

TAKE HEART
I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD
John 16:32-33

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Introduction

On a Friday night almost two thousand years ago the disciples of Jesus were stunned with grief, pain, despair, and unbelief. They had fully believed that Jesus was the Messiah and that he would redeem them and deliver them from their captors. But now he was dead.

I could imagine one of them quoting **Psalm 77:7-9**, “**7 Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? 8 Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?”**

The one we thought would be king is dead.

If only they had kept reading, “**10 Then I said, “I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High.” 11 I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. 12 I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. 13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? 14 You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples.”**

The disciples should not have been so shocked about the death of Jesus. He had been foretelling his death quite a lot that last week. He had repeatedly told them that he was soon leaving—that he was going to the Father. But they did not understand. They did not understand what happened on that cross. They did not understand why that Friday was good.

You do realize, don't you, that we call it "Good Friday" not "Sad Friday". There is a reason for this. Yes, it is good to meditate on the pain and suffering that our Lord endured on our behalf. It is good to soberly contemplate the wickedness of our own sin that could bring about such suffering for the perfect lamb of God. It is good to see the crucified Christ and weep for him. But that isn't all we do.

We take heart.

Jesus said in **John 16:32**, "**Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.**" Jesus knew that when Judas came to betray him with a kiss and the guards would arrest him that all of his followers would flee. He knew that he would be left alone, yet not alone because of the confidence of his Father's presence.

Then he says in **verse 33**, "**I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.**"

He told them before hand and he told them so that they would have peace. Not just any peace, but the peace that is found only in Jesus Christ. The world gives tribulation, but Christ gives peace. Then he says, "**Take heart; I have overcome the world.**"

The world will put me to death. My enemies will mock me, whip me, and crucify me. I will undergo the greatest pain of my life. You will scatter and think that all is lost. But take heart. Take heart and be encouraged. Take heart and be bold. Take heart and have peace. Take heart and rejoice for I have overcome the world.

In Christ's death he put to death our greatest enemy—sin. All of our sin that is counted against us, all of our sin that keeps us from a holy God, he has put to death. He has done what we

could not do. He has done what the law could not do. He has done what only God could do. As far as the East is from the West so far does he remove our transgression from us. He overcomes the world and all that keeps us from a loving relationship with God as our Father. Not because we are good, not because our sin isn't wicked and worthy of eternal punishment. But because he is rich in mercy and because of his great love with which he loved us.

Our record of debt is cancelled. It was nailed to the cross. He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. He has overcome the world so take heart.

We don't only take heart because he has risen. We also take heart because he died. The disciples should have been full of expectant joy and anticipation at how God would redeem them through Christ. They should have known that the Holy One could not stay dead. In the midst of their grief for the pain of their friend and Lord, they should have also rejoiced for in Christ's death the world is overcome and all his enemies are defeated.

So this Good Friday we don't merely grieve and pretend that Christ is still in the tomb and that there is no hope. We rejoice. We take heart because he has overcome.