



19 Minutes With the Messiah

The Woman in Labor

(John 16:16-33)

Jesus' Body as the Temple
The Living Water
New Cloth
New Wine in Old Wineskins
The Salt of the Earth
The Light of the World
The House Built on the Rock
The Two Debtors
The Sower
The Weeds
The Growing Seed
The Mustard Seed
The Yeast
The Hidden Treasure
The Fine Pearl
The Net
I AM the Bread of Life
Becoming Childlike
The Unmerciful Servant
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
The Good Samaritan
The Friend at Midnight
The Rich Fool
The Wise Servant
The Barren Fig Tree
The Great Banquet
The Lost Sheep
The Lost Coin
The Lost Son
The Shrewd Manager
The Rich Man and Lazarus
The Unworthy Servants
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
The Persistent Widow
The Pharisee and
the Tax Collector
The Workers in the Vineyard
The Ten Minas
The Two Sons
The Wicked Tenants
The Wedding Feast
The Fig Tree
The Householder
The Ten Virgins
The Talents
The Sheep and the Goats
A Lesson About Foot Washing
I AM the Way
I AM the True Vine
► The Woman in Labor
I AM the Alpha and the Omega

¹⁶[Jesus said,] "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." ¹⁷Some 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'?" ¹⁸They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

¹⁹Jesus 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'?" ²⁰I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. ²¹A woman giving birth to a child has pain 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. ²²So 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. ²³In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

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

²⁹Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. ³⁰Now 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."

³¹"You believe at last!" Jesus answered. ³²"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. ³³I 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."

1. Jesus' words are a part of his long discourse spoken to the disciples in the upper room on Maundy Thursday. Put Jesus' picture of the woman in labor into your own words.
2. What intense grief and anguish would the disciples experience in a matter of a few short hours? In a matter of a few short weeks? How would each be turned to unending joy?
3. What did Jesus mean by saying that as his disciples grieve, "the world rejoices"? What ill effects might the world's joy have on Christians of any age? How can these be overcome?
4. Although the apostle Paul wrote, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18), take a few moments, nonetheless, to make a comparison. List five

"present sufferings" and the corresponding "glory that will be revealed in us." An example has been provided to get you started. Compare your lists. Do you agree with the apostle Paul?

"present sufferings"	"glory that will be revealed in us"
a. sickness and health issues	a. a glorified body, free forever from all illness
b.	b.
c.	c.
d.	d.
e.	e.
f.	f.

5. What comfort for your daily life do you find in Jesus words: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"?

For Further Study

6. In verse 23, two different Greek words are translated with the English word *ask*. The first means to "ask questions," or "inquire." The second means to ask in the sense of "request." What does our Lord promise that will sustain our joy even in our times of grief and trouble?
7. In addition to stating that "our present sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed in us," the apostle Paul wrote that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:18,28). Consider some of the "present sufferings" you listed in question 4. How might God use these sufferings to bless you and to serve your "good"?
8. How would you respond to a skeptic who scoffs, "Your Jesus said that he would come 'soon' and 'in a little while,' but that was two thousand years ago. Wake up! He's not coming!"?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, in this world we have trouble, but you have overcome the world for us. Fill us continually with the joy of our salvation and help us to fight the good fight of faith. Come quickly, Jesus, our Savior, brother, conqueror and King. Amen.

Helps:

(1) A woman in labor experiences acute pain and anguish. After a short time, however, this mother is filled with such boundless joy over the birth of her child that she forgets her anguish.

(2) In a matter of hours, the disciples would experience intense anguish at the arrest and brutal execution of Jesus. They would experience that anguish again, six weeks later, when Jesus was taken from them into heaven. Yet the Savior's glorious resurrection from the dead and his glorious return on the Last Day turns all anguish to joy that "no one will take away."

(3) As Jesus' unbelieving enemies were elated by his crucifixion and death, his enemies continue to be elated by the persecution, suffering, and apparent defeat of Jesus' followers today. Christians, tempted to doubt or to forsake the faith, are strengthened through the gospel and its truth of eternal victory and salvation in Christ.

(4) Examples will vary. In heaven, every sad and evil effect of sin will be removed and reversed. The complete and incomprehensible glory that awaits us in heaven infinitely outweighs any present sorrows so that, like a mother with a newborn, we will not even remember those sorrows.

(5) Jesus' disciples will always have the strength and courage to endure the troubles, which they must undergo in this evil world, because they are held by the Savior who has already overcome the world on their behalf. The victory has already been won!

(6) The Scriptures are complete; we need no further information. Through this complete revelation of Jesus and his now completed work, the Holy Spirit strengthens our faith and increases our joy. Our joy is further increased as we pray in the certainty that through Christ our Savior, we have access to the Father, who hears and answers our prayers.

(7) Answers will vary. Although God does not promise to reveal his good intent, he may use our present sufferings to deepen our reliance on him, to work in us a greater sympathy for others who suffer, to make us more heavenly minded and less earthly minded, etc.

(8) "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day" (2 Peter 3:8). Two thousand years is a very long time to us. Yet, to a God who is eternal, whose years have no beginning and no end, any period of time is as nothing. "The Lord is not slow. . . . He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (3:9).