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# Sermon Notes

July 26, 2015

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## The Heart of Jesus: The Joyful Heart

John 16:16-33

<sup>16</sup> "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." <sup>17</sup> So some of his disciples said to one another, "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 am going to the Father'?" <sup>18</sup> So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." <sup>19</sup> Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'?" <sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. <sup>21</sup> When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. <sup>22</sup> So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup> In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

<sup>25</sup> "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. <sup>26</sup> 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; <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

<sup>29</sup> His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! <sup>30</sup> 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." <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> 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."

### Down in My Heart

- ❖ Joy is in short supply both in the world at large and among God's people
  - depression is a worldwide problem
  - how can we cultivate and keep a deep seeded, life nourishing reservoir of joy "down in our hearts"?
- ❖ Jesus cares about our experience and expression of joy

### As Clear as Mud

- ❖ Jesus' disciples are unclear about what they've heard, what they think they've heard, and what it all means
- ❖ Jesus knows, and Jesus cares about their confusion
  - Jesus knows the disciples cannot imagine the horror of what lies ahead
  - beyond that, He knows they have no clue about the resurrection
- ❖ Jesus forewarns and forearms His disciples with just enough information so that after these events unfold, they will recognize that Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen

### Sorrow Will Turn Into Joy

- ❖ While the world "parties" you will weep and lament

- the way the world reacts to your loss will make your grief all that much worse
- BUT... this is not going to last forever
- ❖ *Your sorrow will turn into joy* (cf. Psalm 30:5)
  - Jesus' promise does not eliminate or alleviate the grief
  - Jesus' promise stabilizes us in our grief by providing a larger grid against which to filter it
- ❖ Jesus uses the illustration of childbirth (vv. 21-22)
  - not just a joy that follows pain
  - a pain that is essential to producing joy
- ❖ For Christ and those who follow Him, pain produces the glory and the joy that comes out of it (2 Corinthians 4:17)
  - the pain of the crucifixion is followed by the glory of the resurrection
  - God often uses our pain and losses to generate great spiritual growth and insight in our lives

### True Reasons for True Joy

- ❖ Jesus is going away, but He is coming back
  - from the grave
  - with the invisible power and presence of the Holy Spirit
  - for His church and to establish His kingdom on earth
  - we will see Jesus!!!!

- ❖ We have a new relationship with the Father
  - direct, personal access (vv. 23-24, cf. John 14:9)
  - though God may occasionally be referred to as “a Father” in the OT, no one has previously come to God crying out *Abba Father*
  - Jesus' revelation of His Father will finally become clear and understandable to His followers
  - the Father loves you!!!!
- ❖ Jesus wants us to find our peace in Him
  - He has overcome the world
  - God's peace “gobbles up” whatever seeks to unsettle us

### Personal Application

1. How well do your experience and express the kind of joy Jesus teaches about in these verses? What might improve your ability both to receive and to reflect His joy?
2. What is your reaction to the idea that there is a kind of pain (like childbirth) that is foundational to experiencing genuine joy?
3. What are some ways that God has sustained you in the midst of sorrow, pain, and loss? What, if any, joy have you found on the other side of those events?
4. How are you benefiting from the new relationship Jesus reveals between His followers and His Father? Are you consciously aware of and blessed by the Father's love for you?
5. How does knowing that Jesus has overcome the world bring you peace?