

Sorrow to Joy

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[0 : 00] John chapter 16, beginning in verse 16.

If you would please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. A little while and you will see me no longer, and again a little while and you will see me.

So some of the 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. So they were saying, what does he mean by a little while? We do not know what he is talking about. Now, 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?

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.

[1 : 18] 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.

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. 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. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? Many in our church are experiencing a season of sorrow.

Many have lost a loved one and are suffering as they try to make adjustments to life without them, and that can be really hard.

[2 : 24] And for them it's almost as if they're living in a dream. Grieving takes time, and a lot of time grieving takes much longer than some of us realize.

Some of you are dealing with a physical ailment, a sickness, or a disease. You spend a lot of time with doctors, taking tests, waiting for results.

Often while you wait, those times are filled with worry, hoping for good news, but giving a lot of thought to what the worst case scenario might be. Some of you are experiencing sorrow overseeing the poor decisions that your children or that your grandchildren are making.

You fear the outcome of what those decisions might mean for them. You've tried to raise them in the way that Scripture says they should go, but it's sorrowful to watch how the world continually works to entice them to go in a different direction.

And you know, I would say that there are many of us who are sorrowful, but we haven't let anyone know. The person sitting next to you may be overcome with sorrow, but sometimes in church we put on a facade to make it look like we have everything under control, though we don't.

[3 : 49] When we're sorrowful, it tends to produce within us questions and confusion. We ask ourselves often when we are filled with sorrow, why me or what if?

In answering the what if question, our minds tend to daydream as we construct an alternative reality where the thing causing us sorrow doesn't exist, alternate realities in which a different decision was made or a different action was taken or a different approach was taken which produced a better result.

And we create those alternative realities in our mind thinking, I wish it could be like that. But eventually we wake up from those daydreams and we're once again forced to face the reality that things haven't changed and that we don't really have any power to control those things, which then can make us even more sorrowful.

Why me questions can cause us to doubt God's sovereignty or wonder if we are facing this sorrowful trial because we've done something to make Him, maybe tempted to think that God doesn't even love us anymore.

The why me question can cause us to be jealous of others and act bitterly towards them. Thinking things like this, if I only had what they have, I'd be happy.

[5 : 26] Or causing us to think this way, you know what, I don't deserve to be going through this, but I know somebody who does. And they should be in the situation that I'm in.

We also make an idol out of the life that we wish that we had when we do that, when we ask the why me question. And we make enemies of those whom God has called us to love and to serve. And many of whom would rather and want to be our friends. Contemplating these questions does not bring an end to our sorrow, and neither does it bring us peace. The Bible presents Jesus as our prophet, priest, and king.

And when Scripture refers to Jesus as a priest, it refers to Him as our great high priest, as the one who, in that role, intercedes for His people.

And as the great high priest, He is a high priest who sympathizes with us. Hebrews 4, 15 through 16 says this, For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who, in every respect, has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

[6 : 43] Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need. Part of Jesus' desire and purpose in this role is to continually provide comfort to His people.

That's what 2 Corinthians 1, 3 through 4 says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

And so as we've been going through these last couple chapters in John's Gospel, chapters 14, 15, and now 16, we've repeatedly heard Jesus promise that He would send the Holy Spirit to the disciples, who is the paraclete, the comforter, who will be Christ's presence both with them and within them.

And in our text today, what we get to see is once again, we get to see our great high priest at work in His role as a comforter, as He sympathetically and compassionately seeks to comfort His disciples and unburden them of the sorrows that they are experiencing.

This is the kind of Savior you have. This is the kind of Savior that Jesus is. And His comforting presence continues to dwell within those whom He saved and whom He sealed with His Holy Spirit.

[8 : 25] These verses reveal that Jesus seeks to comfort the sorrowful. He desires to do that. And He desires to replace their sorrow with joy.

He desires that His people be joyful. And that is the truth that is expressed in our Scripture today. And this is the main idea for this morning's sermon.

Jesus Christ turns sorrow into joy. Jesus Christ turns sorrow into joy. Again, at this moment in Jesus' life, He was 24 hours away from death.

Having willingly agonized on the cross as He bore the sins of His people, as He was crushed by the righteous wrath of God for the sins that we've committed, His body would be taken from the cross, a beaten and bloodied mess.

