

Series: Receiving life by believing in God's Son (a Gospel of John study)

Sermon Text: John 16:16-33

Key Words: Prayer, Peace

(*The accounts in chapters 14-17 are only found in John)

Chapters 13-17 contain the words Jesus spoke to His Apostles in the upper room at the Passover before His crucifixion. You'll recall He began with a powerful example inspiring them to pursue love to the very end, warned them they would be persecuted by the world that persecuted Him, and ended by assuring them His death, resurrection, and Holy Spirit would supply real help. His suffering and departure were such a distressing subject for them--an inevitable reality He kept bringing up to help them believe it was part of the plan and not the end of it all. This passage answers so many questions including, "*Where's the power of God when the world's power seems overwhelming? Does faith let me ignore and minimize suffering? Can I expect Jesus to eradicate my enemies and anxieties?*" In this final section, just before one of His most famous prayers ever, we'll explore the following...

BIG IDEA: Having the Spirit helps us pray and have peace.

In *verses 16-22* Jesus said, "*A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again, a little while, and you will see me.*" *Some of his 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 don't know what he's talking about.'* *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. 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.* They couldn't fathom the possibility of *seeing Him again in a little while* if He was going to die, which is why seeing the resurrected Savior traumatized them in a way that irreversibly solidified their faith and *joy*. Jesus warned them it would be a bitter-sweet experience comparable to the *anguish* and *joy* of *childbirth*. Ultimately, the joy of *seeing* His resurrected face would transform fearful followers into *courageous witnesses* (cf. 1 John 1:1-4) like how the joy of seeing her baby's face helps a mother metabolize the anguish of pregnancy, labor, and

post-delivery! Of course, we *see* Jesus by faith and not sight, but that doesn't mean our experience is "less than" theirs. As we've been learning, Easter enabled His Spirit to make His home in us so He could perform 2 new functions: ***Teach us*** and ***convict the world through us***.

2 more Easter benefits are found in the next 2 sections: ***Prayer*** and ***Peace***. ***Verses 23-27*** describe the new way believers can access ***the Father***, ***In that day you'll 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've asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. I've said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I'll no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I'll ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. Christ's resurrection forever changed the nature of prayer***--we now ***ask His Father*** for things ***in His name***. This isn't a "magic phrase" we must tack on to all prayers. It's about recalling who made the All-mighty God's throne accessible to sinners (cf. Hebrews 4:16) and aligning our requests with His character and purposes. ***Verse 26*** is also proof that Jesus doesn't need to "ask His dad and get back to us" --it's not like passing notes to God through Jesus. Prayer is direct access to ***the Father, who loves us*** and listens alongside His Son! In keeping with the larger point of ***chapter 16***...all this goodness is facilitated by a 3rd, loving listener who resides in us by faith (cf. Galatians 3). Romans 8:26-27 (NLT) tells us that when we're confused or maybe too broke for words, "***The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness (like when) we don't know what God wants us to pray for. The Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.***" When people tell me they can't pray or they're bad at it, my question is, "***How can we be bad at something God has made impossible to mess up?***" It's not about speaking perfect words, following proper procedure, or even being worthy of our requests. Prayer is about believing what Easter proved...***the Father*** is eager to hear and answer anyone who ***loves His Son*** and ***believes He came from God!***

Not only has Jesus secured unprecedented access to the ***Father*** through prayer, but He also offers ***peace*** that transcends anything the world has ever known. In ***verses 28-32*** Jesus said, "***I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I'm leaving the world and going to the Father.***" ***His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! Now we***

