

# In the Shadow of the Cross - Parting Promises

by J. Glyn Owen

---

*Jesus promises his followers joy out of sorrow, clarity of understanding, and peace on the basis of his already assured victory, which will be fulfilled through the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 1:01:11

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 16:12, Acts 1:1

**Topics:** "Promises"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the last words of Jesus in formal teaching. He refers to a Bible reading by Eric Alexander, who provides a key to understanding the passage. The speaker identifies three main thrusts in the passage and emphasizes the need for believers to have their eyes opened to see the conquering power of Jesus Christ. He uses the story of Elisha's servant to illustrate the importance of trusting in God's protection and not panicking in the face of enemies. The sermon encourages listeners to have faith and find comfort in the fact that those who are with God are greater than those who are against them.

---

## Transcript

Shall we prayerfully turn to John chapter 16 once again, and we come tonight to a passage which is peculiarly precious, I think, if it is correct to say that any one passage of scripture is more precious than another. I suggest to you that there is something peculiarly sacred about this in that it is the last segment in our Lord's didactic teaching before he prays the great prayer of John 17 and leads his disciples out into the Garden of Gethsemane, and then on to the affairs of what we speak of as Good Friday and what ensued. These words before us tonight are the very last words uttered by our Lord in terms of formal teaching.

Now, it's a difficult passage to deal with in the normal way, and in reading one and another, I found that Eric Alexander, who is going to be speaking here, God willing, toward the end of April, the first weekend in May, at our Philadelphia Conference of Reformed Theology, he delivered some Bible readings in the Keswick Convention in England some years ago on these very passages. And he has given us what I deem to be the right key to an understanding of the passage before us. Rather than take it step by step, verse by verse, he seems to lay hold upon the main thrusts of the passage.

And having seen the passage in this light, I think it falls very naturally into the division that he suggests. Now, I'm not going to follow him in every detail, but there are at least three main thrusts in the passage.

And if you notice this, I think you will find that everything else seems to gather around these three main statements.

The first statement is that the disciples will have joy out of sorrow. It's the promise. It's a veiled promise.

Indeed, it's not so veiled in this first instance. It is given them that they will have sorrow, and the world will rejoice, but they will have joy out of their sorrow. Verses 17 to 22.

Then the next promise, or the next thrust in the passage, speaks of clarity beyond their present perplexity. Verses 23 to 30 begins, or the passage beginning with verse 23 tells us that they were all bewildered. They're talking to one another.

What does he mean? Now, you wouldn't expect people to talk like that when the Son of God was the teacher. But they did. It's a great comfort, isn't it? For some of us, anyway.

They were really puzzled. They didn't know what he was getting at. And they were talking one to another.

What on earth is he saying? And they wanted to ask him, but they dare not ask him, or they didn't want, they were afraid to show their ignorance. And Jesus, knowing their hearts, they never asked him, but he answered the question. He answered the need of their hearts, though they didn't put those needs in terms of a question.

And here he gives them a promise. Oh, it's great to have a Savior like that. When you can't really ask, he knows what's in your heart.

And he promises them clarity of thought and understanding beyond their then-present perplexity. And lastly, in verses 31 to 33, he promises them peace on the basis of his already assured victory. Now, let's look at these three main thrusts, and by the grace of God, we pray that we shall be ministered unto by the Spirit as we do this.

First of all, then, joy out of sorrow. Now, this is a major note that is sounded in the first few verses of the passage, and I think you will find that verse 20 really focuses upon this. It's a key verse.

Let me read verse 20. I tell you the truth. You will weep and mourn while the world rejoices.

You will grieve, says Jesus. So realistic. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

Jesus does not attempt to minimize the reality of the disciples' grief at the prospect of his departure, nor to short-circuit the inevitability of their being considerably more grieved when once he's gone. He doesn't try to minimize what's ahead of them at all. In fact, he recognizes that what they know already has struck terror into their souls, and still he doesn't withhold the realities from them.

He knows and he can foresee as no one else. He could foresee at that point everything that was before them, and how in a very short space of time they will be retreating to an upper room in Jerusalem as into a cave of a dullum to hide, because they will be terrified. They will be terrified whilst the world and its populace, and especially the leaders of the Jewish community in Jerusalem, will be gloating with glee that at last they got rid of the one that has troubled Israel in recent days.

