

“Seven Ways to Deal with Sorrow.”

John 16:16-33

Jesus said in John 16:33, “... Here on earth you *will* have many trials and sorrows.” You know it’s true, because you’ve personally experienced trials and sorrows, lots of ‘em.

In today’s passage Jesus tells us 7 ways to deal with sorrow:

1. Wait a little while.

John 16:16-19, “In a little while you won’t see me anymore. But a little while after that, you will see me again.” ¹⁷ Some of the disciples asked each other, “What does he mean when he says, ‘In a little while you won’t see me, but then you will see me,’ and ‘I am going to the Father’? ¹⁸ And what does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand.” ¹⁹ Jesus realized they wanted to ask him about it, so he said, “Are you asking yourselves what I meant? I said in a little while you won’t see me, but a little while after that you will see me again.”

2. Allow your pain to give birth to hope.

John 16:20-21, “I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn over what is going to happen to me, but the world will rejoice. You will grieve, but your grief will suddenly turn to wonderful joy. ²¹ It will be like a woman suffering the pains of labor. When her child is born, her anguish gives way to joy because she has brought a new baby into the world.”

3. Beware of “joy robbers.”

John 16:22, “So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy.”

- Selfishness, Solitude, Sin are three chief joy robbers.
- John 15:10-11, When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

4. Name drop.

John 16:23-24, “At that time you won’t need to ask me for anything. I tell you the truth, you will ask the Father directly, and he will grant your request because you use my name. ²⁴ You haven’t done this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.”

5. Know that God loves you dearly.

John 16:25-27, “I have spoken of these matters in figures of speech, but soon I will stop speaking figuratively and will tell you plainly all about the Father. ²⁶ Then you will ask in my name. I’m not saying I will ask the Father on your behalf, ²⁷ for the Father himself loves you dearly because you love me and believe that I came from God.”

Here’s what happens when we experience sorrow? ... we think God has abandoned us and so He must not love us anymore. But, God loves us dearly in the valley, and on the mountaintop.

6. Finally believe.

John 16:28-32, “Yes, I came from the Father into the world, and now I will leave the world and return to the Father.” ²⁹ Then his disciples said, “At last you are speaking plainly and not figuratively. ³⁰ Now we understand that you know everything, and there’s no need to question you. From this we believe that you came from God.” ³¹ Jesus asked, “Do you finally believe? ³² But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when you will be scattered, each one going his own way, leaving me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.”

- “Aha!” The light, literally, went on. No more need to question, “we believe.”
- QUESTION: What if you *finally* believed? What if you went “all in” with Jesus and organized your life, relationships, money, dreams, hopes, and failures all around Him.
- When you FINALLY believe, suddenly the trials and troubles of life lighten and are bearable!

7. Take heart, you've *already* won.

John 16:33, "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Hokie Fans, you *will* have seasons like this season ... and, the thing is we have no promise that Frank Beamer has already overcome the ACC. It's entirely possible that the Hokies will be bad year after year ... which is why we do not invest our your life, relationships, money, dreams, hopes, and failures in Frank Beamer.

Frank isn't Jesus. I think he'd agree with that! None of US are Jesus ... but thankfully, Jesus IS Jesus, and He's already overcome the world, and hitching your life to Him means He'll pull you through this world to victory!

Take heart. What does "take heart" mean? Let's see how other translations put it ...

- NASB: "but take courage"
- HCSB: "Be courageous!"
- KJV: "Be of good cheer"
- AMP: "Be undaunted!"
- GW: "But cheer up!"
- NCV: "But be brave!"
- WEY: "But keep up your courage!"

In the middle of a suspense novel or movie you become anxious, worried what might happen next ... knowing Jesus means knowing the ending, that you are an overcomer in Him!

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen."