

**“Sorrow & Knowing When You Are”**  
**John 16:1-22**  
**November 15, 2020**  
**Faith Presbyterian Church – Morning Service**  
*Pastor Nicoletti*

We continue this morning in Jesus’s instruction to his disciples in the moments leading up to his arrest.

In the bulletin our text starts in the middle of verse four, but I’m actually going to start reading at the beginning of the chapter to give a little more context.

With that said, we turn to John chapter sixteen, verses one through twenty-two.

Please do listen carefully, for this is God’s word for us this morning.

Jesus said to them:

<sup>16:1</sup> “I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. <sup>2</sup> They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. <sup>3</sup> And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. <sup>4</sup> But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. <sup>5</sup> But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ <sup>6</sup> But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

<sup>12</sup> “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

<sup>16</sup> “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” <sup>17</sup> 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?’” <sup>18</sup> So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” <sup>19</sup> 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’? <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> 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.

This is the word of the Lord. (Thanks be to God.)

“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.” [1 Peter 1:24-25]

Let’s pray ...

Lord, look upon us and deliver us,  
for we do not forget your word.  
Be our advocate and redeem us,  
and give us life according to your promise.  
Great is your mercy, Lord,  
and so we ask you to give us life according to your law.  
Help us now to love your word,  
and give us life according to your steadfast love.  
The sum of your word is truth,  
and every line of your word endures forever.  
And so help us to attend to it now, and grow in your truth,  
in Jesus’s name. Amen  
[Based on Psalm 119:153-154, 156, 159-160]

## **SORROW & CHRIST’S ABSENCE**

Verse one of this chapter – which is not printed in the bulletin – is key context for understanding the text we will consider this morning.

Jesus says in verse one: “I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away.”

Jesus’s concern here is about the temptation that will come to fall away from our faith in Christ.

And the context of that temptation, Jesus tells us, is sorrow. In verse six he says, “Because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.”

And that sorrow, Jesus tells us, is rooted in the fact that he has told them in verse five that he will be absent from them.

And verse five is a little odd. Jesus says, “I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’”

That’s what Jesus says ... but on its surface this statement seems obviously false.

In chapter thirteen Peter said to Jesus “Lord, where are you going?” [13:36]. Then again, in chapter fourteen Thomas said “Lord, we do not know where you are going.” [14:5] So what does Jesus mean?

Well, though they use similar words, Jesus means something different from what Peter and Thomas meant. And that difference gives us a glimpse into the sorrow that the disciples were already experiencing.

One commentator puts it like this – he writes: “A little boy, disappointed that his father is suddenly called away for an emergency meeting when both the boy and his Dad had expected to go fishing together, says, ‘Aw, Dad, where are you going?’, but cares nothing at all to learn the destination. The question is a protest; the unspoken question is ‘Why are you leaving me?’ The disciples have been asking several questions of that sort; they have not *really* asked thoughtful questions about where Jesus is going and what it means for them.” Instead they have been focused on their own loss with his coming absence. [Carson, 532-533]

Jesus’s disciples are distressed. Their hearts are filled with sorrow. Because Jesus has told them he will be leaving them.

And though he hasn’t broken it down in detail, Jesus has alluded to two stages of his absence. The first will come at his death, and will last three days, until his resurrection. But the longer absence will be when Jesus ascends to the Father and will not return until he comes to make all things new. Details Jesus mentions seem to indicate that both of these absences lie, at different times, behind Jesus words. [contra Carson, 542-543]

What spans both situations though is that Jesus will be absent from his followers ... and this will bring them sorrow. It was true of his time in the tomb. It was true when he ascended to the throne in heaven. And it continues to be true today.

One of the chief causes of our sorrow in this life is Jesus’s physical absence. We do not see him. We do not experience his presence like we experience the presence of others who are physically with us. And the same is true with the Father. Of course Jesus tells us that he is always with us, and that is true. But we do not see him. And while he reigns in heaven, we do not yet see the fullness of his reign here on earth.

And this absence is a core cause of our sorrow, whether we realize it or not.

As Christians we long to see our Lord. But at the moment we don’t.

We all look at the world around us and we see sin and evil and abuse everywhere, and we long to see our King make all things right. But as of yet, we don’t see it.

We long to see all things made new – we long to see all things restored to how God our Maker intended them to be. But so far, we do not.