They would be saddened, all right. They will be grieved, all right. Jesus conceived that.

But, he says, wait a moment, your sorrow will be turned into joy. Now there's a subtle thought underlying those words. I don't like to call attention to subtleties, but there is something quite subtle here, and it's necessary for us to see it, I think.

Jesus did not simply say that they would have joy after sorrow. Sorrow now, joy then. He didn't say that.

Neither did he say that the joy they would have would be commensurate with the sorrow they have now, or the sorrow they're going to have. But what he said was this. He said that the very ingredients of their sorrow would be transformed and changed and metamorphosed into joy.

Now that's much more than saying you've got sorrow now, you'll have joy later on. What Jesus said by the language he used is this. The very ingredients that cause you to be sorrowful, viewed from a distant landscape, will cause you to rejoice.

The very things that break your heart now, or in a few hours time, will be the very things that will make you sing just a little later on. And we shall see that that's exactly what happened. Now let's see that promised joy out of sorrow in the context of this passage.

First of all, Jesus promised joy out of sorrow, despite their uncertainty about the meaning of so much of his teaching. Let me read verses 17 and 18 from the New International Version. Some of his disciples said to one another, what does he mean by saying, in a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me, and because I am going to the Father.

You see, they couldn't bring these bits and pieces together. A little while and you won't see me, a little while and you will see me, and yet at the same time he says I'm going to the Father. What does all this mean? How do you bring all these bits and pieces into a coherent whole? They couldn't understand it.

What does he mean, they says, by a little while? We don't understand what he's saying. The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant, especially by those words, a little while. His meaning was veiled to their understanding.

Even so, now notice this, even so, even so he promised them joy out of sorrow, and that means this, their joy will not be the joy of people who understand everything. They may still remain comparatively uncertain of many things, and their joy will certainly not be a kind of joy that they themselves have been able to bring about in any shape or form. It will be a marvelous, it will be a miraculous joy.

You know how difficult it is to be joyous when you're perplexed about anything, and especially when at the heart of your perplexity there is someone, someone is involved who is really at the heart of your life, in the center of your life. They were perplexed about Jesus, saying about coming and going and coming again, going to the father. Even so, says Jesus, never mind, I'm giving you a promise.

That promise necessarily depends more upon the promiser than the recipients. He says, I'm making a promise to you, joy out of sorrow, your sorrow will be transformed into joy. Come a step further, Jesus promised them such joy that they would even forget their sorrow.

Look at verses 21 and 22, a familiar image, we've used this, I'm sure all of us, or we've heard others do so. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come, but when her baby is born, she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you, says Jesus, so with you, now is your time of grief, but I will see you again, and you will rejoice and no one will take away your

joy from you.

One amazing fact relating to so much maternal travail in childbirth is this, the joy of welcoming a child into the world seems to put a switch on or off, I'm not sure which way. Off, probably, and the memory of the pain of travel is forgotten, not universally, but generally. There are exceptions, but generally the acceptance from the hand of the creator of the gift of a new child, of a new life, does something and it raises a wall, a curtain, between the present and the past, and the past that was painful is gradually forgotten until it falls into oblivion.

Now, says Jesus, exactly the same thing will happen to you. You'll have pain, all right, or you'll have a terrible time. He didn't use those words.

But it's all there implicit in his words for grief and pain and so forth. It's all there. You're going to have a pretty bad time, but the joy that will come to you out of the promise that I'm giving you now, that joy will be such it'll draw a curtain between the then present and the past, and you'll even forget the anguish.

Oh yes, his disciples would be sorrowful, but their sorrow will be turned into joy. Now you rightly ask me, did it happen? Was the promise fulfilled? What was our Lord referring to? Did the disciples actually enter into enjoyment of peace akin to what is suggested here? Yes, they did. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

But they first entered into a trough of deep despair. Sorrow began to descend upon them like a thick blanket of impenetrable cloud. And it's only just maybe an hour, maybe an hour and a half after Jesus uttered these words.

There in Gethsemane, they saw the temple guards coming with their swords and their staves and their lanterns to arrest the one who had been the very center of their life and the hope of their souls. And they saw him taken away and manhandled and taken to the first Jewish court, probably with only Caiaphas and one or two others present. It was illegal, an illegal court at that time.

