



*16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. 17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? 18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. 19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. 23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. 25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. 26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: 27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. 28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. 29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. 30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. 31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? 32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. 33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (John 16:16-33)*

Jesus is approaching the very end of His earthly ministry, but, at the same time, it is the very beginning for a life of eternal joy for all who believe.

It is a great privilege to be accounted one with Christ in all things. Being one

with Him allows us to live in peace and joy of our consciences knowing that our past sins have been forgiven and that we have been redeemed from the sentence of death that was pronounced at our birth. We have the high honor to be accounted the sons and daughters of God in Christ and to anticipate our home-going to Him at life's end. But there is another feature of that oneness that may bring sorrow to us – the cross. We, too, in following Christ, must follow along the way of the cross of suffering and shame. Taking up a cross may not be at all inviting to the world, but to us, it should be a cherished duty. It means denying ourselves for others, as Christ did, being the brunt of false accusations and ridicule of the world, as Christ was, and, if necessary, giving our lives for the truth as Christ did. It may seem like a glorious thing to be just as Christ was in His earthly ministry, but, behold, the cross stands at the front of all who follow Him. Are we ready to take up our crosses and follow Him?

During the War Between the States, the one combatant that was most at risk of being killed, on either side, in battle was the Color Bearer. Why was this so? The reasons are many. First, the Color Bearer was the first in the line of battle. The battle lines followed the colors. Second, the Color Bearer was the most visible of all in the line of battle – the colors distinguishing him prominently from all others. Third, the colors that the Color Bearer bore in battle represented all of the soldiers in who were arrayed in battle behind those colors. The opposing force hates the Color Bearer, and because they hate Him, they will hate you who represent Him. Christ is OUR Color Bearer. He has gone first to point the way to the enemy entrenchments. *And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.* (Isaiah 11:10) When the smoke and confusion of the battlefield becomes intense, it is the moment that the regulars will rally to the colors – for the Christian, those colors are Christ!

<sup>16</sup> *A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.* The full meaning of this verse is not openly certain at present. It may mean that after three days, the disciples would see Him in His resurrected body; or, it may mean that they would see Him through the leading of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

<sup>17</sup> *Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?* Even today, many of us fail to grasp the simple words of Christ as we read them. We may read them as historical narrative, or as a technical essay. But we should read the word of God with the same intensity that we would read a love letter from the one and only love of our lives. Reading with the heart is far more profitable than reading with the mind. <sup>18</sup> *They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.* Men, some even in the pulpit, still cannot tell what He saith.

<sup>19</sup> *Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?* Christ knows the desires of our hearts before we ever pray them. He knows our thoughts always, and He is ready to address them if we ask, or even if we do not.

<sup>20</sup> *Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* What horror and misery does a parent know when a child is lost and cannot be found even after diligent search. The heart is broken and there can be not relief in any pursuit. But the moment that news is announced that the child has been found well and safe, the misery immediately is

turned to joy unspeakable. Though the saints will suffer for Christ's sake and in His personal absence, that suffering will be turned to joy in the end. All such suffering is owing to the ignorance of the world of God the Father. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* (Psalm 30:5) And joy certainly filled their hearts on Easter morning!

21 *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.* Does any woman behold the face of her new-born baby and shrug her shoulders and say, "Ah, but it was not worth it!"? The pain of childbirth is immediately forgotten and the joy of a new life is celebrated.

22 *And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.* "Parting is such sweet sorrow" when there is a sure hope of reunion. There comes a day in the future of every Christian when he shall behold Christ face to face in eternity without any possibility of separation. Will that joy of union not flood your heart with tears of warm love?

23 *And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* The day will come when Christ is no longer accessible to the disciples in bodily form to answer their every question. But "in that day" when the Holy Ghost is given, those things which we ask shall be given for the worthiness and sake of Christ – not our own. 24 *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

25 *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.* Christ spoke to us in parables, proverbs, and word-pictures, but the apostles, after the leading of the Holy Ghost, spoke in plain language that we could comprehend fully. Those parables of Christ took on color and meaning after the coming of the Holy Ghost and the fulfillment of the prophecy of Christ.

26 *At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.* Christ is busy as we speak. He works in and through us, His disciples; and he intercedes on our behalf with the Father. There is no intercessor between God and man. Christ is all we need, and the fullness of our hopes in God.

27 *For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* Never discount the love of God for all who love the darling of His heart – the Lord Jesus Christ. I read a story once of a wealthy man who collected prize works of art. He had an only son for whom all of his life was dedicated. His son went off to WW1 and was killed in the [Battle of Neuve-Chapelle](#). The wealthy man was devastated. A few weeks after the cessation of hostilities in Europe, a soldier appeared at the man's door. He entered upon being invited in. he told the wealthy man that his son was his best friend and had, in fact, saved his life by dying in his stead by stopping a bullet intended for him. He knew from conversations with the son that the father loved art. The soldier had drawn a sketch of the son. He admitted that it was not of the caliber to be displayed among the other famous works displayed on the man's walls. The wealthy man was overjoyed to receive the sketch and placed it at the most prominent place – above his mantle. When the wealthy man died, there was an auction to sell off all his possessions and contribute proceeds to a charity. The auctioneer began with the first sketch done by the inept hands of a soldier. He asked, "Who will take the son?" Do I hear one hundred, do I hear fifty, do I hear twenty-five for the son? There was stunned

silence. Then a voice cried out somewhat belligerently, "Take that piece of junk down and start with the great works in the collection. But the auctioneer persisted. Then, an older fellow who was a friend and gardener for the wealthy man, cried out, "I'll give three hundred – it is all that I have!" The auctioneer then announced that the auction was over. Many voices protested that none of the great paintings had been auctioned off. The auctioneer responded, "I am sorry to say, but the owner stipulated that whoever takes the son, takes it all!" And so it is with the Son of God.

<sup>28</sup> *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* We are often too proud of our presumed knowledge of God. We invent terms that the common man cannot grasp in describing our theology, but the simple words that the common man can grasp of God often put him in greater understanding of truth than the theologian. Christ speaks here the truth in simplicity, yet there were facets of that truth that could not have been presently comprehended by the disciples. <sup>29</sup> *His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.* <sup>30</sup> *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.* In fact, these were as ignorant of the true nature of Christ's going as before He had spoken. Assumptions are dangerous tools in the hands of the proud.

<sup>31</sup> *Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?* These words of Christ sound eerily like a favorite engineering professor I had at a certain northeaster institution. So, do you believe that you have it now, do you? Well, have you considered THIS possibility? Christ will reveal to them their total lack of understanding even while they presume to know.

<sup>32</sup> *Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.* Could the disciples possibly know that each of them would head for the woods and bushes in half a day? Christ was never alone, even on the cross, for the Father was always with Him. Neither are we alone if we are in Christ. Those proud disciples standing about Christ, presuming to know and knowing not – presuming high courage yet acting as cowards a few moments later. How terribly weak we are when separated from Christ, the Vine of our living.

<sup>33</sup> *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* Christ is sharing these mysteries, not to confuse or to belittle them, but in order that they would have peace the moment they did realize the meaning of His passion and sacrifice. He would have them know that he fully understands their weakness in the face of danger, and proceeds to the cross in spite of it out of His love for them, and for us. We do not need to understand all things concerning God to love Him, to trust Him, and to rely upon His mercy and grace in Christ.