When our first Parents, made perfectly in the image of God, sinned and rebelled against God, sin and death entered the world, and God withdrew his special presence from us. In Christ, God the Son drew close once again, and he began the work of renewing all things. But then he ascended to heaven. And we do not now see him.

That is the “when” that we live in. It is the moment of cosmic history in which we find ourselves. Between the Garden of Genesis where God walked with his people ... and the Garden-City of

Revelation when God will dwell with his people once more. Between the coming of Christ in the humility of the manger and the cross ... and the coming of Christ again in power and glory. We live in the time in between. That is the cosmic “when” that we live in. And the “when” we live in shapes the kind of sorrow that we feel. We live in what some have called the “already but not yet.” Jesus has overcome the world – he has brought the kingdom ... but we do not yet fully see it. It is not yet here in its fullness.

And in this season of redemptive history we have sorrow. And in this season of redemptive history we have temptations to fall away.

And in our text, Jesus offers us three things to navigate the sorrow and the temptations we face.

He says that he will send us an Advocate, he puts our sorrow in the context of an anticipation, and he gives us an assignment.

So, in light of his absence, Christ gives us an Advocate, an anticipation, and an assignment.

## **I. AN ADVOCATE**

So, first Jesus gives us an Advocate – a “Helper” – whom Jesus speaks of especially in verses seven through fifteen. Let’s hear those again.

Jesus says:

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

<sup>12</sup> “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Jesus says that he must go so that the Advocate – the Helper, the Holy Spirit – would come. Now, the issue is not that Jesus and the Holy Spirit could not work at the same time for some metaphysical reason – but the issue is eschatological: it is about God’s timing. It is about the “when” that the disciples will find themselves in. [Carson, 533]

The role that the Holy Spirit takes up he will especially take up after Jesus ascends to the Father. But what role of the Holy Spirit is Jesus talking about here?

Well, we talked about this back in early August, when we looked at the four times in chapters fourteen through sixteen where Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the “Paraclete” – which is translated here as the “Helper.”

I won't repeat everything I said then – the sermon is on our website if you'd like to take a look – but I will mention the conclusions of that sermon that are relevant for our text this morning.

While the ESV translates the word Paraclete as “Helper” in the main text, it also includes “Advocate” in a footnote, and that is a more popular translation among many modern commentators.

The word itself refers to a legal advocate or witness, for the defense, in a court of law. [Morris, 662; Carson, 499]

As one writer puts it, in the ancient world, a paraclete – an advocate for the defense – is “someone of elevated status, a patron who speaks in defense of his client before a judge.” [Shelfer, 141]

But what kind of court is the Holy Spirit serving in? Who or what is he defending? Who is the judge? Who is the prosecution?

Well, as I argued back in August, the scene is not so much the heavenly courtroom, but the courtroom of our hearts as believers. The world is the prosecutor, leveling accusations. And the defense – the one being accused by the world – is Christ and the gospel.

We see this in a few ways. For one, the situations in chapters fourteen through sixteen in which Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as a legal advocate for the defense are not ones in which we are on trial before God for our sins, but where the Christian faith is on trial in our lives.

In each case Jesus is speaking about aspects of the disciples' lives that will make accusations against their faith. And in each case the Holy Spirit, as advocate, is said to speak *to* the disciples. In the ancient world the defense counsel only spoke to the judge. [Morris, 665; Carson, 505]

What Jesus promises here is that the Holy Spirit will serve as a witness to defend the faith – to defend our faith – when the world brings charges against it.

And one way he will do that is by proving the world to be in the wrong in the accusations it makes – in the temptations it whispers to us to abandon Christ and abandon our loyalty to him.

In context, the word that is translated in verse eight as “convict” does not so much have the idea of the work of a prosecuting attorney (since a paraclete did not serve as a prosecutor in the ancient world) [Carson, 535; Shefler, 141], but the cross-examining work of a defense attorney, or the refuting testimony of a defense witness, who exposes the true nature of the prosecution. [Carson, 534]

And so what seems to be in view here is that the Paraclete, as a defense witness, is testifying against the trustworthiness of the world that is accusing Christ and the Christian faith. [Discussed in Carson, 536, though Carson disagrees with this interpretation.]

One commentator translates verse eight like this – he says that the Paraclete “will prove the world to be in the wrong on three counts.” [Wright, 79, 81]

The picture then is of a court room – a court room in our hearts and minds. Jesus and our faith in him are on trial. In light of Jesus’s absence, the world makes accusations – the world accuses him, and our faith in him, of being empty – of being false, of being wrong. To help us in the midst of that trial, Jesus will send the Holy Spirit, who will defend him and defend our faith in him, against the accusations of the world.

And he says in verses eight through eleven that the Spirit will do this on the basis of three things: he will show the world to be in the wrong on the basis of their sin, their righteousness, and their judgment.

First, in regard to their sin.

Sin is rebellion against God. The world rebels against God in any number of ways: the world rejects God’s call on humanity to love their neighbors, by always designating some outgroup that that command doesn’t apply to. The world rejects the creation as God has made it – twisting the created world to wrong uses and wrong ends. The world rejects our own humanity as God has designed it to be. And as the world accuses Christ, the Holy Spirit may point out to us the sin of the world in all these ways, which undermines their claims of righteousness.

But chief among the ways that the Holy Spirit may point out the untrustworthiness of the world’s claims is the very fact that the world rejected Christ in the first place. That is what Jesus says in verse nine. When their own Maker came to them, the world rejected him. How then can they be trusted to bear witness on the nature of reality or the nature of who Jesus is. [Carson, 537]

Second, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit proves the world to be in the wrong concerning righteousness. Here, in the words of Jesus and John we have another echo of the prophet Isaiah, who spoke of the false righteousness of the people around him in his day: deeds that look like righteousness, but are not true righteousness, and so in the end are not the beautiful spiritual garments of righteousness but filthy rags [64:5]. [Carson, 538]

In other words, when the world accuses our faith by claiming that it is more righteous than our faith is, then the Holy Spirit will reveal to us the false nature of the world’s righteousness.

The world may do righteous deeds externally. And their righteous deeds can do real good in the world. But unless their good deeds grow out a true love for God, then they are, at their core, done for the wrong reasons. At heart their deed is not about loving God or loving others – it is about something else that they desire more than the good of their neighbor or the glory of God: it is about pursuing their own status, or their own reputation, or their own success. Or it is about pursuing the status, reputation, or success of their people. It is not rooted in love for God, but in idolatry. And so it is a false righteousness.

Jesus spent so much of his earthly ministry uncovering the false righteousness of the religious leaders around him. That is what got him in the biggest trouble. And here we learn that he will not stop that work when he ascends to the Father. He will continue it through the Holy Spirit. [Carson, 538]

And so, when the world tells us that it is more righteous than Christ ... when some non-Christian philosophy tells us that *it*, and not the gospel, is the *real* source of bringing righteousness to the

world ... when some organization or collection of people tells us that *it*, and not the Church, is the *real* instrument that will bring righteousness to the world, then the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of the people of God, works to reveal the false righteousness behind such claims.

Only through Christ, only through the gospel, is true righteousness, with love for God at its core, possible. When the world presents itself as righteous, the Spirit will defend Christ by revealing to believers the false righteousness of the world.

Finally, Jesus says that the Spirit will show the world to be in the wrong concerning “judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”

The world, under the power of the devil, passed its judgment on Christ by nailing him to a tree and putting him to death. And on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, overturning and condemning the judgment that the world and the devil had issued against him. Jesus, in his resurrection, has been vindicated. The world in rebellion against God, has been exposed and condemned. The Holy Spirit will remind us of this truth. [Carson, 538]

Jesus is physically absent from us, and the world around us brings accusations against Christ and our faith in him. It scoffs at the moral demands Christ issues to his creatures. It argues, at the same time, that it is more righteous than he is. And it claims to be victorious over him and his ways.

But as the world issues its accusations, Christ sends the Holy Spirit to his people to testify in our hearts and expose to us the sin of the world that scoffs at its Maker, the hypocrisy of the world that claims righteousness, and the defeat of the world that has already been overcome in the resurrection of Jesus.

But how exactly does the Holy Spirit do this?

*How* does the Holy Spirit make this defense in us, his people – in our hearts as we struggle with the doubts that the world raises before us?

It’s not that the Spirit speaks his own unique words that Jesus lacked. Jesus himself says in verse thirteen that the Spirit will speak to the disciples only what he hears from Jesus. And back in chapter fourteen Jesus said that the Spirit would bring to mind the things that the disciples had already heard from Jesus. [14:26]

But let’s be honest ... is that really that helpful?