And then later on, early in the next morning, they had another Jewish court in order to try and legalize what had taken place at a time when it shouldn't. Evidently the disciples must have been up all night wondering what on earth was going to take place because their master is taken away from them. Then they remember, you remember how he was taken before Pilate and from Pilate to Herod and from Herod back to Pilate.

And there was manhandling with Pilate and manhandling in the presence of, or at least in the court of Herod. So that when Jesus was brought back finally to Pilate, he was lacerated and he was wounded. And then of course comes the climactic thing that's going to drive daggers through their souls, through their spirits.

When they see the very object of their love and faith and adoration and even worship nailed to a wooden cross and that left down into its socket with a thud and left there to die the death of a scoundrel on the brow of Golgotha. Jesus had foreseen it all, but then he said, your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Did it happen? Well, it didn't happen immediately.

I can tell you. Nothing lifted the burden for that first long weekend. Nothing could penetrate the darkness and bring peace into those troubled hearts.

The rest of Friday and through what we call Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath. And the first things that happened even on the morning of the first day of the week, when Jesus rose from the dead, didn't help matters as far as they were concerned, for they didn't know what to make of them. Some of their women folks say that they had seen Jesus in the dawning light of a new day and seen him alive.

Could they really believe what a handful of women said who claimed to have seen him that time of day when they themselves, strong men, and strong men think they're much wiser than feeble women. They'd seen him crucified. They knew he was buried and some of their own hands had helped Joseph of Arimathea to bury him.

He alive? And in any case, if the women say that they saw the grave open and one or two of them have run and they've seen an empty grave and then an angel somewhere around telling them this, that or the other, what's an empty grave anyway? How much can you make of that? But that was not the end, of course. Gradually, I'm not going into the story tonight, but little by little, the blessed fact of their Lord's resurrection caught up with them. They didn't catch up with it.

It caught up with them. And on that first night, Jesus entered into the upper room in Jerusalem and showed them that he was alive from the dead. Thomas wasn't there, you remember.

A week after he came in and he showed Thomas his hands and his side and Thomas put his finger into his side, into the wounds in his hand, and he thrust his hand into his side and said, my Lord and my God. And the bells began to ring. Can you see what's happened? The very ingredients that caused their pain from Gethsemane onwards, Jesus' anguish, Jesus' wounds, Jesus' lacerations, his being crucified on the cross, left to die, those were the reasons for their anguish and their pain.

But seen from the vantage point of the resurrection, the very things that made them sad now make them glad because they begin to realize what it's all about. The words of Jesus come back, the Spirit is leading them into the knowledge of the truth, and he will do so much, much more in due course when he comes and dwells among them. Little by little they remember, little by little they see this is just what he said.

Their joy was not to be completed, however, until the day of Pentecost, when the blessed Holy Spirit came down and in all his glory and in all his fullness took possession of their souls, took possession of their hearts, and flooded their lives. And here came the joy which was unspeakable and full of glory. For now, you see, they knew more than that Jesus was risen from the dead.

They knew that he was risen from the dead when they saw him and spoke to him, and he enabled them to catch fish and prepare breakfast for them on the shore. They knew that, all right. He was risen from the dead.

You know, a spirit, a corpse, doesn't prepare breakfast for anyone. They knew that he was risen from the dead, but what they didn't know until Pentecost was this, that he was on the throne. But when the Spirit came forth according to the promise, they knew that he was on the seat of power, that he was risen to the right hand of the majesty upon high.

And here he fulfilled the promises. And the joy bells began to ring. And you can see these crusading men going out on the day of Pentecost and begin to preach.

And they're preaching, I tell you, with joy as well as authority. I think it's rather precious, you know, that people thought they were drunk. It was something of the intoxication of excitement and joy.

The thing has happened. He's risen and he's ascended, says Peter. You can only explain this, says Peter, in terms of one thing.

God has raised him and God has exalted him at his own right hand and made him a prince and a savior. And he has shed forth this that you now see and hear. He's there.

He's arrived. How glorious does our Lord fulfill his promises. Joy out of sorrow.

He'll do it for you too. Secondly, clarity of understanding for their present perplexity. Perhaps the key verse here is 25.

Listen to the words of Jesus. Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language. But I will tell you plainly about the Father.

Now, that Jesus had often spoken in veiled language or in parables, whose exact meaning was not always clear, needs hardly any proving to readers of the New Testament. So many things had fallen into this category. Take a few examples.