No one was as well acquainted with sorrow as Jesus was, as Isaiah prophesied that He would be in Isaiah 53, 3-5.

[9 : 35] He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. As one from whom men hide their faces, He was despised and we esteemed Him not.

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities.

Upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with His wounds we are healed.

Because Jesus is so selfless and compassionate, we see here His complete love for His disciples as He spent much of that last night that He had with them, not seeking for them to comfort Him, but He was seeking to comfort them.

And you know, they should have been the ones that were trying to comfort Him. But instead, they were sorrowful for themselves. They were sorrowful over the fact that Jesus said that He was leaving.

And even though Jesus had repeatedly told them that He would die and that then He would rise again, He continued to exercise patience with them as He once again spoke comforting words to them with a promise that one day the things that were causing them to feel sorrowful would be things that would give them great joy.

[11:05] And so, in this text, Jesus explains how He turns sorrow into joy. There are three cures here for the sorrowful heart. And the first one is this. When you are sorrowful, take your sorrows to Christ.

Take your sorrows to Christ. beginning of verse 16, it says, there Jesus is speaking a little while and you will see me no longer and again a little while and you will see me.

Now, there is a debate amongst biblical scholars over what exactly Jesus means by a little while in these verses or in this verse. We know for sure that there's definitely a transition that is taking place here in Jesus' teaching.

This verse closes off what He's had to say about the Holy Spirit at this point and now He's beginning to refocus His teaching on the fact that He will soon depart from His disciples.

And so, the debate among scholars over this issue does not concern the transition that is taking place here in Jesus' teaching but it's over what Jesus meant when He said a little while.

[12:15] Some see this verse in Jesus' reference to a little while as referring to events that will take place after Jesus rises from the dead. When He says a little while and you will see me no longer, some believe Jesus is referring there to His ascension after He's resurrected and He ascends into heaven.

And then when He says again a little while and you will see me, they say that refers to when the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost and He is Christ's presence once again with His disciples who would indwell them.

Now that could be the case but I'm not in that camp. I'm in the camp of the others who believe that when Jesus says a little while He is referring to the moments that are just about to take place.

In a little while Jesus will die and the disciples will no longer see Him. His body will be taken down from the cross, it will be put into a tomb and it will be sealed and guarded for three days.

But then after a little while they will see Him when He appears to them, when He rises from the dead and as He spends 40 days with them before He ascends to heaven.

[13:28] That's what I think Jesus means here by a little while. No matter which interpretation though of verse 16 is correct, we have the benefit of the complete revelation of God today as Christians.

We have the Bible. We know that Christ rose. We know that Christ ascended. We know that Christ is coming again. But what we've got to understand as we're reading these verses is that the disciples did not know all of that for sure like we know that for sure.

And they were still struggling to come to grips with the reality that Jesus was going to die. And so they continued to be perplexed by what exactly Jesus was saying and what exactly was going on. And so what we see taking place in verses 17 and 18 is that they're trying to figure it out amongst one another without asking Jesus. So some of the 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'm going to the Father. So they were saying, what does this mean by a little while? We do not know what he is talking about. And so we ask there when we read that, well, why didn't the disciples just ask Jesus?

[14:42] Why didn't they just ask him for clarity? We've seen them do that other times, haven't we? As a matter of fact, even in this moment, these last moments with Jesus, we've seen Philip speak up and make a statement.

We've heard Thomas ask a question, but here they're murmuring and they're whispering to one another. Why don't they ask Jesus? And so here's what I think.

Here's what I think. I think they were afraid to ask. I think they were afraid to ask him his question because they didn't really want to know the answer. This is a strange illustration, but to me, when I thought about it, it was kind of like eating a hot dog.

Okay? Bear with me. I used to really like eating hot dogs. I would eat hot dogs raw. Okay? Gross. I know. But delicious when I was a kid.

And then one day, someone told me how they make a hot dog. And I didn't like eating hot dogs anymore.

[15:51] And even still today, I will eat them, but I've got to, in my mind, just say, you know what? It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter how they make it. If it tastes good, just eat it. Chew and swallow.

And so now, so now, there are some foods that it tastes good, and I might, I might, my palate might identify something that I don't really like, but you know what?

Instead of asking how it's made anymore, I just say, it's good. I'm not going to ask that question because I don't want to know the answer. So the disciples, I believe, did not want to know the answer for a similar reason.

