resurrection overcomes the world. Look back at verse 33, it says, "³³I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." So, the first thing we have to ask ourselves is this: what does it mean when Jesus said, "I have said these things to you"? Well, in context, what Jesus had just told them was 'I am going to stop speaking in figures of speech and I'm going to start speaking plainly. I'm going to give you a clearer knowledge of God,' right? 'I'm going to help you understand Him in a clear way.' That's good news, because the disciples were always confused, and they always misunderstood Jesus, and then He gives them more good news when He says, 'I am going to go to the Father and you don't have to come to me anymore, you can go directly to the Father because He loves you and you love me and now you can access Him directly.' And then, He gives them an example of this plain speech when He says, 'I came from the Father into the world and now I'm going back to the Father.'

Now, here's where things get interesting. Look at what the disciples say, they say, 'Ah! Now we get it! Now we know who you are! Now we don't need to ask you any more questions.'

We understand what you've been talking about all along.' And you want to kind of look at the disciples and go, 'Did you really not get it before? He fed 5,000 people with a few loaves and a few fish! He walked on water! He's done all this amazing teaching with power, and now you believe Him?' Did they really believe Him? Well, Jesus gives them a startling response, doesn't He? He says, 'Do you really believe me?' And I kind of imagine He says it with this twist of irony and sadness and pity. Then He gives them this bad news, He says, 'Look guys, the time is coming, in fact it's here, when you're all going to disown me. You know how Judas disowned me? You know how I told Peter that he was going to disown me? Yeah, you're all going to do it. You don't really get it. You think you get it, but you don't get it.' Despite His best preparation, He knew that they wouldn't abide in Him, that they wouldn't believe in Him, that they wouldn't pray in Him. He knew that they would fail the final lesson.

And He knows the same thing about us. He knows that although we see the bloody cross and we sing about it and although we see the empty tomb, He knows our sinfulness. He knows our weakness. He knows the unbelief that lives in our hearts. He knows that there's a worldliness that still lives inside of us. He knows that when we're faced with sin and suffering in the world we're going to fail to believe, fail to abide, fail to pray, fail to love. He knows all these things about us. He knows that like Edmund, we're going to be seduced by the White Witch of this world into betraying Him. But, there's good news, right? And that good news is this: it says, "I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace." In *me*. In Jesus. Not in them. Not in the world, but in Jesus they have peace! That peace is the inner calm that comes from knowing that your salvation is secure. It's a peace that comes from knowing that Jesus won the battle, right?

In ancient cultures, like in the Bible times, in the Old Testament times, they used to settle wars differently than we settle wars now. What they would do, commonly, is they would take their greatest fighter and they would send their greatest fighter into battle versus the other country's greatest fighter, and those two guys would fight and whoever won would claim victory for their people. This is what we see in the story of David and Goliath. The Israelites send tiny, shepherd boy, David, into the battle and the Philistines send Goliath into the battle, and those two are going to fight to see who wins. Well David, with one swing of his sling, and one slash of his sword, defeats Goliath. He gets the victory, and because he gets the victory, all of Israel gets the victory, and they rush in to battle. What the Bible teaches us, and what Jesus is alluding to here is that Jesus is the true and greater David. That through His sacrificial death and His resurrection, He has defeated Satan, sin and death. He has defeated the world, the flesh and the devil. He has broken the effects of the curse on this world, and because He overcame the world through the resurrection, everything is being reversed. Life overcomes death. Grace overcomes works. Acceptance overcomes shame. Faith overcomes fear. The Spirit overcomes flesh. Joy overcomes sorrow. Love overcomes hate. Forgiveness overcomes condemnation. For all who look to Jesus for salvation from sin and misery, and not themselves, they receive the gift of peace that comes from Jesus' victory. Jesus is saying, 'I know you all are going to fail, but look at me. In me you have peace. I am not going to fail. I am going to overcome the world.' And that's what He did. And it's His resurrection that gives us peace.

