

## Joy is 'Seeing' Jesus in the World

John 16.16-24

Jesus says, "A little while and you'll no longer see Me, and a little while and you will see Me." The disciples were confused, and theologians are, too! What did Jesus mean? At first there was grief; in the end, there was joy! The key to the mystery? Jesus' words are true for all times!

Near Fulfillment: Joy is seeing Jesus after His resurrection

*Within hours, Jesus will be taken from them*

*They will witness Jesus being crucified*

*Jesus will rise from the dead: Joy!*

Distant Fulfillment: Joy is Jesus reigning on earth

*Promise: Jesus will return in the same way He left! (Acts 1.9-11)*

*Revelation prophecy: Jesus returns to reign! (Rev. 19.11-20.6)*

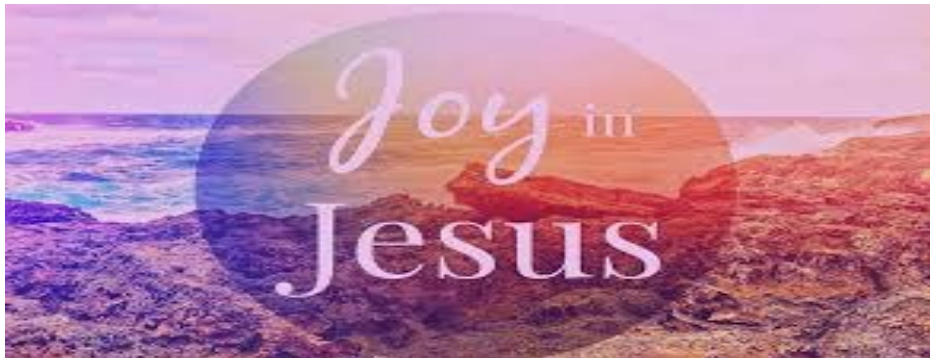
*Joy unending...and no more questions!*

Present Fulfillment: Joy is 'seeing' Jesus amid life's sufferings

*Context: Persecution is coming, and so is the Spirit...*

*The Spirit's focus is all on Christ*

*As we ask, the Spirit gives us abundant joy in Christ*



1. A big challenge facing Christians in Bible study is *correlation*: We understand what the Bible says in its historical context, *but how can we correlate that with our lives today?* This is especially difficult in narrative literature like the Gospels. When Jesus told the disciples of things to come, His words were not just for them – they were for us, too! What did Jesus' words "A little while...and again a little while" in John 16.16 come to mean to the disciples in the days after He said them? What would the same words have meant to the disciples after Jesus' ascension? What significance do those words have for us who live in these 'last days'?
2. What does Jesus' reference to "the world" in v20 mean? The term occurs 78 times in John, but in different ways. While it often refers to the earth, or all humans, many times it has spiritual connotations. To grasp the spiritual meaning of "the world," see these verses in John: 1.10, 29; 3.19; 6.33; 7.7; 8.12, 23; 12.31, 46; 14.17, 19, 27, 30; 15.18-19; 16.8-11, 20, 33; 17.14, 16, 25; 18.36. What are the 'spiritual' characteristics of "the world"?
3. In verses 20 and 22, Jesus says His disciples will "weep and mourn" and "grieve." Obviously, in the immediate context, this was because Jesus would be crucified the next day. But earlier, Jesus spoke about persecution that was coming on all His followers (John 15.18-16.3). Does this pertain to us today?
4. When, and in what ways, would the disciples, and Christians down through the centuries, experience joy (20, 22, 24)? Can you relate this to Jesus' resurrection? His second coming? What about today?
5. Jesus puts His promise of joy after the time of suffering, a common theme in the New Testament. What does James 1.2-4 say about trials and joy? How does Romans 8.18-25 tie these together? How is Jesus the 'model' for our endurance of suffering (Hebrews 12.1-2; 1 Peter 2.19-25; 3.14-18)? Can we 'see' Jesus in our lives today? How? (cf. John 14.26; 15.26; 16.13-15) What role does the Holy Spirit play in us experiencing joy every day?