

Dr. David L. Turner, The Gospel of John, Session 18, John 16:16-17:26, Podcast Audio Overview

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All right. Welcome back, everyone. Ready for another Deep Dive? Definitely.

Always up for a good Deep Dive. Okay. So today, we're going to be looking at Dr. David Turner's teaching on the Gospel of John.

Oh, nice. Specifically, chapters 16 and 17. Okay.

And... Lots to unpack there. Yeah. This is a section that's just packed with powerful themes.

You know, sorrow and joy, persecution and peace. Yeah. And what it means to overcome the world, which we'll get into.

So, yeah. Get ready for some seriously thought-provoking insights. I'm ready.

Okay, good. So what really struck me about these chapters is how John just tackles these really heavy themes head-on. Like he doesn't shy away from the raw emotions that the disciples are experiencing as they face the reality of Jesus leaving them.

It's intense. Yeah. Absolutely.

And what I think is so compelling about it is he shows us how real their faith was. You know, it wasn't just this kind of superficial, oh, everything's going to be okay kind of thing. They were wrestling with some really tough questions and emotions.

Totally. And it's like you can just feel their grief radiating off the pages. Like in John 16.6, it says they were filled with grief.

It's just such a raw human reaction, you know. I can't even imagine what it must've been like to hear your beloved teacher and friend say that he was leaving, especially under such dire circumstances. Yeah.

Especially knowing, I mean, at this point, they know what's coming, right? They know that he's talked about his death. And so this is the lead-up to all that. Yeah.

Heavy stuff. Yeah. So it's in those moments of just, like, intense emotion, though, that I think we often see the most profound glimpses of Jesus's character.

Oh, for sure. Instead of, like, dismissing their sorrow, you know, he offers them and us ultimately something so much greater. He offers this joy that transcends circumstances.

Yeah. And it's not like a cheap joy, right? It's not like, oh, just think happy thoughts and everything will be okay. It's this deep, abiding joy that comes from knowing him.

That's where John 16:22 comes in, right? Where Jesus says, I will see you again, and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. Right. But how do we reconcile that promise with the imminent reality of his death? You know, it seems almost impossible to comprehend joy in the face of such a profound loss.

It is. It is a paradox. And I think, you know, Dr. Turner suggests that there's a beautiful double meaning woven into Jesus's words here.

Okay. On one level, you know, he's clearly referencing the sheer joy that the disciples would experience upon seeing him resurrected. Right.

Yeah. Imagine that moment, the shock, the relief, the overwhelming joy. But it goes even deeper than that.

I'm all ears. So this promise also speaks to the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit. Okay.

Yeah. So think about it. Even though Jesus wouldn't be physically present in the same way, he would be with them always through the Spirit, right? This constant source of deep, abiding joy.

That's so powerful. It's like he's saying, yes, you will grieve, but don't lose heart. A joy is coming that nothing can extinguish, a joy rooted in my resurrection and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

Yeah. So how does that concept of future joy, a joy that persists even through hardship, you know, how does that change the way we approach sorrow in our own lives? I mean, does it mean we just ignore our pain and just focus on the future? Well, that's a great question. And it gets to the heart of, I think, what it means to live with a kingdom perspective.

Okay. You know, it doesn't mean that we deny the reality of our pain or pretend like everything is okay when it's not. We're not.

We're not supposed to be, you know, putting on a happy face all the time. Right. It's about holding both the sorrow and the promise of future joy and tension.

So it's not about ignoring the pain, but letting the hope of future joy kind of anchor us through the storm. Exactly. It's like that saying: joy is not the absence of suffering.

It's the presence of God. Wow. I like that.

And this kind of leads us to another fascinating paradox that John highlights, which is this idea of finding peace in the midst of trouble. Yes. This peace that's not dependent on our circumstances, but on something much, much deeper.

Yeah. In John 16:33, Jesus says, in this world, you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world. And, you know, it's not like some naive, everything will be all right kind of peace.

It's something far more profound. Yeah. I think what makes this so powerful is that it's rooted in Jesus's own experience.

Right. He wasn't spared from suffering. I mean, he faced betrayal, abandonment, and ultimately a brutal death.

Yeah. Yet, even in those darkest hours, we see his unshakable connection to the Father. And it's from that place of deep connection, even in the face of unimaginable suffering, that Jesus offers us this unshakable peace.

This idea of peace not being the absence of trouble, but the presence of God in the midst of trouble. Yeah. It's so profound.

But it's also a bit hard to wrap my head around sometimes. Yeah. Like, what does that actually look like in our daily lives? You know, I think that's where people struggle.

