

Readings

Scripture

¹⁶ "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." ¹⁷ So some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" ¹⁸ So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." ¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'?" ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. ²¹ When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³ In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

- John 16:16-24 (English Standard Version)

Reflection

The change from the expected 'you will see me again' to 'I will see you again' is not meant to hint that the disciples will not really see him, but that Jesus' 'seeing' of them is far more foundational to the relationship than their seeing of him – a point Paul well understood (cf. Galatians 4:9, 'But now that you know God – or rather are known by God...'). The thought is analogous to John 15:16: 'You did not choose me [though of course in one sense they did!] but I chose you [for that is the properly fundamental perspective]...'

- D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (p. 545)

The name of Christ is both the passport by which the disciples may claim access into the audience chamber of God and the medium through which the Divine answer comes...

- *The New Application Commentary - John* (p. 442)

Sermon Outline

When Questions Remain Unasked
John 16:16-24

Table Talk in an Upper Room
Jeff Hooker

The Confused Disciples (John 16:16-18)

The Good Teacher (John 16:19-22)

The Responsive Father (John 16:23-24)

Reflection Questions

- If you could pray for any "selfish" thing and you would get it instantly, what would you pray for?
- What events do you think Jesus is referring to in verse 16?
- Why do you think that the disciples didn't ask Jesus questions about their confusion? (v. 17-18)
- Are there any questions that you have about life, faith, or doubt that you struggle to bring before God? Why or why not? Read John 16:23-24 and Hebrews 4:14-16. How should these truths impact our approach to God?
- What is the joy that Jesus is speaking about in verses 20-22? What should that look like in the lives of believers? Do you think the church/believers in general reflect this joy? Why or why not?
- Do you find having a regular prayer life is easy or difficult? Why?
- What is something you can do to spend more time in prayer with God? How can you build a habit of prayer?