Let me just remind you now, just they're just examples. You imagine people hearing these terms for the first time. There may be someone here tonight who will be puzzled by them.

Perhaps most of us have been schooled in the scriptures and somebody has taught us and somebody has told us about them. But you listen to these as if you heard them for the first time. Jesus had spoken first of all, a way back in John chapter two about raising up the temple in three days.

What on earth does that mean? Who can raise a temple like the Jerusalem temple in three days? Or he had spoken to them of being born again. And you know, we sometimes sarcastically say something about Nicodemus that he should be troubled and didn't understand this. Would you have understood it when you heard it the first time? No.

He had spoken of living water, which quenches the thirst once and for all. What on earth was he talking about? And then he had spoken of that same living water, believe it or not, flowing like leaping rivers out of the innermost being of Christian people. Well, now that's defying all imagination.

When a man becomes the source of rivers, what on earth is happening here? And then he had spoken of people who would never see death. Then he had spoken about himself as the one whose flesh the believer must eat. John six, whose blood a believer must drink.

He said that he had preceded Abraham before Abraham was. I am. Spoke of himself as the good shepherd who would lay down his life for the sheep.

About a mysterious betrayer whose identity had remained undisclosed for a very long time. Long after he first referred to him, someone will be training. And then, believe it or not, he said that someone would deny him three times, and that was none other than Simon Peter.

Over against that mode of teaching, however, a new day is coming, says the Lord Jesus, when I won't talk to you in mystifying statements like that, in veiled statements or parables. Now, why did Jesus do that anyway? Was not our Lord the perfect teacher? Did he not teach the multitudes and did they not respond and said, he's speaking as one with authority and not as the scribes and the Pharisees? They did. Well, then how do you explain this here? He's confessing that he has said so much to them that they couldn't

understand.

We'll now take it in its context. In the first place, this must not be taken to imply that the bulk of our Lord's teaching was not clear. The bulk of his teaching was clear as crystal.

And the very presence of these disciples of his assured was guarantee of the fact that they had understood something about his teaching. Indeed, he had said to them, this is one of the main means whereby he called people to follow him. He that follows me, he says, shall not walk in darkness, but he shall have the light of life.

And they began to follow him and they had light, the light of life upon their pathway and they knew certain things. Nevertheless, said Jesus, in comparison, there is a new day coming when you will understand things in a way you've never understood them before. However much you've understood now, beyond your present perplexity, there's a day of crystal clear understanding coming.

Secondly, the reasons for our Lord's failed sayings did not reside in Jesus himself, but rather in his disciples and in the circumstances that prevailed. You see the disciples themselves were incapable of receiving more teaching. Now, I don't know how this sounds in the years of a congregation.

But you know, this is not the first time in the New Testament that we read this. Paul told the Corinthians that he had many things to say to them and he says, I'm sorry, but I can't teach you these things because you're only babes, you're carnal and you can't take it in. And spiritual truth needs a spiritual appetite and a spiritual capacity to take it in.

You have exactly the same kind of thing in the epistle to the Hebrews, where the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews says to some people now, he says, really, you people should be out teaching others about the Christian life and about the glories of your great high priest and savior. But as a matter of fact, he said, something's gone wrong. You need someone else to teach you again.

What are the ABCs? What are the elements of the Christian faith? Something had gone wrong, you see. And Jesus said in verse 12 of chapter 16 to these very disciples, look, he says, I have much more to say to you, but you can't bear them now. Now, it's interesting.

He didn't say you can't, you can't, you can't listen to me now, but he says you can't bear them, you see. And I think there's something significant in the way Jesus puts it. Hearing his teaching brings a responsibility upon people.

Oh, yeah. And Jesus felt that they could not now assume the responsibility of taking the added burden of more knowledge before they put into operation what they knew already. It's not all simply a matter of understanding.

It's not simply a matter of having gray matter and being able to grasp the facts. It's a matter of morality. It's a matter of ethical ability of being able to do what he says, to respond to what he requires.

And he says, you can't bear it now. You can't take the burden of any extra knowledge. Their spiritual condition was one of immaturity.

But of course, the most important and the most significant reason why they couldn't take it in was because the spirit had not yet come. Fundamentally, this was one of the main reasons why the Holy Spirit was to be

sent forth. The end of the passage that we were trying to deal with on Sunday evening last, we didn't really deal with this, how the spirit comes and will lead you, says Jesus, into all truth.