know that you know all things and don't need anyone to question you; this is why we believe you came from God." Jesus answered them, *"Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me."* This reminds me of chapter 13 where Peter naïvely exclaimed, *"I'll die for you!"* Again, Jesus doubted their *belief* knowing they would soon *leave Him alone* in His darkest hour. Plus, He had just said in *verse 12* *"I still have many things to say to you, but you can't bear them now."* True *belief* didn't occur until they *saw* their resurrected Savior and His Spirit came to live inside them--that changed everything! Like the disciples, we often reduce faith to memorizing doctrines and winning Bible trivia contests. Do I think meditating on truth brings spiritual health? I absolutely do! But I've also discovered truth alone doesn't make me *joyful, prayerful, and peaceful* when life knocks the breath out of me. What good are His words if He's not present in my trials? To put it another way...it's nice to receive a greeting card with encouraging words, but it's no substitute for the presence of a friend. Scripture isn't a divine *"Hallmark card"* or a book of *"magic words"*; it's a signpost that points us back to Easter's world-altering realities! Christ's death and resurrection did so much more than merely validate the words--it terminated the barrier of sin between us and God, so He could make His home inside us and others. Think about it...the resurrection offers us spirit-filled helpers (God, others) who show up to listen, hold our hands, and walk through the fire with us!

According to Jesus, Easter also enabled us to *peacefully* endure *tribulation*. Check out His final statement in *verse 33*, *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*" This wasn't like platitudes we use to motivate people. He wasn't saying, *"The Trinity is with you in Spirit"* or *"I overcame my struggles, so you can too."* That would've been like Tiger Woods saying, *"I've won a bunch of golf titles and you can too if you just work harder!"* It wasn't a pep talk on *overcoming* the world through self-effort, morality, or education. It's Jesus saying what no one's ever said nor could ever say, ***Take heart*** (have courage/confidence) ***because I have overcome the world.***" We can *confidently* await His future return as we endure *tribulation* by relying on the vindication of His past resurrection! It's here we must stop and ask, *"What was the aim of this upper room speech?"* Oh, it's that we love the way Jesus loves us--He loves us to the end! We cannot devote ourselves to the needs of others if we're preoccupied by our trials, needs, desires, or thoughts like *"If I don't take care of myself, nobody else will."* Like a mother who endures the pain of pregnancy, labor, and post-delivery and trusts the gifted

helpers God has put in her life, faith enables us to stare through the anguish and see the face of the one who has already overcome the world. 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NLT) puts it like this, “*Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.*” So, we **peacefully** endure **tribulation** by looking backward to the resurrection and forward to when our Savior’s face will melt away all questions and uncertainties!

Let’s pray: Father, it intrigues me how Jesus suggests we can simultaneously experience peace and tribulation. Such a statement forces us to rethink how we define and attain peace. It also challenges us to consider our command to love others and enemies even in moments that are dark and scary. It’s easy to be at peace and love others when life’s going well, but what Jesus modeled that night in the upper room and in the following days is peace and love that can co-exist with suffering--peace and love that can endure life’s worst storms by fixing our eyes on the one who has already overcome the world! Our experience is something like that of the Apostles prior to the resurrection where it was hard to see how things would work out. Of course, the advantage we have is that we’re living on the other side of an historical game-changer, the resurrection of Jesus Christ! Like them, we await His return and the restoration of all things, but with a Spirit-filled confidence, peace, and love that can co-exist with very real struggles and enemies. Faith merges the history of Jesus, our experience of Jesus, and the promise of His return into a confident discipleship that produces peace and love in a world full of tribulation. May the future return of your Son give us courage in the same way the trauma of His death and resurrection transformed the Apostles. Amen.

Let’s sing: Have you heard the Casting Crowns song called, “[Crazy People](#)”? Some of my favorite lines are, “Who builds a boat with no clouds in sight? Who walks up to a giant and picks the fight? Who turns a lion's den into a petting zoo? Who brings a Bible into a public school? Who shares a gospel even when the world caused them a fool?” And I love the chorus which says, “Crazy people trusting Jesus, Following Him wherever He leads us, Kingdom seekers, walk by faith believers, Here's the church, here's the steeple, here's to all God's crazy people.” Memorizing and singing such a super-fun song helps us maintain eyes of faith during troubling times and believe the crazy truth that “*He has already overcome the world!*”

So, what’s your NEXT STEP?