Yeah. I think, well, think about it this way. I mean, we all face challenges, right? Big and small.

Right. It could be a health crisis, a financial setback, a broken relationship, or even just the daily grind of life in a world that often feels, you know, chaotic and overwhelming. But Jesus is saying, take heart, I have already overcome the world.

He's offering us a peace that transcends our circumstances, a peace that flows from knowing we're not alone, that we're held by the one who has already conquered the ultimate enemy. So this peace is directly tied to Jesus's victory over the world. Yes.

But what exactly does John mean by the world? It's clearly not just talking about the physical planet. No, you're right. Dr. Turner emphasizes that the world, as John uses it, is more of an ethical entity.

Okay. It's a system of values opposed to God, a way of life that prioritizes self-interest and rejects God's authority. So it's less about our physical surroundings, more about, like, an internal state, a way of thinking and living that's at odds with God's ways.

You know, now that you mention it, I can see how easy it is to get caught up in the world without even realizing it. It's incredibly subtle, isn't it? And that's what makes it so dangerous. John 14.16 says the world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him.

It's like we're operating on completely different wavelengths. And in 1 John 2.15, we're warned not to love the world or the things in it, right? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Okay.

So we're talking about anything that pulls us away from God, anything that tempts us to prioritize our own desires over our relationship with him. I mean, I guess it could be the relentless pursuit of wealth or status, a culture that glorifies instant gratification, or even ideologies that elevate human reasoning above God's truth. Anything that whispers, "You can have it all without God."

Yeah, exactly. It's anything that promises fulfillment or satisfaction apart from him. That's a pretty sobering thought.

It makes you realize how pervasive the world really is. But it also makes Jesus' statement in John 16.33 even more remarkable. If the world is so set against God, how can he confidently declare, I have overcome the world? That's where the good news of the gospel really explodes with hope, right? Yeah.

You see, Jesus' victory isn't just a distant event in history. It's a living reality that extends to every believer. You're talking about 1 John 5.4, right? For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world.

And this is the victory that has overcome the world. Our faith- wait, so are you saying we actually share in Christ's victory just by believing in him? Precisely. It's not, you know, some special status reserved for a select few.

It's available to anyone who puts their faith in Jesus. And this isn't just about escaping the world or avoiding its influence. It's about living in the world with a new power and perspective.

So it's about being in the world, but not of it. It's about engaging with the world's complexities and challenges, but remaining firmly rooted in Christ. You know, I'm starting to see how these themes are connected.

Sorrow and joy, persecution and peace, and overcoming the world. They're all part of this, this incredible tapestry of what it means to live as a follower of Jesus. Yeah.

And to fully grasp this tapestry, I think we need to explore another crucial concept woven throughout John's gospel: the concept of glory. All right. Bring on the glory.

Right. It's a word that holds so much weight, and it's essential to understanding how we live out this victory in the world. Yeah.

I mean, Dr. Turner defines it as like the revealed excellence of God's being, right? It's like catching a glimpse of God's like incredible awesomeness and realizing just how amazing he truly is. Exactly. And John's gospel is all about revealing God's glory through Jesus.

In John 1.14 we read, the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. Jesus is literally the embodiment of God's glory, walking among us, showing us what God is truly like. Yeah, I love it.

He's like a walking, talking billboard proclaiming the glory of God. I love that image. And this glory reaches its peak in Jesus resurrection and ascension, right? Where he's restored to his preexistent glory alongside the Father, but it doesn't stop there.

Yeah. The Holy Spirit enters the picture to continue revealing Jesus and making his glory known. Okay, hold on.

I need to make sure I'm following this. Okay. So Jesus embodies God's glory.

He ascends to the Father in glory, and then the Holy Spirit comes to continue making Jesus's glory known. Yes. That's a lot to take in.

I know. I know. It's mind-blowing, isn't it? But think about how crucial the Holy Spirit's role is.

In John 16.14, Jesus says, " He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. The Spirit's primary purpose is to shine the spotlight on Jesus, right? Not to start something new or draw attention to himself. This is where I sometimes get a little confused.

So I understand the Holy Spirit's role in revealing Jesus, but what does that mean for us? Yeah. If the Spirit's focused on glorifying Jesus, shouldn't we be too? Absolutely. And the beauty is we don't have to figure this out on our own.

John 15.8 gives us a clear picture of what glorifying Jesus looks like. By this, my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. It's all about fruitfulness.

Okay. Living lives that reflect Christ's character, exhibiting love and grace in a way that draws others to him. So it's not just about going to church or knowing all the right doctrines.