If all the Holy Spirit does is remind us of what we heard ... if all he does is repeat to us the truths revealed by Jesus – the truths already found in the Scriptures ... then is he really that helpful to us? I mean ... we have apps on our phones that can do that now ... right?

Well, obviously Jesus has more than that in mind here. How then does the Holy Spirit work these truths – how does he work his testimony – into our hearts?

The answer touches on what theologians will refer to as the Holy Spirit’s work of illumination. This is different from revelation. Revelation is delivering new content. Illumination is turning on

the lights so we can actually see the content that is already before us. The Holy Spirit is the light that enables us to see and then receive God's revelation to us.

That illustration is helpful ... though incomplete. And maybe another can help get at the mystery of this process from a different angle.

One theologian compares it not only to the role that light plays in helping us understand words before us, but to the role that music can play in helping us truly connect with words that are before us.

He writes:

“How do you talk about things that are not just out of the ordinary but that take you into a whole new world?

“One way of doing it is through music. That's why some of the greatest songs are love poems. Faced with the glory and thrill of human love, all our words seem threadbare and inadequate. Set them to music, though, and they soar with the eagles and beat in time to our excited hearts.

“That's why, too, from very early on in Israel and the church (and elsewhere, of course), people have used music to ‘say’ things that the words themselves couldn't do, the things that have to do with the arrival of a [...] new world.” [Wright, 84]

We see this in various places. Words alone may fall flat, but set to music they not only express our convictions, but they strengthen them.

In a particular moment, or at the end of a long day, we may not be feeling particularly romantic towards our spouse, and the words of a love song as mere text on a page may feel silly to us even. But then, when those words are set to music, they stir our emotions towards our spouse, and suddenly the expressions of love become our own, and our conviction of our love and desire for our spouse grows.

We may not be feeling especially patriotic in a particular moment. But then a patriotic song is played, or we sing along with a crowd to a patriotic song, and the themes of the song begin to resonate in us, and the patriotic convictions of the words become our own, as we suddenly find ourselves swelling with pride and love for our country.

Or we may not be feeling particularly warm towards God when we walk into church on Sunday morning. Maybe we're thinking about something else. Maybe we're struggling with our kids. Maybe we're annoyed with our spouse. Maybe we're not even sure why we came to church. And when we look at the words of the first hymn on the page before us, the words seem flat and lifeless to us.

But then the hymn begins. And the music of the piano, or the organ, along with the voices of the congregation around us swell, and suddenly the words become alive, and they become our own.

How does music do that? It's not adding any additional intellectual content to the words. And yet, it somehow makes the words we hear more true for us. It somehow translates those words from being someone else's, to being our own. It somehow moves the words from being outside of us, to being in our hearts. It is a great mystery.



And in that picture, we see something of how the Holy Spirit works as the Advocate of Christ in our hearts. [Wright, 86]

We may read in the words of Scripture that the world is in sin – that it has rejected its Maker. We may hear the preacher on Sunday tell us that human righteousness is hollow unless Christ is at the center. We might read Christian books about the significance of Christ’s resurrection from the dead. But by themselves, those words would remain outside of us. They would remain flat and lifeless before us.

But like music applied to lyrics, the Holy Spirit brings those words to life. The Holy Spirit makes them powerful. The Holy Spirit makes them *ours*. The Holy Spirit brings conviction.

The ways of the Holy Spirit may be mysterious, but he serves as an advocate in our hearts. He vindicates Christ and our faith in him. And he exposes the accusations of the world as false.

That is the first thing that Christ gives us in his absence: an advocate who will defend him in our hearts.

## **II. AN ANTICIPATION**

The second thing he gives us is an anticipation to live our lives in light of.

That is the second gift he gives us for the “when” in which we find ourselves.

And we see that especially in verses twenty through twenty-two. There Jesus says:

<sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>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.

In some ways this refers to the time between Jesus’s death and resurrection. But as we said earlier, it refers as well to the time between his ascension and return.

And we know this because the Apostle Paul picks up the same metaphor when he speaks to the Church in Rome about the moment of history we find ourselves in, between Christ’s incarnate coming and his final coming.

Paul writes:

<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. [...] <sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. <sup>23</sup>And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The picture, which comes up in the Old Testament too [e.g.: Isaiah 26:16-21; 66:7-14 (Carson, 544)], is of distress and pain that leads to joy and peace.