- Remember, our next step always begins with faith in Christ. Either placing faith in Him for the first time or exercising faith to repent, change, and grow. Either way, His Spirit will help you.

Quotes related to this passage:

- **Chapter Context:** “Since these ideas—suffering and dramatic deliverance—are properly eschatological, this has led some commentators to say that Jesus is actually referring to the Second Coming in 16:16 (or at least that John is confusing the Second Coming with Easter or reinterpreting it). But such a view is unnecessary. The cross and resurrection represent a dramatic deliverance; but more, they truly inaugurate an era in which eschatological gifts such

as the Spirit are given...Jesus twice says, 'you will see me' (16:17, 19). This is the one-line identification employed on Easter by Mary (20:18), the disciples (20:20, 25a), and Thomas (20:25b). Seven days after Easter Jesus invites Thomas to "see" him (20:27, 29). John himself knows that this promise of 'seeing' was at the heart of his confidence about Jesus (1 John 1:1). There is no doubt that it is the resurrection of Jesus when the joy promised in 16:20 will be fulfilled." Professor Gary Burge

- **The birth analogy:** "How do you talk about things that are not just out of the ordinary but that take you into a whole new world? The theme of God's new world being born out of the womb of the old. Like Paul in Romans 8, Jesus in this passage uses the imagery of giving birth to express what is going to happen and invites his followers to prepare themselves for a sorrow, and a subsequent lasting joy...Giving birth is terrifying. But most women giving birth go through it with eager expectation. Their hearts are already set on the new young life that's waiting to come into the world. There may be days and weeks of pain to come as the body recovers from its ordeal. But new life has come, and with it, new joy. Jesus' disciples are about to be plunged into a short, sharp, and intensely painful period that will be like a moment of birth. It's all happening because, with Jesus' death and resurrection, a new world – the new world – is indeed being born. That is what John wants us to grasp." Professor NT Wright
- **Labor in the Old Testament:** "The analogy Jesus uses in 16:21–22 of a woman in labor and childbirth was frequently used in the Old Testament to illustrate the anguish Israel (or a person) might have to endure before God's wonder and blessing were finally experienced (Isa. 21:2–3; 26:16–21; 66:7–10; Jer. 13:21; Hos. 12:13; Mic. 4:9–10; cf. Rev. 12:2–5; 1QH 3:18). Isaiah 26:16–31 is particularly important since it combines the ideas of "a little while" and the picture of a woman in labor." Professor Gary Burge
- **The resurrection changed prayer:** "Until this point the disciples have brought their requests directly to Jesus and have been encouraged by his prayers for them to the Father. By his death and rising he will remove the barrier of sin and establish a new relationship in which they will be able, with utter confidence, to address the Father directly through him (23). On the basis of Jesus' name, which means a trusting reliance on his sacrifice to cover their unworthiness, and a sincere commitment to seek only those things which would accord with his glory, they can be assured that my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name (23)...too often Christians confine prayer either to such vague generalities that it would be difficult to identify any specific answer on the Father's part, or to specific requests which are so self-centred that to tag 'Jesus' name' on to them shows a failure to understand what that sacred phrase implies. Jesus' name' is not some pedantic formality. It witnesses to the only basis of all intercession...Prayer directly to the Son is not excluded in the New Testament (cf. 2 Cor. 12:8, where 'Lord' is, surely, the Lord Jesus Christ). It is, however, the exception." Pastor Bruce Milne
- **The resurrection brought the gift of insight:** "In two places John specifically states that the plain meaning of Jesus' words remained veiled in their original setting and that it was only after Jesus' glorification (with its attendant gift of the Spirit) that true understanding came (2:22; 12:16). This is what Jesus means in 16:25 when he points to a time when plain speech will disclose the exact meaning of his words. Veiled revelation will be gone; clarity of spiritual insight will be an apostolic gift." Professor Gary Burge
- **Incomplete belief:** "One might call 16:28 a terse, or 'plain' summary of John's doctrine of Christ. His origins are divine, and he comes from God; he was sent on a mission to the world;

