

Life Group Discussion Guide

No Greater Love – Part 2: Remaining in Jesus
Week 5: Grief Turns to Joy • John 16:12–22

As we continue our series through the Gospel of John, Jesus is preparing His disciples for the events that are about to take place—events that neither the disciples nor the world had ever experienced. To help them understand all that’s to come, He uses the metaphor of a woman giving birth:

“Nothing less than a new world is about to be born, and Jesus draws attention to the grief of labor followed by the joy of new life.”

Before we get there, though, we’ll begin with Jesus’ fifth and final teaching about the Holy Spirit in this section of Scripture. If we’re going to understand these verses correctly, we need to keep in mind this image of new birth, which applies to the whole world. Let’s dive in.

1. The Announcement of the Spirit

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” John 16:12–15

Magnificent truths about God’s Spirit are revealed to us through this passage. According to Jesus, the Spirit will:

Guide you into all the truth: Here, “all the truth” refers to the revelation about Jesus. Remember, Jesus is the truth. (John 14:6)

Not speak on His own, but only what He hears: Just as Jesus did not speak on His own but only what He received from the Father, so also with the Spirit.

Make known to you: The ministry of Jesus to the disciples did not stop when He ascended. He continues the instruction of His disciples through the Spirit, who receives from Jesus the things He makes known to the disciples.

Tell you what is yet to come: One thing the Spirit will make known is what is yet to come. From the point in time when the Spirit came on the disciples at Pentecost, what was yet to come was the multifaceted things made known in the New Testament.

Glorify Jesus: Finally, and in sum, the role of the Spirit is to bring glory to Jesus. As there is no more important figure in the history of humankind than Jesus Christ, we can confidently say the Spirit has done a great job adding glory to His name.

- Of the roles of the Holy Spirit listed above, which have you experienced Him accomplishing in your own life? Talk about it.
- Consider this quote from the message: *“There’s a reason the Bible has spoken and continues to speak with such authority and power to billions of people. Standing behind the founding of the Church and the writing of the New Testament documents is the instruction of Jesus through His Spirit. The very breath of God has spoken.”* How does this statement challenge your perspective of the Bible? Does this correct understanding of Scripture necessitate a change in the way you view or interact with it?

2. The Little While of Confusion

“Jesus went on to say, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.’ At this, some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean by saying, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,” and “Because I am going to the Father”?’ They kept asking, ‘What does he mean by “a little while”?’ We don’t understand what he is saying.’ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, ‘Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me”?’” John 16:16–19

The phrase “a little while” is repeated seven times in these verses, and the disciples are totally confused by it. Jesus picks up on their confusion but, before we see how He addresses it, let’s pause for a few moments to think about the significance of this phrase.

“This is the little while we celebrate on Good Friday and Easter—when Jesus triumphs at the cross and rises in the tomb. The one that reframed life for every human and for all eternity. We’re still talking about this little while and will never stop talking about it. Surely, this is a little while of monumental proportions.”

- Take time now to reflect on the wonder and power of this “little while.” What does it mean to you personally? Have you oriented your life around the eternal significance of Jesus’ “little while”?
- This Easter season, what will you do to center your heart and celebration on Jesus and His redemptive work?

3. The Joy of Seeing Jesus

“Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices.” John 16:20a

Now we see how Jesus answers the disciples' questioning about the "little while." The little while is a time of grief—and it's worse than grief, because it's grief while the world rejoices. But that's not how the story ends.

Jesus continues, "You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy" (v. 20b). How? He explains, "A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy" (v. 21-22).

The crucifixion of Jesus drove His disciples into deep anguish, but it only lasted a little while. After His resurrection, Jesus came back to the Eleven. They saw Him. He saw them. And they knew nothing would ever be the same—not for them or for the world. This leads us to our **Big Idea: The birth of a new world turns grief into joy.**

"Can you imagine what it was like to lock eyes with the resurrected Jesus? And in that moment have Him tell you without words, just by the power of His resurrected life, 'Death lost. You are mine. I am making all things new. And you know beyond the shadow of a doubt, it is true.' That's where joy that no one can take away comes from."

- Do you personally know the victorious, resurrected Jesus? What changed when you saw Him?
- Consider this quote from the message: *"Notice that the joy that nothing and no one can take away is contingent on us knowing that **Jesus sees us**. He says, 'I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.'"* Do you have the enduring joy that comes from knowing that Jesus conquered death and sin on your behalf—that He sees you, knows you, loves you, and will never leave you? Why do you answer that way?
- Take time now to pray that each of you would grow in the joy of knowing that Jesus sees you. This is also a time to repent of any sins and distractions that have kept you from seeing Him.