That's the second thing that we're going to talk about. There's a book called "God's Way of Peace" by Horatio Bonar. I'm from Oklahoma, I know I'm saying that wrong. I was born that way! I was born in Oklahoma, what can I do? Horatio Bonar. But in his book, "God's Way of Peace: A Book for the Anxious," he writes this: "Remember that the gospel is not a list of duties to be performed or feelings to be produced or frames which we may pray ourselves into in order

to make God think well of us, in order to fit us for receiving pardon. The gospel is the good news of the great work done upon the cross. Knowledge of that finished work is immediate peace.” What’s troubling you today? What’s making you anxious? Look to the cross and attune for the good news. Is it your failure? Then look at Jesus’ faithfulness on the cross. Is it the strife that you see in the world? Then look at the way He reconciled us to God through His death. Is it pain and suffering? Then look at the pain and suffering of your great Savior, who endured the pain and the suffering of the cross so that there would be a world with no more sorrow, no more pain, and no more suffering. Is it the loss of your family or friends? Then look at the resurrection, so that one day in heaven you will see them again. Is it your own struggle with sin? Then look at His perfect life and His sacrificial death that saves you, that overcomes sin for you. The answer to overcoming the world does not lie in the world, it lies in the one person who overcame the world and that is Jesus. And when we look to Him, that’s where we find peace. When we receive Him, when we rest in Him, that’s where we find our peace, and that’s what transforms us to be able to receive peace in the anxieties and the trials and the tribulations of this life.

I was with a friend recently who received some bad news. He is in a custody battle with his ex-wife and they had been seeing a counselor, and they thought the counselor was going to help mediate the custody battle and that didn’t work, and the counselor quit, so now they’re going to have to go to court to get things resolved, and he was pretty devastated by it. But to hear him process the gospel during that moment was amazing. He said, ‘I can’t control my ex-wife. I can’t control my kids. I can’t control the court. I can’t control this process. I can’t control anything, but I know the God who controls everything, and in Him I have peace.’ Don’t you see? He knew that the resurrected Jesus was ruling and reigning on the throne and because of that, He had peace in the midst of the tribulations.

We can find peace when we’re in tribulations. We can find peace when we get opposition from the world. When the world is just raging against us, and condemning us, and persecuting us, and hurting us, we can be transformed into people who find peace, and into people who don’t fall away. Think about Peter! Peter denied Jesus three times, but after Jesus’ resurrection, Jesus went back to Peter and reinstated Him, that Peter could be an apostle and a leader in the church, and Peter went on to give up his life for Jesus. He became a martyr. That reminds me of a story I heard about a Korean martyr who was killed by communists, but before he was killed, listen to what he said, he said: “You may take my life from me, but you will never take Christ from my heart.” That’s the kind of peace that we have in the gospel. He gives us peace whenever we experience opposition, peace when we struggle with sin. The Apostle Paul was a Pharisee. And in his mind when he was a Pharisee, he was blameless. He was perfect. He hated Christians. He hated Jesus. Then he met the resurrected Jesus on the road, and he got body slammed. It totally flipped his world, and what he saw was that he was a sinner and that he fell far short of God’s standard of perfection. But he also saw that there was no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

If you are a perfectionist, you need to hear that message. I know there are a lot of perfectionists in here, I, myself, being one of them. Think about the words that you say to yourself when you sin. How do you talk to yourself? How do you speak to yourself? Do you curse and condemn yourself? Do you think that’s how your heavenly Father speaks to you? Do you think that’s how he thinks about you? No! There is now *no* condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. There is none. He loves you as a child and He speaks to you tenderly and kindly, so speak tenderly and kindly to yourself. Don’t curse and condemn yourself. The Lord of the universe doesn’t curse and condemn you; He forgives you. That gives us the peace to bring our

sin to Jesus and to allow Him to cleanse and change us and transform us. It's through the resurrection of Jesus that we have this peace that transforms our lives, and it gives us courage.

That's the last thing we see. In verse 33, Jesus told the disciples, "Take heart, I have overcome the world." Now, what does that phrase "take heart," mean? Well, one of the ways that you can literally translate that phrase is "to dare." I love how one pastor said it, he said: "Jesus is daring us to believe that He has overcome the world." He's saying, 'I dare you to trust me. I dare you to live as if the things that I have said are true.' Jesus is making a dare! Kids, do you ever dare each other? Daring is fun isn't it. Moms and dads hate it, but it's fun. Well, Jesus is giving you a dare right now. He's daring you to trust Him. He's daring you to live as if He has overcome the world, because He actually has.

What I thought would be interesting to do, would be to take the commands Jesus has given us in the Farewell Discourse and just sort of lay those out as dares. Jesus is daring us to believe in Christ. He is daring us to believe in Christ when we doubt. Are you here tonight and you doubt the resurrection? Do you doubt that Jesus was real? Those disciples were transformed from cowardly deserters into martyrs. Every single one of them died a martyr's death except for John. Look at the transformation that took place in their lives. If that's not proof enough, I don't know what is. Their lives were radically transformed by this truth, so much so that they were ready to die for it. Now, people die for lies that they believe are true all the time. But they don't die for lies that they know are false. Think about that! Nobody dies for a lie they think is false. These disciples didn't die for something that wasn't true. They died for the truth, because they knew that it was worth dying for.