he will return to the Father after completing his work. This is the essence of the Christian faith, distilled to its most essential form. The disciples immediately celebrate this “plain speech” (16:29–30) and feel confident that in Jesus they have gained access to unsurpassed wisdom. But this is one more example of tragic misunderstanding, such as we have seen in every other discourse. It is the Spirit who will give this insight and wisdom from Jesus, and this gift must await ‘the hour.’ It cannot happen now. So, Jesus must abruptly censure their exuberance (16:31–32). Jesus is asking a question (RSV/NRSV: ‘Do you now believe?’), placing some doubt on their achievement. They do not believe with the rigor or insight that they think. Now they think they’ve got it? At the ‘hour,’ in fact, they will be scattered in their fear (16:32; cf. Matt. 26:56). If they had understood, if they had believed fully, they would have the strength to cross this obstacle, but they do not.” Professor Gary Burge

- **Naïve enthusiasm:** “Their enthusiasm is touching, but insecurely based. ‘Like young recruits, they had yet to learn that it is one thing to know the soldier’s drill and to wear the uniform, and quite another thing to be steadfast in battle.’ ... Jesus will not allow them the dangerous assumptions of self-confidence.” Pastor Bruce Milne
- **Forsaken but not alone:** “While his disciples will desert him, Jesus says that nevertheless he will not be alone because the Father will never leave him (John 16:32b). This verse does not contradict Jesus’ cry of desolation on the cross (Mark 15:34, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’). In John, Jesus is comparing the faithfulness of God through the hour of glorification and contrasting it with the faithlessness of his disciples. Discipleship is about learning how to discover peace when surrounded by threat, how to possess tranquility despite those hostile to your faith. The solution is ‘courage’ (Gk. *tharseo*, 16:33b; NIV “take heart!”). This word occurs only here in John but is used in the Synoptics to describe the attitude Jesus sought in the disciples during the Galilee storm (Matt. 14:27; Mark 6:50). It was also the word given by the Lord to Paul in Jerusalem when he was surrounded by enemies (Acts 23:11). Despite the circumstances, the victory of Jesus (‘I have overcome the world’) outweighs the jeopardy of the present crisis.” Professor Gary Burge
- **Why we mustn’t minimize or spiritualize:** “One mission of the church, therefore, is to be the one voice that holds an honest assessment of the world, that speaks of the way it twists the meaning of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and that describes boldly its absence of justice and compassion and its failure to promote true virtue in the fear of God...Romans 1:18–21: It is not just that individuals have a propensity to sin, but that corruption is universal and unavoidable and that whole systems of life have been built to sustain a darkness the world calls light, to keep in place injustices that only the world calls fair. Therefore, the mandate of John 16:8–11 is for us—in prayer, guided by the Holy Spirit, listening for the voice of Christ—to identify and diagnose the true nerve-system of this world in our own generation. ‘The prince of this world now stands condemned’ (16:11b)—which means that the moral and spiritual struggle is not only about sinful humans, but about humans whose communities and organizations, governments and politics have been manipulated by Satan. To diagnose the injustice, say, of racially discriminatory programs becomes spiritual warfare. To unmask the dishonesty or deviousness of political systems that sustain suffering and anguish around the globe or around the corner is spiritual warfare too. Sometimes such activity will be labeled as unpatriotic (when we name political or military evil) or antisocial (when we identify the key players in evil deeds). If the church talks about the Holy Spirit only in terms of the emotional

healing it may bring or the praise and worship it may generate, the church has missed part of the Spirit's work. Charismatic gifts, healings, and signs and wonders are only part of the Spirit's mission. The Spirit is also engaged in the prosecution of the world. The Spirit is likewise about battle and struggle and winning so that the kingdom of God described by Jesus will begin to emerge like a mustard seed, whose shrub stands visibly on the landscape (Matt. 13:31–32).” Professor Gary Burge