Again, that's a strange illustration to use, but I think it's helpful to understand the disciples' perspective. Their whole lives, they had been told things about the Messiah, what He would do when He came.

And they believed, as did their culture, because it was ingrained within the society, that the Messiah would be one who overthrew the Romans and would establish a Jewish nation, a Jewish empire.

[17:00] And so when Jesus came and they believed that He was the Messiah, they were of the mind that this means really good things for us because we are His close associates. And so they were always looking for Jesus to be that kind of Messiah that they had been, that had been ingrained in them from childhood, that this is who the Messiah will be.

This is what the Messiah would do. But as they walked with Jesus and as Jesus came closer to the time when He would die, they became increasingly sorrowful and perplexed that Jesus was not the kind of Messiah that they had been told about when they were growing up.

And as Jesus approached the cross, He got more detailed about His death, saying that He would be arrested, saying that He would be beaten, saying that He would be spit upon, and that eventually He would be crucified.

But though He told them all those things, He also would tell them that He would rise again. But again, all of these things were contrary to what they grew up being told about the Messiah.

And so I think the closer they got to Jesus' death, the more sorrowful then they became and the less questions they wanted to ask because they were afraid of what the answers might be.

[18:23] And with that, I think they were in a sort of denial, a sort of denial. And that's what sorrow can do to us, can't it? When we are sorrowful, it puts us in a sort of state of denial, tempted to think that things will never get better for us, refusing to believe that there is any reason left to hope.

Proverbs 13, 12 says, hope deferred makes the heart sick. Lack of joy eliminates hope.

But Jesus seeks our hope and always gives us reason to hope. So in verse 19, He voices the disciples' questions for them because being God, He knew what was troubling their minds.

And He knew deep down they wanted to ask Him these questions. And so there, Jesus voices their question. Jesus knew they wanted to ask Him, and 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?

And so as we saw last week, Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. When they're saved, they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. They have the one indwelling them who inspired God's Word and who will illumine their minds to aid them in interpreting His Word for their lives.

[19:55] So when you are sorrowful, take your sorrows to Christ by turning to His Word and being reminded by His Spirit of the hope that you have in God through Jesus Christ, your Savior.

For example, the psalmist in Psalm 42, though sorrowful, challenges himself with these inspired words, Psalm 42, 11, Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God. Jeremiah was God's chosen prophet.

Jeremiah was a great preacher and a faithful servant of the Lord, but he was rejected time and time again by his people because of the things that God gave him to say to them.

And in Jeremiah 29, 11, there are words recorded from God to His suffering servant that though he was full of sorrow, God would come to His people's rescue.

[20:59] For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. This is who God is.

He comforts us when we are sorrowful. Lamentations is a book of laments. It's a book of sorrows, but inspired by the Holy Spirit, Jeremiah again writes in chapter 3, verses 21 through 24, but this I

call to mind and therefore I have hope.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul.

Therefore, I will hope in Him. We all experience time of sorrow where it seems like hope is lost, times where it seems like there's no light at the end of the tunnel.

It's just dark and it's going to be dark forever, we think. Sorrow produces within us the questions where we ask why me or what if, but again, those questions only lead to greater confusion, not to better answers.

[22 : 11] Instead, what we must do when we're sorrowful is take those questions to the Lord, to Christ, to His Word, and in doing so, we are told that we will find hope as He turns our sorrow into joy.

Your favorite Bible verse. Why is it your favorite Bible verse? Many times it's your favorite Bible verse because that was the Scripture that God gave to you and helped you through a really difficult time.

And so, you know that God uses His words in His Word to comfort you. I think it's great that we share those things. That's going to be one of our application questions.

Share your favorite Bible verse because oftentimes it's there and you remember it because God used it to help you in a really hard time. It gave you peace and joy in the midst of difficulty.

So, once you've taken that first step, acknowledge your sorrow, take it to Christ, then do this. Filter your sorrows through the cross. Filter your sorrows through the cross.

[23 : 20] Verse 20, Jesus says, truly, truly, I say to you, you will leap and lament but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful but your sorrow will turn into joy.

And so, whenever Jesus begins a statement with the words truly, truly, it indicates that what He's about to say is significant and very important. Jesus' death will deeply grieve His disciples and while they grieved, the enemies of Christ would rejoice in the thought that they had finally won, that they had finally silenced Him.

