

## Worksheet #17: John 16:1–33

**Summary:** In John 16, Jesus turns his focus toward his soon departure and the subsequent coming of the Spirit. In verses 1–16, he provides continued instruction on the role of the Spirit (described again in 16:7 as the *paráklētos*). A time of intense persecution will come upon the church (16:1–4), which will itself demonstrate that the world hates the church because it serves a different master (15:18–19). In 16:5–16, Jesus explains that his impending departure is to the advantage of the church, because it ushers in the new age of the Spirit’s work in believer’s lives. Verses 17–18 provide a natural transition, revealing the disciples’ misunderstanding of Jesus’ departure. Jesus addresses this misunderstanding by comparing the disciples’ present confusion and dismay to the pain of childbirth, which (though excruciating for a time) leads to joy (16:19–22). Although very soon the disciples will no longer have Jesus present with them, this is not a disadvantage. In the new day following Jesus’ departure, the disciples will instead have the ability to pray the Father in the name of Jesus, the Son, because the Son will be present with the Father (16:23–28). In response, the disciples claim to understand and believe, yet Jesus observes that they will soon flee him while he overcomes the world (16:29–33).

### Abbreviated Outline<sup>1</sup> (current passage in bold):

- I. INTRODUCTION: THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1–18)
- II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS: THE SIGNS OF THE MESSIAH (1:19–12:50)
  - A. *The Forerunner and the Coming of the Messiah* (1:19–51)
  - B. *The Cana Cycle: Jesus’ Inaugural Signs and Representative Conversations* (2:1–4:54)
  - C. *The Festival Cycle: Additional Signs amidst Mounting Unbelief* (5–10)
  - D. *Final Passover: Climactic Sign, the Raising of Lazarus, and Other Events* (11–12)
- III. THE BOOK OF EXALTATION: PREPARING THE NEW MESSIANIC COMMUNITY AND THE PASSION OF JESUS (13–20)
  - A. *The Cleansing and Instruction of the New Covenant Community, including Jesus’ Final Prayer* (13–17)
    - 1. Cleansing the Community (13:1–30)
    - 2. **The Farewell Discourse (13:31–16:33)**
      - a. Jesus’ Departure and Sending of the Spirit (13:31–14:31)
      - b. Jesus the True Vine (15:1–17)
      - c. **The Spirit and the Disciples’ Witness to the World (15:18–16:33)**
    - 3. Jesus’ Parting Prayer (17)
  - B. *The Passion Narrative* (18–19)
  - C. *Jesus’ Resurrection and Appearances, Commissioning of Disciples* (20:1–29)
  - D. *Concluding Purpose Statement* (20:30–31)
- IV. EPILOGUE: THE COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF PETER AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Andreas Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, The Cross, and The Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Academic, 2009), 307–308.

**Interpretation:** *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. Based on the nearby context, what might Jesus have had in mind when he said that he desired for the disciples to “not stumble” (16:1)?  
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2. What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to “convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (16:9–10), and why is this necessary?  
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3. If “all things that the Father has are Mine” (16:15) and the Spirit of truth will declare the things that are the Son’s (16:14), what does this mean about what the Spirit says?  
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4. Why will “the world rejoice” while the disciples are weeping (16:20)?  
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5. In what way does Jesus limit his guarantee of fulfillment for the disciples’ requests in 16:23?  
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6. Compare 16:32 with Zech. 13:7. In what sense would the disciples be scattered in fulfillment of this text?  
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7. What does it mean for Jesus to have “overcome the world” (16:33)?  
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**Application:** *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? How does it help us to understand “his place in the sweep of redemptive history”?<sup>2</sup>  
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9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?  
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10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?  
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<sup>2</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 102.