- **Peace in Him:** “Jesus further promised that ‘in Him’ we may have peace. This peace is not only peace with God (Rom. 5:1), but the subjective kind as well. Despite the chaos of living in a hostile world, we may experience tranquility. However, this too is conditional. Like joy, peace is available, but we must choose it...like a full bank account, they do us no good if we fail to draw upon them. The gifts of joy, love, and peace require faith.” Pastor Chuck Swindoll
- **Honesty in our trials:** The Spirit who comforts us, simultaneously convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment from inside of us! That's sure to cause us some *tribulation*, right? They say, “*de-Nile is not just a river in Egypt.*” Well, denial is also a very unhelpful defense mechanism. Those who believe in a Savior who obliterated the power of sin, Satan, and the grave should NEVER be caught minimizing or trivializing worldly sin and pain. First, we can't possibly know the depth and intensity of other's suffering. Second, downplaying our struggles limits our ability to receive help and comfort from Spirit-filled helpers. When you're drowning in the sea of life and someone asks, “*How are you doing*”, it may sound spiritual to say, “*I'm blessed, brother!*” or “*Better than I deserve*”; however, we should be more honest with our friends like Jesus was when He suffered. One of my greatest life lessons has been learning to invite people who *love* me into the dark times. Being honest about our struggles allows us to experience the relational meaning of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, “*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him--a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*” Suffering is also easier to metabolize by meditating on passages like Psalm 23 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-5.

Quotes related to the larger context:

- **Full life:** John said he wrote this letter to help us find “*fullness of life through believing Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*” Chapters 1-12 contain 3 years of real-life stories where people met Jesus during His public ministry. Chapters 13-21 slow way down as Jesus began to reveal His (God's) heart to His disciples in the week leading up to the cross and resurrection.
- **The bigger picture:** *Chapters 13-17* form a unit, which is often called His “*Farewell Address.*” **13:1** begins, “*Jesus knew his hour had come to depart out of this world*”, and **17:1** begins, “*Father, the hour has come*”. The middle 3 chapters (**14-16**) are about another Comforter. The bullseye of this unit is the parable of the true vine, making it the central theme of the entire unit (**13-17**) “*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me*” (John 15:4). Why such a huge section on comfort and abiding in Christ? Well, because the disciples were becoming uneasy as Jesus ramped up the cryptic talk about His departure and death. Anxiety is evident in their questions (**13:36, 14:5, 8, 22**), and Jesus affirms His purpose for this address in **chapter 16:1**, “*I've said all these things to keep you from falling away*”; **16:6**, “*Because I've said these*

things, sorrow has filled your heart”; **16:25**, “*I’ve said these things in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father*”; and **16:33**, “*I’ve said these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*” This unit of Scripture gives the church her marching orders (i.e., *to glorify God by loving one another like Jesus loves us*) and is filled with comfort for when the world wears us down and we lose sight of the goal.