However, Jesus went on to assure them that a time would come where their grief would turn into joy. And so, it's important that we understand here that Jesus was not saying that the thing that caused them sorrow, His death, would be replaced by a separate event that would be joyful and overshadow the sorrow.

Rather, He was saying that the same event, the same event that brought them grief would also be something that brought them joy. And that same event that He's talking about is the cross.

The cross that caused their mourning would also be the cause that brings them joy and rejoicing.

The shadows of sorrow and mourning cast by the cross on which Jesus died fled before the glorious light of revelation on that third day when the disciples discovered that the tomb was empty.

[24 : 48] Death had not extinguished the light of the world. Jesus had risen. After His ascension, 40 days later, the Holy Spirit came just as Jesus promised them that He would.

And He illumined their understanding then to view the cross in its proper perspective, transforming their understanding of it from an instrument of death into the source of unending joy.

As Paul testifies to in Galatians chapter 6 verse 14, But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

You see, the cross is foundational to a Christian's joy because it is the basis for the Christian's redemption. Jesus died on the cross to bear the punishment of the sins that we've committed.

Jesus propitiated the wrath of God on the cross by sacrificing Himself for us that by faith in Him we are set free from our sins and we are clothed in His righteousness.

[25 : 53] We are set free from shame and from guilt and from sin's penalty forever. Through Christ we have peace with God and have hope in the promise of everlasting life and that's what the cross reminds us of.

To communicate this truth, Jesus used an example an event that initially causes pain but that ultimately brings joy. In verse 21, this is the illustration that He uses.

When a woman gives 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.

Two of the best days of my life were August 4, 2011, and July 7, 2015. Those are the birthdays of my children.

Now, I can't speak and I wouldn't dare to speak for what a woman endures in labor but I've seen it. I've seen it. But the best moment for me was when the doctors and the nurses left the room and Danny and I were alone with our children for the first time and holding their hands for the first time and counting their fingers and toes for the first time and kissing their little forehead, introducing ourselves to them for the first time, calling them by the name that we chose to give them for the first time.

[27 : 22] Those are profound moments of joy that are forever etched into my memory. You know, Danny never said something like this whenever the doctors and nurses handed her either Jack or Hazel she didn't say, here, take this baby.

Take this baby. I'm just in too much pain. Never once, right? No. You know, this is my child. This is a joy that I've never felt before even though it was painful to bring this child into this world. They forget all about the pain because of the joy of having their child in their hands. You know, also as a pastor, I've visited a lot of mothers and fathers in the hospital after they've recently had a child. And you know, we would always, Danny and I would ask the mom how she's feeling, but you know, they were, the mom is always deflecting the attention back to the baby. Back to the baby. I'm fine. I'm fine. It's back to the baby. You know, that's where the focus is because there's so much joy in that life that it was worth whatever anguish had to be experienced to bring them into this world.

[28 : 33] And so Jesus took this illustration of childbirth and then in verse 22 he applied it specifically to the circumstances of his disciples when he says, 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.

In verses 16 and 19 Jesus spoke of the disciples seeing him. But here in verse 22 he changes the wording and he talks about how he is the one who will see them.

You know, it's something to know God but it's far better to be known by God personally, isn't it? And if he saved you, he knows you.

He knows you intimately and personally. As Jesus said in John 10, 13, he is the good shepherd who calls his sheep by name. They're indicating again that he has this personal relationship. He has knowledge of those who are his. He loves them. He cares for them because each of them belongs to him. And he's the good shepherd who ultimately showed his great love for his sheep by laying down his life for them to save them.

[29 : 46] So when you are sorrowful, filter your sorrows through the cross. And by that I mean dwell upon Christ's sacrifice for you.

No one has ever endured the amount of sorrow that he has. No one has ever been more innocent and more unfairly treated. Jesus suffered more than you and I will ever know.

And it was through his sufferings that he willingly endured that by faith in him we have peace with God and eternal life. And so if you are sorrowful today or in the future when you experience a time of sorrow, look to the cross.

Be reminded of how great the sorrows were that Jesus endured for you and that he endured them because he loves you, because he desired to save you.

As he said to his sorrowful disciples, then so he says to you his sorrowful disciples today, let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

[30 : 59] In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself that where I am you may be also.

