

# “Take Heart! I Have Overcome the World!”

Thomas Robinson, April 25, 2010

## John 16: 16–33

<sup>16</sup> **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.”*

<sup>17</sup> 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**?’”<sup>18</sup> They **kept asking**, *“What does he mean by ‘a little while’? **We don’t understand** what he is saying.”**

<sup>19</sup> **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’?”* <sup>20</sup> *Very truly I tell you, **you will weep and mourn** while the **world rejoices**. **You will grieve**, but **your grief will turn to joy**.*

<sup>21</sup> *“A **woman giving birth** to a child has **grief** 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**.”* <sup>22</sup> *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**.*

<sup>23</sup> *“In that day you will **no longer ask me anything**. Very truly I tell you, **my Father will give** you whatever you ask in my name.”* <sup>24</sup> *Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and **your joy will be complete**.*

<sup>25</sup> *“Though **I have been speaking figuratively**, an **hour** is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will **tell you plainly about my Father**.”* <sup>26</sup> *In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.* <sup>27</sup> *No, **the Father himself loves you** because **you have loved me** and have **believed that I came from God**.* <sup>28</sup> ***I came from the Father** and **entered the world**; now I am **leaving the world** and **going to the Father**.”*

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus’ disciples said, *“Now you are **speaking clearly** and without figures of speech.”* <sup>30</sup> *Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that **you came from God**.”*

<sup>31</sup> *“Do you now believe?”* Jesus replied. <sup>32</sup> *“An hour is coming and in fact has come when **you will be scattered**, each to your own home. You will **leave me all alone**. Yet I am **not alone**, for **my Father is with me**.*

<sup>33</sup> *“**I have told you** these things, so that **in me you may have peace**. **In this world you will have trouble**. But **take heart! I have overcome the world**.”*

## John 1: 9–13

<sup>9</sup> The **true light** that gives light to everyone was **coming into the world**. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the **world was made through him**, the **world did not recognize him**. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was **his own**, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did **receive him**, to those who **believed in his name**, he gave the **right to become children of God**—<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but **born of God**.

John 13: 1, 3-4

<sup>1</sup> It was just before the Passover Festival. **Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father.** Having loved his own who were in the world, **he loved them to the end.** ... <sup>3</sup> **Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;** <sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

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## **The End of Jesus' Final Guidance**

They're gathered in a circle as the banquet comes to an end. Within a couple of hours Jesus will be arrested, in the hands of his determined/beloved enemies. The band will scatter in fear and the great double drama will play out: betraying and killing Jesus, Jesus' conquest of death, giving life and love to the world. Words can only go so far. Jesus gives his disciples language and images to grasp what is about to happen, but they could not imagine it before it happened. They had not believed in incarnation, a dying messiah, final resurrection in the middle of history. They took these things in only when they were confronted by the facts. John lets us see the disciples' struggle in their muddled questions (v 17-18). When Jesus explains, they think they understand and affirm confident faith (29-30). But Jesus shows that only experience of the events will bring them to real faith.

## **Grasping the Great Story**

Jesus encapsulates for the disciples what John has been telling us hearers from the beginning of the Gospel. Jesus is not just their teacher, a prophet, healer, even the Messiah. Jesus is God's own intervention in his world (28) - utterly unique. Jesus is God-Logos, become flesh/human, now to be lifted up in death for the sin of the world, conquer death in resurrection, take that transformed humanity into God. Religion is humans' quest for God. This is God coming for humanity. Because of this uniqueness of Jesus, a relationship with Jesus is so important, powerful, transforming. Love and trust toward Jesus takes us inside this great event. It is our death and life. We are immersed in God's love by his Holy Spirit.

## **Birth Pains for a New World / New People**

But it is not easy at any point. The sin and brokenness of humanity, the grip of death's enslaving power - only God can transform these. Our resolutions or philosophies or political improvements won't do it. It is death and life. Jesus gives a final image to help the disciples. Giving birth was a time of great danger and pain for women. It was endured for the sake of new life, a new person born into the world - great joy overcomes grief. Jesus is about to endure a unique agony for the sake of that joy (Heb 12:2). The disciples also experience it on their own level. Life is resurrection life. Joy is delight after childbirth.

## **In Me You Have Peace**

I am doing this, Jesus says. It does not depend on you, but you get to enter into this great event of God's self-giving, suffering intervention of love into his world. In this childbirth, a new world is born, you are born from God as God's children. You live in the world with its pain - suffering, serving, giving yourselves for others. But you live also in me, in a new world. The Peace of utter confidence. Death has no dominion. Suffering gives way to joy. I have overcome the world!