Right. It's about letting the reality of Christ's victory, his glory, transform our lives from the inside out, making us more like him. It's about living in the world as ambassadors of his glory.

Yes. Reflecting his love and grace in everything we do. Yes.

And that brings us to another fascinating paradox in John 17, where Jesus prays for his disciples, but also acknowledges that they are not of the world, even while remaining in it. Right. So how do we even begin to make sense of that? Yeah.

This is where the rubber meets the road, isn't it? It's the tension we all face as believers. How to live out our faith in a world that often feels hostile or indifferent or even outright opposed to what we believe. Right.

Do we isolate ourselves to protect our faith, or do we try to blend in and risk compromising our values? It's a delicate dance for sure. Dr. Turner suggests we need to embrace a kind of otherworldly worldliness. Our values and our ultimate allegiance should be rooted in God's kingdom, not in the world's systems, but that doesn't mean we retreat from the world or become irrelevant to it.

So we're called to be different, to stand out, but not in a way that makes us unapproachable or judgmental? Exactly. We need to understand the world, engage with its complexities, and find ways to meet people where they are. Right.

We're called to be salt and light, to bring God's love and truth into the very heart of the world's darkness. I'm starting to see how crucial this idea of glory is to the whole picture. It's like we're called to reflect God's glory in a world that's lost sight of it.

Yeah. But how do we do that effectively, especially when the world seems so determined to pull us in the opposite direction? Well, that's where John 17 takes us next. And I think you'll find that what Jesus prays for in this chapter holds the key to unlocking the mystery of living victoriously in a challenging world.

All right. I am ready to dive deeper. What does John 17 have in store for us? Okay.

So we're diving into John 17, the chapter where Jesus prays for his disciples. What's the big takeaway here? What's Jesus' heart cry for those he's leaving behind? You know, John 17 is often called the high priestly prayer, and for good reason. It's an intimate glimpse into Jesus' heart, his deep longing for those who would carry on his mission after his departure.

And one of the most powerful themes that runs through this prayer is the call to unity. Unity. Okay.

That makes sense. After all, Jesus spent three years modeling unity, you know, living in community with his disciples. But the world thrives on division.

It seems like everywhere you look, you know, people are at odds with each other. How do we even begin to live out this radical unity that Jesus is praying for? Yeah. It's a tall order, no doubt.

But I think what's so compelling is that Jesus doesn't just, you know, command unity. He models it. Right.

This entire prayer, this conversation between Jesus and the Father, is an incredible illustration of their unity. It's like we're witnessing the perfect harmony of love and purpose that exists within the Trinity. Whoa, that's a powerful thought.

So we're not just talking about getting along or tolerating each other's differences, right? We're talking about reflecting the deep, profound unity that exists between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Man, I don't know about you, but that feels like a pretty high bar. It certainly is.

But here's the thing. Jesus doesn't just leave us with this command and expect us to figure it out on our own, right? He invites us into this unity. He prays that we may be one with him and the Father just as they are one with each other.

Okay. Now, now my mind is officially blown. Yeah.

How can we, with all our flaws and imperfections, possibly share in that kind of unity? That's where the Holy Spirit comes into play again. It's through his empowering presence that we can begin to experience this supernatural unity. It's not something we can manufacture or force.

It's a work of God in our hearts, breaking down the walls that divide us, transforming us from the inside out. So it's not about ignoring our differences or pretending we all agree on everything. Not at all. It's about recognizing that our unity is rooted in something far deeper.

Something that transcends our opinions or preferences. Our unity is found in Christ and the love he has for us and the love he calls us to share with one another. That makes so much more sense.

It's not about uniformity. It's about unity and diversity. It's about celebrating our differences while recognizing our shared identity in Christ.

But I still struggle with how we make this practical. What does this radical unity look like in the messy reality of everyday life? Well, remember Jesus' words in John 13.34, A new command I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

It all comes back to love, but not just any kind of love. We're talking about the same kind of self-sacrificing, unconditional love that Jesus has for us. Okay, that makes sense.

It's about putting others' needs before our own, forgiving those who hurt us, choosing reconciliation over division. But sometimes it feels like the world is determined to pull us in the opposite direction. You're absolutely right.

The world thrives on division, on highlighting our differences, on creating us-versus-them mentalities. It's almost like the world's operating system is wired for conflict, while God's operating system is wired for connection. But here's the amazing thing.

What's that? Jesus doesn't just pray for this unity for our own benefit. He prays for it so that the world may believe that you have sent me. Our unity is meant to be a powerful witness to the world, a testament to the reality of God's love and power.