That is really the answer to this problem. Now, you and I cannot understand the truth of divine revelation, and we cannot move into it. We cannot get into it and understand it from the inside and know it experientially and experience it insofar as it is experiential.

We can't do it, said by the Holy Ghost. And as yet, you see, the Holy Spirit had not yet come. Oh, he was active.

Of course, he was in all his glory and without measure in the person of the Lord Jesus, the preacher. But the Holy Spirit in the preacher was not sufficient. The listeners must have the fullness of the spirit as well.

And he will lead you into the knowledge of the truth. The spirit would only come when Jesus had ascended to the Father. Now, here, it is important for us to recognize that, especially before Pentecost and the subsequent ministry of the Spirit, all the great facts of the gospel were too immense to be naturally grasped.

Though Jesus had said so much, for example, about his death long, long before his death, it happened. They just could not take it in. It was too immense, and I'm quite sure we wouldn't have taken it in any better.

Probably we would have done much worse. But they just could not take it in before the event and before the Spirit of God came upon them. You remember how Peter tried to dissuade his Lord from going to the cross.

This shall never be to you, he says. Don't talk about dying. Talk about anything but not about you dying.

You see, they couldn't fathom it. They couldn't make sense out of it. The same goes about the coming of the Holy Spirit himself.

Talk about the paraclete. They just didn't know how to make sense of that. No, no, no.

But once the Spirit came, it was all so different. Once Christ died and the Spirit had come, now this side of the events. The light dawned.

The meaning became clearer. And as the Spirit led them into an understanding, so we have a very complete difference, an almost total difference in the ethos between the end of the Gospels and the first few chapters of Acts. Now, I don't know whether you've looked at this and whether you've examined it.

May I encourage you to do so? I can't go into this this evening, but I can only make a dogmatic statement. It's there. Here at the very end of our Lord's didactic teaching, they're questioning and they don't know what's happening.

They've misunderstood so many things from John 13. You remember? And they've asked so many questions. Question, where are you going? Why can't we come now? Why this? Why that? Everybody's got his questions.

You come to the first chapter of the book of Acts, nobody's got a question. They've got the answer in the book of Acts. They're proclaimers in the book of Acts.

They're witnesses in the book of Acts. They know what to say. People are asking them questions.

They've got the answer. Where do they get it from? Oh, the blessed Barathletus come. Jesus has kept his promise.

And out of their perplexity, they have clarity. Now, wait a moment. This is not the ultimate answer even to their perplexity.

Because there is a day coming when we all have to say, however much we know now, we still only see through a glass dantly. But then, face to face. That is an eschatological thing.

That will only come when at last we see our Lord face to face. When all our problems will be resolved. All our problems are not resolved in any form of experience here and now.

But in the experience of these disciples, when the spirit came, they were completely transformed, even though that transformation itself is not the ultimate. And it is significant that Paul puts it like that. No, he says, we don't know everything now.

But one day we shall know as those that are looking into the face of a person. Face to face, we'll have face to face knowledge and understanding. And now I want you to notice what's happening here.

Jesus is promising them that later on, you see. But the pressure of the of the coming cross and anguish and pain is upon him because it's coming upon them. And he feels for them.

It's a remarkable picture of our Lord here, concerned to prepare his disciples for anything that's coming. And so you know what he does with them. Just just look at the passage.

He begins to reassure them of certain things as they await the promised day of clear teaching and clear understanding. And he begins to reassure them of certain things, as it were, offering them a foregleam of their future privileges. Now, can I just mention one or two things only? One, Jesus at that significant moment, he told them of new possibilities in their prayer life.

I think this is a very psychologically strategic statement and aspect of our Lord's teaching right at that moment when the all the trauma is just an hour or so ahead and they're going to be scattered like a crowd of frightened sheep. And he tells them that. What does he do? Well, he says, look, it'll be clear by and by.

And let me tell you some things. Now you're going to have an entirely different level of prayer life. Let me just read a few verses, 23 and 24, for example.

In that day, he says, referring to the same day when he will teach them things clearly, when they will know things clearly in that day, you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth. Evidently, they doubted.

So Jesus gives this. It's a word of a separation. I tell you the truth.

He says, I want you to understand. I mean what I say. My father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

Until now, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete. Now go on to verse 26.