You know, one of the joyful things whenever a child is born is to hear it cry, is to hear it scream for the very first time. That's probably the only time a parent is happy to hear their child cry, if you know what I mean.

But listen, a day is coming for you, brother in Christ, sister in Christ. A day is coming for you when Christ will come for you and he will cry out to you for his church.

1 Thessalonians 4, 16 through 18, for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the sound of the trumpet of God and the dead and Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive who are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore, encourage one another with these words.

[32 : 09] And then one day, as we filter our sorrows through the cross, we think of how great a love we have for us in Christ, we think beyond that about what is going to happen next.

And then one day, he who erased your sin on the cross will eternally erase your sorrows forever. Revelations 21, 2 through 4.

This is a great one to highlight and underline in your Bible. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away forever.

[33 : 14] So when you are sorrowful, let the cross of Christ be a reminder to you of God's great love for you and the hope that Christ's death and resurrection has secured for you and a certain future with him.

As Christians, we always have reason to hope, don't we? Because for us, the best is always yet to come. And then thirdly, when you are sorrowful, pray to the God of all comfort.

Pray to the God of all comfort. Jesus says in verse 23, In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask in my name, he will give to you.

The disciples had been seeking each other to find answers, to understand what Jesus meant by a little while. They had wanted to ask him, but they were afraid to. But when the Holy Spirit who Jesus promised came, they would no longer be at a loss as to what to do.

As the Holy Spirit brought the cross into perspective in their minds for them, they'd be empowered by him to act upon the instruction that he revealed. Peter would no longer ask, where are you going?

[34 : 27] Thomas would no longer need to ask, how can we know the way? Philip would not need to say, show us the Father, nor Judas, not Iscariot, have to ask when the Lord would manifest his presence.

Nor would the rest of the disciples ever have to inquire about what a little while meant anymore.

The Holy Spirit would be their resident truth teacher as Jesus said he would in John 16, 13.

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the truth, into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

So Jesus says to pray, to pray in his name. But we've got to understand that praying in Jesus' name is not some kind of magic formula that we tack on to the end of the verse and God is obligated to answer that prayer request, right?

Otherwise, the Chiefs would have won the Super Bowl these past couple of years. I don't pray for that. I'm not that shallow.

[35 : 32] I need help, but I'm not that shallow. To pray in Jesus' name is to pray in a way that is consistent with who he is. It's to pray in a way that is consistent with what his word says.

It's to pray in a way that is consistent with what he wants and what he desires. It is to pray according to his will, not your will. It is to pray in such a way that ultimately what you want and what you are seeking in the answer to your prayers is that God would be glorified through you, not that you would be glorified instead of Christ.

Acknowledging your need and your dependence upon Christ to meet it with the goal that he will be glorified in the end signifies a prayer that is prayed truly in Jesus' name.

So like Jesus, when you pray, don't ask, why me? I mean, you can, but I'm saying this is the better way to pray. Don't ask so much why me or what if, but instead the question you should be asking when you're sorrowful and you pray is how.

It's how. How, Lord, can I glorify you through this time of sorrow in my life? When Christians endure situations in their life that cause them to be sorrowful, it's as if the Lord points the spotlight on you.

[36 : 53] Your church family, your unbelieving friends and co-workers are watching you to see how this will affect your faith. When we are sorrowful, the Lord gives us opportunity for testimony, to declare that Christ is enough.

No matter what I'm going through, I know that Christ is sufficient and so is His grace. To testify to the world that Christ is what I truly treasure the most in life and whom I truly seek.

And you know, sorrow has a way to drive us to our knees in prayer and be reminded by the comforter of the hope that we have eternally in Him. I know for me there's many times where I've just crumbled in the ground in prayer over something that was causing me grief or sorrow. And in crying out to the Lord and sharing those things when I rose back to my feet, even though to my knowledge my situation hadn't changed at all, I felt completely different. And I felt hopeful and I felt strong and it wasn't because of me but how God works in prayers to strengthen us. So be persistent in prayer when you're sorrowful and always, really. But you know, sometimes the answer to your request might repeatedly be no.

[38 : 21] And if that's the case, then it's time for some introspection. Maybe you thought you were praying that prayer in Jesus' name but truly the one who you wanted to receive the glory in answering that prayer was yourself rather than Him.

