

TRUSTING GOD'S JOY WHEN WE ARE CONFUSED!

John 16:16-33

INTRODUCTION: Our Lord Jesus talks about "joy" seven times in John's gospel. All of them occur the night before Jesus' crucifixion in chapters 15-17. Jesus promises us joy regardless of the circumstances and the confusion of our lives.

I. GOD'S PLAN CAN BE CONFUSING!

We seldom laugh when God tells or shows us His plans for our lives. John 16:16-18. Our Lord has given us assurance that He will be with us forever: John 14:15-20. God's timing in our lives can often become confusing to us and our confusion becomes greater the longer our discomfort continues. A very common plea to our Lord found in Scripture is "How Long?" Psalm 13:1-2: from the time David wrote that over 2,000 years ago, God's followers still express their confusion and frustration with God's plans, particularly with His timing.

II. WHEN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE CONFUSING!

The disciples of Jesus certainly had different plans for themselves and their Lord than what He clearly laid out for them. Believing Jesus was the Messiah, they expected Him to set up His kingdom immediately to restore Israel's world dominance. As Jesus announced His plans it disrupted their plans: John 16:19-21. Frustrated by their shattered plans Jesus gives them a reliable truth. Our God's joy is not about temporary solutions or quick fixes. God promises us reliable truths for lasting joy even when our temporary circumstances are not enjoyable. Jesus told His disciples to expect confusing, and even painful circumstances in their lives which will lead to greater joy as we continue to trust in Him.

III. CONFUSED BY REASSURED!

This news of Jesus departure from them is just too much for them so to comfort them Jesus gives them five reassuring promises. These five reliable truths injected them and will inject us with God's joy in our uncertain times. The first three promises appear in verses 22-24: John 16:22-24. Hearing Jesus will soon leave them disturbs them so Jesus promises them "But I will see you again!" In verse 23 Jesus said "In that day you will not ask me anything." Revelation 21:4-5. When we experience physical pain and personal challenges we can easily fall into depression, especially if we see no end to our problems. As Jesus' followers we have His promise that one day He will make everything right again. When we doubt we will ever rejoice again what a wonderful promise we find in John 16:22. Jesus' joy doesn't come and go. It lasts! That is why we should not confuse Jesus' joy with our happiness. John 15:11: Jesus joy in our hearts is Jesus Himself and He promises to be with us forever! We need to keep looking to our Lord Jesus: John 16:25-28. As we continue to talk with our Lord we will continue in His joy both in the highs and the lows of our lives. Through Jesus, His disciples have direct access to the Father: John 16:26-28; John 16:23-24: As we ask in Jesus Name our joy will be complete. John 16:29-33: Life will always have its messy moments but Jesus promises us that in our times of messy moments to take heart because He will see us again; Our hearts will rejoice again; No one can rob of us of our joy in Jesus; We can ask Him anything because through Him we will overcome the world. Jesus calls us to joy but we must trust in Him in order to have His joy in our hearts.