Dare to trust Jesus and the truth of Christianity, to believe in Him. Dare to abide in Christ through obedience. If Christ overcame the world through His death and resurrection, I think we can trust Him. I think we can trust Him with our sexuality. I think we can trust Him with our money. I think we can trust Him with our time. I think we can trust Him with our children. I think we can trust Him with our spouse. I think we can trust Him with our parents. We can trust Him with our lives! He says that if we imitate this pattern of death, there will be resurrection, that as we die to ourselves, and our own way of living, that we're going to experience the joy that God has for us. Jesus dares us to abide in Him, to believe Him, to trust Him, and to obey Him. Jesus dares us to receive love and to give love. Think about how Jesus died; think about how Jesus loved! He loved painfully. He loved sacrificially. He loved selflessly. He laid down His life for people He knew were going to desert Him. Why? Because He loved us, and the Father loved us, and He is daring us to live a sacrificial life of love.

He is daring husbands to pursue their wives, even when they're wrong. He is daring husbands to pursue their wives in love, even in their sin. He is daring wives to forgive their husbands when they are pigheaded and selfish and stubborn, to move toward them in love the way Jesus moved toward us in love. He is daring children to obey their parents, even when it's hard, to love their parents, and care for them, and serve them, even when they don't get it. He is daring us to love our community, even when it hates us. He is daring us to go out and love a world that literally wants to persecute us in the name of Jesus. He is daring us to give our lives up for others, because that's what He did for us, and that's what brings joy. Through death is resurrection, through sacrificial suffering is joy and life, and Jesus calls us to embrace that life because He want us to experience that joy. He dares us to receive love and to give love. Some of you out there think that you are unlovable, that there's no way anyone could love you based on what you've done. Look at the cross. There is nothing that you have done that could take God's love from you. Receive His love. Stop rejecting it. Receive it.

And then lastly, we dare to ask the Father to meet all our needs. Jesus told us three times in the Farewell Discourse, three times, He said: 'Ask the Father in my name for whatever you want, ask Him for whatever you think will further my mission, and I will answer to you. I will give it to you.' He's daring us to ask! Kids, do you ever dare each other, 'Hey, go ask mom and dad if we can have that. Go, go do it. See what they say.' Jesus is saying, 'Hey, take that prayer to God. I dare you to go to the Father and ask Him to show fruit in your life. I dare you to go to the Father and ask Him for your spouse to be converted. I dare you to go to the Father and ask Him for your lost child to believe the gospel. I dare you to go to the Father and ask Him to comfort you in times of affliction and suffering. I dare you to ask the Father to give you your daily bread, every single morning like manna from heaven. I dare you to do it! Because I love you, and He loves you, and I paid for that!' Ask Him.

Jesus is daring us to have the courage to give Him everything, so that He can give us everything we need. Elisabeth Elliot tells an allegory about a beggar sitting by the side of a road, and she said, when that beggar was sitting on the side of the road, a great king came by. And when that great king came by, the beggar held out his bowl of rice, expecting the king to put money into the bowl. Well, when the king saw the bowl, he didn't put anything in it, he told the beggar, he said, "I want you to give me something." And the beggar of course, was grumbling and angry and frustrated, like "What is this king doing?" So, the beggar reaches in the bowl and grabs out three little grains of rice and he hands the king three grains of rice. The king takes the rice and speeds off, and the beggar is frustrated and angry and he reaches into his bowl to see what he's got left, and he feels something inside the bowl. He feels three gold nuggets, and then it dawns on him. "If I would have given him everything, then he would have given me everything."

Friends, Jesus has already given everything for you on the cross. Give Him everything. His resurrecting power has overcome the world. It's given us peace with God. It's given us a hope that is unfadeable. It's imperishable. He's given us the courage to live radically changed lives as His beloved children. Give Him everything. Believe Him. Trust in Him. If you're like the disciples, and you've fallen away, now is the time to come back! Repent, believe the gospel, trust in Him for salvation. If you've never believed the gospel before in your life, if you've always thought this was just a myth or a fairytale, and now there is even a grain in you that wants to believe that it's true, give Him that grain and let Him give Christ back to you and experience the glory of the resurrection and the power of His love for you. And if you're there, and you're just trying to follow Jesus every day, and you get to the end of the day and you are empty, Jesus says, 'Take heart. I have overcome the world. I have won. Trust me. The battle is over, the victory has been won, you have peace in me.' That's good news! Now let's pray that the Lord would give us the courage to believe it and to live it out. Please bow your heads and pray with me.