In that day, it's the same idea again. In that day, you will ask in my name. I'm not saying that I will ask the father on your behalf.

That's not what I'm saying, says Jesus. No, no. The father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

Now, in verse 19, Jesus recognized the disciples perplexity about his reference to the little while. A little while and you see me and a little while you won't see me and so forth. They didn't ask him.

They were not prepared to ask him to explain, but he answered. He sensed the difficulty in their hearts. They wanted to ask him.

He sensed their difficulty. And then when the other paraclete, the Holy Spirit comes, they will not need, says Jesus. Now, that's what he's saying here.

When the other paraclete comes, you will not need to ask me anything. You wanted to ask me a question back there because you were puzzled and you're beginning to wonder what you're going to do when I leave you. How he knew their hearts.

And I won't be here. He says, I won't be here in the flesh. So where are you going to turn? What about your problems? Well, he says, you won't need to ask me anything in that day.

Their questions will yet be answered, even though Jesus himself will be physically absent from them. Why? How? Well, on the one hand, as we've said, he will lead them into all truth, but the way is open for them to come to the throne of the father and to ask the father personally and directly and face to face in the name of the Lord Jesus. This is precious.

Our Lord proceeds to remind the 11 that up until now in all their prayer lives, of course, they've prayed before. Don't let's have any question about that. They've prayed before, but they've never prayed in his name.

They've prayed as good Jews would pray, but they would never say as Christian people say that they're coming in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they've prayed. But now he says there's a new day dawning. You see, when the Holy spirit comes, it means that I have ascended into the presence of the father and I have opened up a new and living way into the presence of the father for all my people.

Now he says by that new and living way, you may come near to the father and you may ask the father yourself. I find this most enriching, you know, and most comforting. Jesus said, I really want you to be sure what I'm telling you.

This is exactly what I'm telling you. He had not meant to say that he would pray the father for them. I'm not telling you.

It's just that I will pray the father for you. Even though he, he does in chapter 17 intercede for them. And even though we read in Romans eight and the epistle to the Hebrews that he ever lives to make intercession for his people, but that's not what he's saying here.

I'm not telling you. And I didn't mean to tell you. He says that I would pray for you.

What I'm telling you is this, the way is free into the presence of the father. The father himself loves you and you shall ask the father what you want in my name, plead my name to the father. He loves you when he loves me.

And because he loves me, he will answer you when you plead my name in his presence. You know, John Calvin has a beautiful statement here. Here says John Calvin, we are taught that we have the heart of God.

As soon as we place before him the name of his son. Did you get that? And if I may dare add to the great Calvin, yes, not only the heart of God, but the year of God. He listens.

And when you plead the name of Christ and his atoning merit and his sacrifice, and you come to the father in the name of the son, the father, the unseen, the mighty, the almighty omnipresent God listens to you feeble, frail human being. He listens to you and he receives you. That's what Jesus is telling them.

That's trouble brewing and you'll have many more problems than you have now, but there's a way open to the father himself. I won't be there for you to turn to me, but he'll be there. Now to pray in Jesus name, of course, means much more than just attack his name at the end of our petitions.

I have no time to deal with that tonight, but can I say this much? It means that we are approaching God and asking certain things of him entirely on the basis of the teaching of Christ and of the promises of Christ and of the death of Christ and of the resurrection of Christ and of the ascension of Christ and of the presence of the same mediator at the father's right hand in glory, where he bears our own name on his hand. And on his heart to come in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is to come on the basis of his promises and on the basis of his work. And because he is the person he is who stands between us and the father and brings us near to God, I will go one stage further to pray in the name of the Lord.

Jesus means that we come to the father as the representatives of the sun here upon earth. See, you have no right. You can't go really in the name of Jesus unless you go because you're concerned to do the will of the Lord Jesus Christ and to be involved in his work.

To come really in his name means you represent him. And the thing you're asking for is acknowledged as right by him. It's consistent with what he said and what he wants to do.

Now, says Jesus, you pray in my name and the father loves you. You know, Dr. R.A. Torrey, I don't know how many of you have read his books, but he's got a very good book on prayer. He must have been a great man of prayer.

And among the other things he illustrates very beautifully is this issue about coming to God in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he compares it with going to the bank with a check to cash. Now, he says, if I went to the bank, I'd made out a check in my own name, my own check in my own name, and I wanted to cash it.

