

Connecting Minds

"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31)

The Gospel of John

Chapter 16:33

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace..."

Verse 33 in Jesus' summary statement to His disciples. He wants them to have peace. Everything He has said as they spend their last moments together before the betrayal, trial and crucifixion has been to bring peace to the disciples.

"In Me you may have peace..." Peace can be elusive. It can be especially elusive if we don't understand what kind of peace Jesus is talking about and what kind He is not talking about. We all naturally think of peace being the absence of pain, difficulty, stress, sickness, etc. and etc. But Jesus is talking about an internal peace, a peace with God, a peace in the midst of trials. This comes out clearly, for in the next breath He says "In this world you will have tribulation..." Jesus is speaking of a peace that is somehow present in the midst of tribulation.

"In the world you will have tribulation..." Paul is a good example of how we can have peace in the midst of troubles. Read of his experiences in 2 Corinthians 11:22-33 and Acts 21:10-13. He speaks of prison, beatings, shipwrecks, peril, weariness, hunger, thirst and more and more. Certainly there was little outward peace for this great apostle, yet he can also say with confidence and peace of soul "I am ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Acts 21:13).

This is the kind of peace every Christian wants and every Christian should pursue. It comes from being in Christ – "I have spoken to you [so] that *in Me* you may have peace..." We must believe in Christ. This peace belongs

to those who are “in Christ”. In Christ our hope is found. But we must also listen to His words - “These things I have spoken to you, *that [in order that] you may have peace...*” Outside of Christ there is no peace. Isaiah 57:21 says there is no peace for the wicked. Jesus says “in the world you will have tribulation...”

“Be of good cheer...” It seems like a heartless thing to ask someone who is in the midst of tribulation to be happy. However, there is a reason Jesus gives for the support of such “good cheer” - “I have overcome the world...” This is the last word. Jesus has overcome the world. Yes, you will have tribulation, there will be distress, persecution, unbelief, great trials and more, but the last word goes to Jesus who has triumphed. Here is Jesus’ comfort as He approached the Cross. Here is our consolation as we live through all that the world throws at us.

Matthew Henry writes “We ought to be encouraged because Christ has overcome the world before us, so that we may look upon it as a conquered enemy... He has conquered it for us, as the Captain of our salvation.”¹ And so Paul’s words are true, “We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us...” (Romans 8:37).

TableTalk

This is the paradox of the Christian life, that we can have good cheer in the midst of our tribulations. How does Paul speak of this in two different places?

- Romans 5:2,3
- 2 Corinthians 6:9,10

¹Matthew Henry’s Commentaries, vol. 5, Matthew Henry, pg. 927