- **Farewell Addresses:** “Academic studies have compared Jesus’ Farewell Discourse with those of dying teachers and leaders in antiquity. Jacob’s last words in Genesis 49 are typical of this form, as is Moses’ farewell in Deuteronomy 31–34. Not only does Moses identify his successor, but he gives teachings that must be recorded and a final blessing. Apocryphal Jewish literature from Jesus’ day offers more tantalizing parallels. In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs each of the twelve sons of Jacob give farewell instructions, blessings, and prayers. In the Testament of Moses, we overhear Moses’ final words to Israel and Joshua. We even possess ‘testaments’ of Solomon, Job, Isaac, and Adam³⁰—fictionalized farewells imagined by Jewish authors between 100 B.C. and A.D. 200. Jewish testaments imagine the dying (or departing) person surrounded by his most intimate friends and family. Standard literary elements generally appear. For instance, they always show a concern for the comfort and encouragement of those left behind. Often there is an exhortation to obey the law, and a deposit of writings is left behind.³¹ In some cases, the departing person passes his ‘spirit’ to his followers or successor. Moses and Elijah do this respectively for Joshua and Elisha (Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; 2 Kings 2:9–14). In the farewell of Jesus many of these elements appear. He encourages his disciples and comforts them (John 14:1). He also urges them to be obedient (13:34; 15:12), and from John’s perspective the ‘literary deposit’ Jesus leaves behind is the Fourth Gospel itself. Moreover, Jesus promises that his Spirit will indwell and empower his followers following his death (14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:3, 13). In other words, we have in John 13–17 all of the elements of a Jewish farewell.” Professor Gary Burge
- **Change of focus in Chapter 13:** “This section signals a change of focus as Jesus turns to ‘his own’ and shows them his love...In the end there is no explanation of the cross other than the love of God. There can be no other, for we certainly do not deserve it and can never earn it.” Pastor Bruce Milne
- **The heart of God:** “Here, in five chapters (13-17), in only 155 verses, and in less than four thousand words we are given what the Puritan writer Thomas Goodwin called “‘a window into Christ’s heart.’” Professor Sinclair Ferguson
- **Book Context:** The Gospel of the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, provides a clearly stated purpose. *John 20:30-31* says, “***Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.***” Some people demand to have all their questions satisfied before bowing to Jesus, yet John claimed his limited account was enough to bring anyone to faith. As we read it, our Savior and friend emerges from the pages as a real person in the real world. Jesus shows us what we could become, if we too would rely on His infinite Father who will gladly supply whatever we need.
- **Life in his name:** Life is the Greek word, “zōē”, which means “Life, Living, Lifetime, Life-Giving” and is where we get the word, “zoology” in English. Vine's Expository Dictionary of

New Testament Words says it's "used in the NT of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, Jhn 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1Jo 1:2. From this life man has become alienated in consequence of the Fall, Eph 4:18, and of this life men become partakers through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Jhn 3:15, who becomes its Author to all such as trust in Him, Act 3:15, and who is therefore said to be 'the life' of the believer, Col 3:4, for the life that He gives He maintains, Jhn 6:35, 63. Eternal life is the present actual possession of the believer because of his relationship with Christ, Jhn 5:24; 1Jo 3:14, and that it will one day extend its domain to the sphere of the body is assured by the Resurrection of Christ, 2Cr 5:4; 2Ti 1:10. This life is not merely a principle of power and mobility, however, for it has moral associations which are inseparable from it, as of holiness and righteousness. Death and sin, life and holiness, are frequently contrasted in the Scriptures."

Other Articles/Songs/Videos:

Direction for discussion leaders:

1. Keep circling back to the big idea and main points of the passage to stay on track.
2. Keep the discussion around 30mins. Go for a single, not a home run.
3. Keep the group small for deeper sharing. Once you hit the "sweet spot", spend your time there.
4. Keep these simple questions in your back pocket: What is God teaching you? What are you going to do about it? How will it help you love & serve others?

Preparation questions for John 16:16-33.

- As you read this passage in preparation for Sunday, what stands out to you about the nature of tribulation and peace for those who possess God's indwelling Spirit?

Application questions from John 16:16-33.

- Jesus said, "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." How has seeing the face of Jesus by faith helped you metabolize (absorb, endure) the pain and suffering you've experienced in this world?
- Easter clearly changed the game by giving us unprecedented access to God. How often do you pray and how does that look for you? What concerns you about your prayer life? What delights you about it?
- Does your faith seem like a bunch of words and memorizing facts, or have you also sensed the indwelling presence of God in yourself and others? How does our "showing up for each other" help others transition from a transactional faith to a relational faith?
- How has faith in the resurrected Savior helped you peacefully endure tribulation? How is our ability to love others related to our willingness to deemphasize our needs by relying on the power, presence, and care guaranteed by His resurrection?

Here are some great resources for digging deeper into community group life...

How life together looks <http://austinstone.org/stories/film/item/140-missional-community-lukes-story>

Rethinking what we do https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvWnXYSELF4&feature=player_embedded

Numerous articles to provoke thought <http://toddenstrom.com/archives/>

What groups of 2-3 might look like <http://toddenstrom.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/LTG-Overview.pdf>