

Greetings from God the Father and from our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and from the Holy Spirit. Amen

A little Sorrow then there is Joy

John 16:12-22

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, today we will visit the upper room before Christ's death and resurrection. The upper room is the very same upper room where Jesus washed His disciples' feet. He gave them His Body and Blood in His Supper, The Lord's Supper. As we listen, we hear Jesus speaking to His disciples. He tells them, ***"A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."*** We hear the disciples speak among themselves asking, ***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'?"*** Their discussion becomes so loud and continues among themselves that Jesus needed to explain what He said. We, you and I, must remember that the disciples were the first audience to hear these words of Jesus. We are the second audience. The first audience does not yet know the outcome of things until after Jesus' resurrection, ascension and Pentecost. All that the disciples know is that they will be losing their Master and the promised

Messiah. Put yourself in their sandals that evening; they would feel a great loss and sorrow because Jesus is leaving. They would begin to doubt all that they have seen and all that they have heard from Jesus. Jesus also says that the world and the devil will rejoice in Jesus' death. So again the disciples are very, very confused and sorrowful. Jesus has washed their feet; He has given His body and blood to them. And now He speaks something strange to them. They can and do ask, "What is Jesus telling us?!"

Strange as it sounds, what Jesus is saying, is very important to the disciples. and to us You, being the second audience, (the audience after His death, His resurrection, His Ascension and Pentecost) you are able to guess what Jesus is saying. You would say that Jesus is speaking about His death on the cross and His resurrection. And you would be partly correct. Partly correct only, because Jesus is speaking two different phrases when we hear "you will see me." The English language uses the same words. The Greek is correctly translated but the translation does not truly capturing the meaning. The Greek language conveys a much fuller meaning. Jesus' saying to His disciples, in the first "you will see me" means "you have seen and witness all the events and miracles that I have done. You have been with me all the time." It is like a scientist who gathers

and records data on a particular event. The data is only information, observations, no conclusion drawn from the data yet. Then Jesus uses “you will see me” a second time in the same sentence. This “you will see me” means to have an intimate relationship with Christ. The second “you will see” is in the sense that the Father sees the Son and the Spirit within the Trinity, the seeing of intimacy. An intimate relationship with Christ is like being a family member verses a servant of the family. You will be an heir to the kingdom, a brother, a sister, a child of God. will have a personal relationship with Christ will have your home in heaven. As Jesus explains his second “you will see me” to his disciples, He tells them that He will see them. The second “you will see me” will be accomplished ... made possible by Jesus and only by Him. They will not bring this about by their own efforts. Jesus tells them this for two reasons: one, to help them through their sorrow; two, to point to His crucifixion and His resurrection as being the one event that will change their relationship with God, with Him. Christ’s crucifixion has paid the price for all mankind’s sins – including yours and mine. Christ’s death on the cross has reconciled you and all mankind to God. This personal relationship with Christ that Christ brings to them brings joy to them – and to you. This joy that Christ gives them cannot be taken away from them!

For us, dear believers in Christ, Christ has given you this personal relationship to you by your baptismal waters, by His hands ... "to see Him " ... as He said to His disciples using the second "you will see me" to have a intimate person relationship with the Lord. He brings you joy in your baptismal water. You may have know this joy for many years, or maybe for just a few years, but you may have allowed from time to time life's fears, concerns, and or worries to push aside this confident joy that you have a personal relationship with Jesus and that your real home is in heaven. These worries in your life may have caused you to forget that Jesus is with you always and that because your real home is in heaven, this earth is only a temporary stay. The worries of this life may cause you to act as though life on this earth is what matters only. And allowing this joy to be pushed aside, your joy of serving your Lord and Savior has become a "burden" or you push aside loving your God and your neighbor as yourself. Pushing aside this joy that Lord has given you because of worries of this life is a sin, because pushing aside the joy the Lord gives you means you have replaced this joy with something other than Christ. Maybe you replace Christ's joy with your own self serving goals rather than God's love and love of serving others.

As you fail to overcome the worries and fears of this life by your own attempts to overcome the sins in your life, remember that the one who is in you has overcome the world by His death on the cross and His resurrection and ascension – and He has done it **for you**. In Christ, and only in Christ, **you** are victorious over this world and your real home is in heaven. The joy that we have now in Christ is for now **and** for the future. You do not have to wait for Christ to give you this joy, He has given it to you already. He comes again and again in Worship Service each Sunday to assure you of His forgiveness that He freely offers you. Each Sunday, the Holy Spirit of truth again focuses your heart and mind on Christ and the joy He gives you as you hear His Words of Absolution, and in His Word of the Gospel. You taste and see His joy that He gives you in His body and blood in the Lord's Supper. He gives you and sustains His joy in you each Sunday. No one can take away this joy that Jesus has given to you; nor the joy He offers and gives you each Sunday. He gives you this joy to you freely by His Grace and Love. The true and real joy is given to you by the Lord. And the joy you have is from the personal relationship with the Lord that He Himself has given you ... and in knowing that your real home is truly and certainly is in heaven.

And may the peace of God, which is beyond all human comprehension,
keep your hearts and minds through your faith in Christ Jesus. Amen