I'd go to the clerk and I would present the check. And, well, he would make sure that there was enough there to cover it. And if there was, he would cash the check.

So I would get what I wanted. But now he said, if the check was in somebody else's name and I take the check made up by one of you rich people here tonight with your signature on it, and I take your check to the bank, the guy or the lady behind the counter is not concerned as to what I've got in the bank at all. My

account doesn't matter.

He or she doesn't go and look what's in my account, whether I've got a lot or whether I haven't got anything. What really matters is whether the person who signed the check has got money. And if the person who signed it has got enough to cover, then however poor I am, though I may be dressed in rags, if the person in whose name I come has monetary merit in the bank, I can draw according to that monetary merit of the man whose signature is on the check.

Well, my friends, can you see it? This is a great comfort. You have a sense of guilt when you go to the throne of grace. I don't deserve this.

How can I ask for that? I'm so feeble. I'm so sinful. And even when I get it, I may misuse it.

Do you worry about things like that? Listen, when you come really and truly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, what you have in terms of merit in the bank of heaven doesn't matter that much. What matters is that you come in the name of the one who has merit and he's the only one who has. Now, that brings me to the other thing, and I'll have to close.

But I can't close without telling you this. Jesus also told them that he himself would be alongside of the father when they would eventually make such requests to the father in his name. Now, look at that 28th verse.

I've puzzled for a long time over this, and I found the commentators really useless. Jesus said at this point in this context, I came from the father and entered into the world. Now I'm leaving the world and I am going back to my father.

Now, look where it is set. If you want to know what the jewel is meant to do, trace its setting, examine its setting. What is the point of saying that there? I'll tell you.

And I would almost be prepared to be dogmatic, though you could contradict me. I think it is this. You see, they've always brought, for the last three and a half years, they've brought all their questions to Jesus.

Now, Jesus is saying, I'm not going to be with you physically. I'm not going to be with you. So you can't bring your questions to me.

Who are you going to take your problems to direct to the father? Oh, but that's not easy to do to a people who knew something of the sovereignty and the glory and the majesty of the great Jehovah of the Old Testament. How can these people go near to God? It's all right, said Jesus. I came forth from the father and I'm going back to be with the father.

And when you offer your petitions to the father, I'll be sitting at his right hand. I'll be there. As if to say, I shall still be interested in your affairs and you can come to him just as you came to me, because the father who loves you loves me and we love one another in the massive mercy of God.

My very last word will have to be just a reference to the point that we made the third point, peace in the knowledge of Christ's victory. I cannot close without just reminding you of this fact that our loss, our Lord's last word to his disciples before he prayed the great high priestly prayer of John 17 and went on to give ceremony was this tremendous statement. You believe at last, he says to them in verses 31 and 32.

Well, don't be too sure of your own faith because it's still unsteady. Then he goes on to say this. I have told you these things in verse 33, so that in me, you may have peace in the world.

You will have trouble, but take heart. I have overcome the world. Now, here he is, this the other side of the cross, the other side of Gethsemane.

He's been fighting with the world, or should I say the world has been battling with him from the moment he set out on his public ministry. It's been a battle all along the way. Now, he says, I want you to know that I have overcome the world.

And I've said certain things to you because I wanted you to know certain things ahead of time. I've told you so many things ahead of time. Now, will you notice that I have no time to fill it in just here.

So many things Jesus told his disciples before they happened in order that they should realize that he knew what was coming, such as the Judas being the betrayer, such as Peter going to deny him. Such, oh, there's a whole host of them between John 13 and John 16, things that he foretold them. Now, he says, in me, you can have peace because I've foretold you all these things, and then they've come to pass.

Just trust me, he says, have peace. I would have told you anything else if there was need to say so, need to tell them. Now, take this as my last word, says Jesus.

In me, you can have peace. You don't have that in the world. In the world, you'll have tribulation.

You'll have trial, misery. But in me, he says, you can have perfect peace. I have overcome the world.

Eric Alexander concludes his studies, his study of this chapter with reference to a statement by Lord Wreath, one of Scotland's noblest sons of the 20th century. A statement he made when he was addressing the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland some years ago. He said that he had detected in Scotland that some of the theologians of the church and some of the ministers of the church and some of the lay people in the church appear to be ashamed of the Jesus Christ of the gospels.