Wow. I hadn't thought about it that way. So it's like our unity is a giant billboard proclaiming the truth of the gospel.

Exactly. And it's a billboard that speaks a language everyone understands. Yeah, yeah.

Think about it. When the world sees Christians who genuinely love and care for each other, who work together for the common good, who prioritize forgiveness and reconciliation over division and strife, it's a powerful counter-narrative to everything the world tells us is true. That's such a powerful image.

It's like we're showing the world a glimpse of the kingdom of God breaking into our broken reality. Yes. It's a signpost pointing to the truth that there's something more, something better than the world's way of doing things.

And it's a message the world desperately needs to hear. But I think we need to be honest here. How often do we as Christians fall short of this ideal? How often do we get caught up in our own little bubbles, our own denominations or theological camps? Right.

And forget about the bigger picture? Ouch. You're hitting a little close to home there. It's so easy to get distracted by secondary issues and lose sight of the core message of the gospel, the message of love and unity that Jesus embodied and commanded us to live out.

It's like we're so focused on being right that we miss the opportunity to be a compelling witness to the world. Yeah. It's a danger we all need to guard against.

Our primary allegiance is to Christ, not to any particular theological system or denominational label. Right. Our unity is found in Him, not in our agreement on every doctrinal nuance.

You know, it's easy to get overwhelmed by the immensity of this call to unity. But hearing you talk about it, I'm starting to see how simple it really is at its core. Yeah.

It all boils down to love. Exactly. And that love should be evident in the way we treat each other.

Remember, Jesus said, "By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another, John 13.35. It's the most powerful apologetic we have. Imagine, imagine the impact we could have if Christians around the world truly embrace this call to unity. If we put aside our differences and focused on what unites us, our love for Christ and our desire to see His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Oh, be revolutionary. It would be a game changer. It would be a powerful testament to the transforming power of the gospel.

Okay, let's, let's shift gears a bit and delve into another central theme in John 17, the idea of being chosen and sent. I'm intrigued. Tell me more.

So in verse six, Jesus says, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. This is where we encounter the profound mystery of election.

Jesus is acknowledging that the disciples and by extension, all who believe in him are a gift from the father. They were chosen by God, set apart for a special purpose. So it's not about us choosing God, but about God choosing us.

I've always found that concept a bit difficult to grasp. I understand. It can be a humbling thought, but it's also incredibly encouraging.

It means that our faith is ultimately grounded in God's sovereign love and purpose, not in our own efforts or merit. So our salvation isn't something we earn or achieve. It's a gift freely given.

That takes a lot of pressure off, doesn't it? Absolutely. And it should fill us with gratitude and a deep sense of responsibility. You see, this chosenness isn't meant to be a source of pride or exclusivity.

It's a call to mission. In verse 18, Jesus says, Ah, there's that missional aspect again. So we're chosen out of the world for a purpose: to be sent back into the world as ambassadors of Christ.

Precisely. It's like we've been given a special assignment, a divine mission to carry out. And that mission is all about revealing God's love and truth to a world that desperately needs it.

It's about being salt and light, about bringing hope and healing to a broken world, about pointing people to the one who can truly satisfy the deepest longings of their hearts. But how do we live this out? How do we actually do that? Well, it requires us to be both otherworldly in our values and worldly in our understanding and engagement. We need to be deeply rooted in God's truth while also being able to connect with people where they are, to speak their language, to understand their struggles and aspirations.

It's that delicate balance again, right? Yes. We need to stand firm in our convictions while also being approachable and understanding. But how do we know we're striking the right balance? How do we avoid becoming so worldly that we lose our distinctiveness or so otherworldly that we become irrelevant? That's the tension we're called to navigate.

And it's not always easy, but I think the key is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the one who perfectly embodied this balance. He was fully God and fully human, deeply connected to the Father while also engaging fully with the world around him. That's a really helpful image.

Jesus, our model for how to live in the world but not be of it. And that brings us to the final and perhaps most profound statement in John 17. In verse 26, Jesus says, I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them.

Wow, what a powerful ending to this incredible prayer. It's like a final benediction, a promise that Jesus' presence and love will continue to be with his disciples even after he's physically gone. But what does that mean for us today? We weren't physically present with Jesus.

That's the beauty of the gospel. This promise extends to us as well. Through the Holy Spirit, we can experience that same love, that same intimate connection with the Father and the Son.

And that love isn't meant to be contained within us. It's meant to flow outward, to be shared with the world. It's a love that transforms, that heals, that reconciles.

It's a love that has the power to change the world one heart at a time. I couldn't have said it better myself. So as we move into the final part of our deep dive, let's carry this image with us.