One commentator puts it like this – he writes:

“Giving birth is terrifying. It involves sharp pain, convulsions, breathing difficulties, a form of agony that mere men can only watch with awe. But most women giving birth go through it with eager expectation. Their hearts are already set on the new young life that’s waiting to come into the world. Within minutes, or even moments, of the birth (assuming they and the child are reasonably healthy), they are deeply content.” [Wright, 85]

Now – the reason why women can approach childbirth with eager expectation is because they know and anticipate what is coming. They know the trajectory of the suffering they face – they know “when” they are in the process. And that is everything.

But imagine if the pains of childbirth came upon a woman who somehow did not know that she was pregnant. It would be terrifying. It would be disorienting. It would be pain and distress with no obvious object. It would be a completely different experience.

And so it is with us. If we fail to recognize what is coming – if we fail to see that what lies ahead is the return of Christ in which we will see him, and he will make all things new, and we will dwell in his presence forever, and all sickness, sadness, pain, and death will be banished from our lives, and no one will take our joy from us – if we fail to recognize and remember that that is the future we are heading towards, then we will find the pains and the sorrows of this life (and of the Christian walk) to be overwhelming. They will be terrifying, disorienting, and have no obvious end.

And so, the second thing Jesus provides for us is anticipation of what is to come. Because that changes everything.

So, in light of Jesus’s physical absence from us, he provides for us an Advocate, he holds before us an anticipation ...

### **III. AN ASSIGNMENT**

And third, he gives us an assignment.

And to see this, we need to reach back a few verses earlier, one more time. At the end of chapter fifteen, Jesus said to his disciples “But when the Helper” – the “Advocate,” the “Paraclete” – when “the Helper comes, whom I send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.” [John 15:26-27]

The trajectory Jesus gives here is that the Holy Spirit’s witness *to* the disciples leads to their witness *to* the world.

And that leads to the realization that the same is true of the Spirit's work described here in verses eight through ten. The Spirit will reveal to Christ's followers the sin of the world, the emptiness of the world's ways, and the truth of Christ's resurrection. But the Spirit's work will not end there. It won't end in the hearts of the disciples. As the Spirit testifies in the hearts of God's people, he will also enable them to carry that testimony beyond themselves so that they can bear witness to others.

And the Spirit continues that work to this day. He continues his work *in* Christ's followers, but also, he continues his work *through* Christ's followers. He continues to witness to the world through the words and the deeds of God's people, drawing more and more people to faith in Jesus Christ. [Carson, 537]

And we know this from the rest of the New Testament. On the day of Pentecost Jesus pours the Holy Spirit out on the Church, and thus equips the Church for its mission in the world. And the Spirit – the Paraclete – then extends the ministry of Jesus in ways the disciples could not have imagined. [Carson, 537; Wright, 82-83]

Jesus has called us to himself in this in-between time – this time between his incarnation and his return. But he hasn't called us to just to wait around until he returns or calls us to himself. He has given us an assignment. He has given us a mission. We are to be his witnesses. In word and deed we are to point others to who he is. We are to be his Body in the world. We are to speak out the testimony of the Spirit. We are to follow in the footprints of Jesus – in lives of love for God and for others – in a way that provokes a response from the world.

And we are to be his instruments *within* the Church – within the Body of Christ – as well. We are to be the means by which the Holy Spirit assures other believers, as we minister to them and speak the truths of the gospel to them in love. We are to care for God's people in ways that carry them through this time of sorrow and temptation, in Christ's absence – in ways that propel them forward in anticipation to the joy that lies before us.

It is easy to slip into patterns of thinking and living in which we are living primarily for ourselves and not for the kingdom of God. But that is to misunderstand *when* we are. We are in the time of mission. We are in the time of the Church working to sow the seed of the word of God in order to bring a harvest of men and women into the kingdom of God.

And so, let us act accordingly. As we face the difficulties of the physical absence of Christ our Lord, who dwells now in heaven with the Father, let us turn our attention to the testimony of the Advocate he has given us in the Holy Spirit. Let us live our lives in anticipation of the joy that will come at Christ's return. And let us keep ourselves focused on the assignment Christ has given us until that day comes, diligently working to make disciples of one another, and of all nations.

Amen.

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**This sermon draws on material from:**

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