

Take Heart!
John 15:18-16:33
Bethany Assembly of God
4.28.2024

Central Proposition: You should take heart in the middle of trouble.

Introduction: The world's hatred. See John 15:18-16:4; 16:29-33.

Last week, we heard a fantastic message from Pastor Mason from John 15 about abiding in Jesus. We were encouraged to trust the finished work of Jesus for growth in sanctification and to prioritize love as the greatest mark of Christian maturity. I like the way that Pastor Mason put abiding in common terms toward the end of the message when he encouraged us to “*Stick with it,*” to stick with Jesus. But there were some major challenges that Jesus’ apostles were about to encounter. The world hates Jesus, so it will hate His followers. We Christians are people of pain and peace, suffering and joy, defeat and victory, all at the same time. In the section of John’s Gospel for today, we can see three resources given to the believer to shore up our hearts against the world’s hatred.

1. You can rely on the Advocate from God. See John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15.

This resource is so powerful that Jesus said it was to our advantage that He went away so that the Holy Spirit could come. The Holy Spirit helps Christians in a number of ways, including sanctifying us and producing the fruit of Christ-like character. He enables us to be witnesses for Jesus. The Spirit of God convicts the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. He also guides. Jesus said that when the Spirit of Truth came, He would guide them into all truth. Jesus also said that the Spirit would reveal things to come. What a valuable resource God has given us in our struggle against the hatred of the world! We should not go through life unaware that we have an Advocate.

2. You can rejoice in the resurrection. See John 16:16-22.

When Jesus died, Satan and the world rejoiced. It looked as if they had done away with the Light that confronted their wickedness. But the disciples’ sorrow of Jesus’ death was transformed to joy when He was resurrected. These sheep that were scattered in fear were then filled with joy. Where they had denied Him previously, they were now willing to suffer with Him and even die for Him because the resurrection transformed their understanding of life and salvation. Jesus’ resurrection means that the way things are is not really the way things are, so to speak. We need to be reminded of that over and over again because Jesus’ resurrection is the guarantee of our own resurrection when He returns.

3. You can take advantage of the access you have through prayer. See John 16:23-28; Hebrews 10:19-22.

The final resource we’ll consider today is access. Throughout the Bible, we find a God who answers prayer. However, it is undeniable that Jesus has opened up a wider door to the presence of God and to answered prayer because of what He did for us. God has given us full access to Him through prayer. The fullness of this access involves Father, Son, and Spirit but we can pray directly to the Father because of the relationship that has been restored as a result of Christ’s work on the cross.

Conclusion

Jesus warned His disciples that they would be scattered, but He also knew they would come back and He told them all these things so that they would have peace in the middle of tribulation.