The image of a love so powerful, so transformative, that it has the potential to change the world. I'm ready. Lead the way.

Okay. Okay. So we've been unpacking all these profound themes of sorrow, joy, persecution, and peace, overcoming the world, and the call to unity.

It's a lot to process, but incredibly rich. Like, what ties all this together? What's the ultimate takeaway from John 16 and 17? Yeah, it's remarkable how much depth and complexity John packs into just these two chapters. And what strikes me is how practical it all is.

This isn't just some abstract theological treatise. You know, it's a blueprint for living a life rooted in Christ, a guide for navigating the complexities of a world that often feels at odds

with our faith. It's like Jesus is giving us a crash course in discipleship, right? Like he's equipping us to face challenges, to live victoriously, and to be a light in the darkness.

Exactly. He's addressing the real struggles. His followers will face sorrow, persecution, the temptation to compromise, and he's offering a way forward.

And the key to it all, the foundation upon which everything else rests, is love. Yeah, right. Back in John 13.34, Jesus gives that new commandment: to love one another as he has loved us.

And we've seen how that love plays out in these chapters. It's a love that endures through sorrow, a love that fosters peace in the midst of persecution, a love that binds us together in unity. And it's important to remember that this isn't just some warm, fuzzy feeling, you know? It's a radical, self-sacrificing commitment to putting others first, to seeking their good above our own.

It's the kind of love that's willing to forgive, to reconcile, to build bridges instead of walls. This kind of love seems almost superhuman, though. How can we possibly live this out consistently, especially when we're surrounded by so much selfishness and division? You're right.

It is beyond our human capacity. But that's where the Holy Spirit comes in, you know? We can't manufacture this kind of love on our own. It's a supernatural gift, a fruit of the Spirit that grows in our lives as we abide in Christ.

So it's not about trying harder or gritting our teeth and forcing ourselves to love. It's about surrendering to the work of the Spirit in our hearts, allowing Him to shape us into the image of Christ. Precisely.

It's about letting go of our selfish ambitions, our need to be right, our desire to control, and allowing the Spirit to work His transformation in us. As we surrender to Him, we become more and more like Christ, and that Christ-like love begins to flow naturally from our lives. That's a beautiful thought.

It takes the pressure off of trying to achieve something in our own strength and instead invites us into a partnership with the Holy Spirit. And remember, we're not just called to experience this love individually. We're called to embody it corporately, to live it out in community, to be the church that Jesus prayed for, a unified body of believers reflecting His love to a watching world.

This makes me think about how easily we get caught up in our own little Christian subcultures, you know, our own preferences and theological nuances, and lose sight of the bigger picture. But if we really believe that our unity is a powerful witness to the world, shouldn't that change the way we interact with other Christians, especially those who might not see things exactly as we do? Absolutely. It's a challenge for sure.

But I think it starts with remembering that our primary allegiance is to Christ, not to any particular denomination or theological system. Our unity is found in Him, not in our

agreement on every doctrinal detail. You know, as we've been discussing all this, I've been struck by the paradox of being chosen OUT of the world but sent back into it.

It's like we've been given a dual citizenship, citizens of heaven living as ambassadors in a foreign land. That's a great way to put it. And it reminds us that we're not meant to isolate ourselves or withdraw from the world.

We're called to engage, to be salt and light, to be agents of reconciliation, ambassadors of grace, beacons of hope in a world that often feels shrouded in darkness. It's a daunting task, but also an incredible privilege. It is.

And it's a mission we don't undertake alone. Remember, Jesus promised that He would never leave us or forsake us. And we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, empowering us to live out the love and unity that Jesus prayed for.

As we wrap up this deep dive into John 16 and 17, I'm left with a sense of awe and wonder at the incredible depth and beauty of God's word. It's a message that challenges us. Inspires us and ultimately points us to the one who is the source of all love, all hope, all truth.

Yeah, I couldn't agree more. It's a wellspring of truth that we can keep returning to, finding new depths of meaning each time. And I hope you'll continue to ponder these words, to let them sink deep into your heart and mind and to allow them to shape the way you live and love in the world.

Well, thank you for guiding us through this incredible journey. It's been an eye-opening experience. For those listening, thank you for joining us on this deep dive.

We hope it sparked something within you, a desire to dive deeper into the truth that sets us free. And as you do consider this, if the kind of love and unity that Jesus prayed for is modeled on the very nature of God himself, what might that reveal about the very heart of the Trinity? It's a question worth pondering. It certainly is.

Until next time, grace and peace to you.