**The Joy of the Cross**

**(John 16:16-33)**

**Yearly Theme: *“Joy is…”***

**Series Title: *For the Joy…***

**April 12th, 2020 (Easter Sunday)**

***Something to think about:***

The key point this morning is this…

**Key Point*: “Sometimes losing is winning.”***

Today, Easter Sunday, we come to a passage not about resurrection, but rather the hope of resurrection, with a look at Jesus final moments with His disciples around the table of the Last Supper in an upper room in downtown Jerusalem. Jesus knows His time has come, but the disciples are still oblivious to the fact that Jesus (in just a few hours) will be arrested by the Temple guards in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He will lead His disciples to pray with Him through the night.

In our passage from John 16, we read the words of Jesus’ encouragement to His closest followers. In the midst of what is about to happen to Jesus – the tragedy of death and sorrow and grief – the disciples will see Jesus come into His full glory as He fulfills the Father’s purpose for His life. Jesus even tells them the devastating truth of their coming betrayal of Him in the midst of His darkest hour and need, but wants them to understand that these words aren’t meant to discourage them, but rather to give them peace in the coming days knowing that this is not the end.

Let’s take a closer look this morning…

**Turn in your Bibles to: *John 16:16-33***

From this passage of Scripture, how can we deduce that Jesus’ losing His life is actually a winning prospect?

1. **Jesus tells them that in a little while they won’t see him anymore, but a little while after that, they will ­see Him again (v. 16).**

*Sometimes losing what we love the most is has a way of refocusing our attention on what is most important; for Jesus this means death on the cross, for without His death there is no resurrection.*

1. **You will grieve, but your grief will suddenly turn to wonderful joy (v. 20b).**

*The disciples will grieve at the loss of their Master, Teacher and Lord, but at the resurrection their grief will suddenly turn to joy as they realize not only what they’ve lost has come back, but that they now have more than they ever could have imagined.*

1. **Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world (v. 33).**

*The disciples were about to undergo the most difficult test of lives as Jesus followers. Their courage and boldness would be pressed to the breaking point. Would they stand with Jesus in His hour of greatest need, or would they abandon Him to utter shame and defeat? Jesus answers the question before it’s even asked. They will scatter like sheep who have gone astray. They will leave Him completely alone.*

***Something to take home:***

Do you feel like you know Him? Are you bumbling through life with sorrow and doubt struggling to find your way through the day, week, month? Has fear and discouragement gotten you so off track that you don’t know your way back to joy and peace?

Sometimes the only way to victory is through the battle. Sometimes the only way to healing is through the pain. Sometimes the only way to win is by taking a loss. However, the only way to salvation is through the Cross.

Where are you today? Are you petrified as the prospects of life after difficulty? Are you afraid of the unknown beyond the struggles you now face?

If God’s kingdom is not of this world, doesn’t it stand to reason that what looks like losing to the world is actually gaining in God’s economy?

Listen to the words of Jesus:

***Luke 9:24-25 (NLT), 24****If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.* ***25****And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed?*

**Key Point*: “Sometimes losing is winning.”***