Maybe that's the case. Or maybe it isn't. Maybe you just need to continue to be persistent like Jesus' parable of the persistent widow or the persistent widow who came and spoke to Him. Or maybe the answer isn't what you expected it to be. You've been praying and the answer isn't what you thought it was but there it is. And so you just need to be obedient and do what the Lord asks.

And you know, sometimes, I know I've prayed or I've heard other people pray for something consistently and they're not sure what to do but then it's like, well, it's right there. You know? It's right there. That's what, that's the answer to your prayer. It's right there in God's Word. And so you just need to see that and accept that and walk in that way. God uses prayer to comfort us and He desires that you bring your sorrows to Him in prayer as Philippians 4, 4-7 says. [39 : 33] And this is how God wants us to be as His people. Rejoiceful. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice. So if you weren't paying attention the first time, hear me the second time.

Rejoice. Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. Do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

And one thing I would add to this too is that the Lord has given you a salvation through His Son. He's given you His Spirit. He's given you His Word. He's also given you His church.

And so sometimes when you're praying and you're sorrowful and you're mourning you know what you need to do is to consult the members of your church family for help and they will help you. Sometimes we want to just you know pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and I can do this on my own. I'm going to show people how tough I am but what we really need is to just let the people of God love us.

[40 : 46] And so I just want to say thank you on behalf of my family for your prayers for dating and the loss of our father and thank you for bringing us food. You know? It's just a little thing like that.

We think as Baptists well what can we do? I can't really you know I'm not God I can't change circumstances but I can cook food and I can bring it and man Southern Baptists are wonderful bakers and cooks or whatever.

I don't think cooks is a word but you know what I mean. But just even letting people do that. Just be loved by the church and so if you are in that state of sorrow and you've been praying and you're not sure what to do man God has surrounded you with people who love you and want to be used by Him to help you.

Four questions of application. Question number one what Bible verse has the Lord used to help you during a time of sorrow? What is one of those passages of Scripture that God has used that got you through a difficult time?

Was there a situation follow-up question where He turned your sorrow into joy in life? And maybe probably I think it could be that it was that verse that comes to mind and you remember a sorrowful situation that the Lord turned into a joyful situation.

[42 : 05] Question two and this is one of my favorite verses and the reason why it is is because the Lord has used it to help me during a sorrowful time and turn it into joy. Romans 8.28 What promise does this verse provide for those who are sorrowful?

What promise does this verse provide for those who are sorrowful? Question three how does sorrow produce opportunities to share the gospel? How does sorrow produce opportunities to share the gospel?

And then lastly what is one way you will share the joy of Christ with someone around you this week who may be in the midst of sorrow?

I want you to think practically. I want you to be like Christ this week and open your eyes to those who are around you. Pay attention to how they are acting. Are they sorrowful? How will you seek to be used by God to share the joy of Christ with them this week?

And I pray and I hope that you will. Let's pray together. Lord God we are thankful to know that you are the God of all comfort. That Lord you are also a God who has identified with us and who knows what it's like to be sorrowful.

[43 : 21] Has first hand experienced of that. Lord you have experienced greater sorrows than any of us could ever know. And we're so thankful for what you endured and how it has saved us from our sins and how it gives us hope no matter what we are going through in life because we know that the best is yet to come that day when we are with you when you wipe our eyes dry of any tear all those things that we go through in this life that we don't understand.

Lord a time will come a day will come when it will make sense to us that day when we are with you and there will be no more sorrow and there will be no more pain there will be no more death or sin but just you and us with you forever in joy.

God you've given us so much reason to be joyful. Lord I pray that for those who are feeling sorrowful right now that they would take these steps that you took your disciples through back then that they would come to you that they would seek you that they would be reminded of what you've done and that they would go to you in prayer and be encouraged by your spirit not to give up and not to lose hope and Lord may we be a church that seeks to comfort one another may we be a church that seeks to be there when our brother or our sister is struggling to come alongside them without them even wanting you know asking us for help just seeing them like you see us like you saw your disciples and wanting to be an encouragement to them God we pray that you would open our eyes to those who are around us to those who are sorrowful in this world those who we work with those who we live next to

God that we would see them in their sorrow and we would be like you and we would go to them and do what we can sharing Christ and hoping that they would know the joy that we have in you too we ask these things in Jesus name Amen