And I'm not quoting him verbally, verbatim, I can't do that. But the message he got across was this. I don't see, he says, that that is possible if you really know him.

To know him, it is impossible to be ashamed of him. And then he made this statement, and this is the one that Mr. Alexander takes up. What we need today in Scotland, he said, is something of the Dothan sort.

Now that puzzles you. I can see by your faces, some of you are puzzled. Something of the Dothan sort.

Do you remember what happened in Dothan? I'd like to test you now. Well, Elisha lived in Dothan, that's one thing. But something very significant did happen in Dothan, and Lord Wreath knew about it.

Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, was absolutely envenomed against Israel at that time in history. And he would do anything to squash Israel, and he tried it. But each time he made incursions into Israel, it seemed as if the army leaders and others, when they knew what was happening, they knew what was coming.

And each time he tried to attack, they were prepared, and they were ready. And everything was laid on, wherever they went, Israel was ready for them. And so Ben-Hadad came to the conclusion, there must be a quizzing here somewhere.

And when they heard this from the king, they thought, well, it's time somebody told him the truth. Well, what's the truth? Somebody went to speak to the king and said, Your Majesty, no one is letting you down. The truth of the matter is this, that they have a prophet in Israel, a man by the name of Elisha, and he's a man of God.

And he knows what is happening. And God seems to communicate with him and tell him things. And when we go in with our armies, they're ready for us.

It's this man, it's this man. Elisha is your problem. You know, there's a little bit of a comic about this.

Ben-Hadad says, let's get all the army together. And you can see the cavalry and the artillery and the lot of them marching, hundreds of thousands of them going down for Dothan. And what are they going after? One prophet of the Lord is laughable, isn't it? And surely they're going to catch him.

It'll be no difficulty for a whole army like this. They can have 10,000 to one man coming in from all directions. Surely they're going to get him.

It's just like, well, it's impossible to fail. Well, Elisha's servant gets up early one morning and he goes out and he's frightened stiff. He's panic stricken.

He looks around Dothan and there were hills on either side. And he sees the troops of Ben-Hadad. And he gets all excited and dithery and he runs back to his master in the house and he says, master, master, he says, what can we do? And his master seems to have put his hand upon his shoulder and said, my dear boy, he says, don't get excited all as well.

Those that before us, he says, are far, far many than those that are against us. Well, that was adding insult to injury. Where are they? Can you hear the young fellow saying, master, where are they? I can't see anybody.

It's only you and me. And here are the host of them all around Dothan. He must have thought the old man was dreaming or lapsing or perhaps gone off his rocker, as they say.

The old man could see him. And he said, there's only one thing to do with a fellow like this. The Lord must open his eyes.

And the old prophet said, oh, Lord, open the eyes of this young man. And the Lord did. And he went outside again to see what he could see.

Now you remember what he saw? Some of you do. This time he went out and he saw something he'd never seen before. You only saw Ben haddards troops before, but this time he sees chariots of fire, hundreds of them, thousands of them all around encircling him and Elisha around chariots of fire between them and the enemy.

Says Lord Reith, what we need these days in Scotland is something of the Dothan sort. What did he mean? This an opening of the eyes of the blind to see the mighty conquest of the crucified risen reigning Lord Jesus Christ as the conqueror of all as the Lord of Lords and King of Kings as the one who can keep his lonely servant in any situation as the one who is more than adequate to deal with Ben haddard or any contemporary Ben haddard for that matter. You and I have no right to panic.

What we need is to have our eyes open. They have good cheer. I have overcome the world.

Let us pray. Father, write your word into our hearts and our minds and our consciences tonight. Some of us perhaps are being surrounded by foes of one kind or another.

They're not like the ancient types, but at heart, they're very much the same. But we thank you that you are unchangeably the same in that you are able still to meet the problems that engage us from day to day and night to night, summer and winter. In many cases, and we covet in your presence tonight that our eyes should be able to see Jesus crowned with a vision glorious, that we should be able to go back into a new week to face the difficulties and the temptations and the trials and the blessed privilege of being your servants in a world that knows you not.

To that end, bless your word wherever it has been proclaimed tonight and today, and let your people go out again from the place of prayer and where your word has been ministering to them and where the sacrament has been administered, perhaps, but go out in the strength of the Lord for the task of the week. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26598.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-glyn-owen/in-the-shadow-of-the-cross-parting-promises/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**