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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor  
on Thursday Evening, July 29, 1982.

Lesson. John 16.

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. John 16. 22.

There are two observations as we open the discourse. You will know of both of them, you who are spiritually taught and divinely blessed, and read the Scriptures prayerfully and find them meat and drink. First, it appears almost incredible to us, the Lord Jesus having called His disciples from every walk of life - tax gatherers, fishermen, beloved physician, and so on - and they following Him and hearing His wonderful sermons, impeccable and comprehensive, filled with divine truth, and He being the Way, the Truth, and the Life; having the experience too of irradiation to a degree of His glorious divine Person in their souls, so that Peter could say in his noble confession at Caesarea Philippi when Jesus asked, "Whom say ye that I am? Thou art the Christ - the Messiah, the Saviour - the Son of the living God." Knowing constant communion with Him and holy peace and joy; knowing Him to be so adorable and precious beyond computation, yet one thing was hidden from them, though it is implicit in the word, "Thou art the Christ" - the precious Person whose miracles they saw with wonder, heard His sermons with the greatest delight and their <sup>souls</sup> were richly nourished; they knew immediate communion with Him and His preciousness was paramount to them, and they could see His Person continually and see the love and compassion in His eyes, yet this was hidden from them, that He was on a journey. He had a work to do assigned to Him by His divine Father in the Covenant. He was His Father's servant, He was our Surety, our blessed Substitute, and according to the divine plan and purpose of God in the economy of salvation and grace He was on His way to Jerusalem to be apprehended, buffeted, scourged, to enter Gethsemane and drink His cup of wrath, to be crucified and killed and be raised the third day. It was hidden from them. I wonder how they thought their redemption could be accomplished without, how sin could be atoned for and expiated, how they could be clothed in a royal vest to fit them

for the courts of Heaven? How could they know wondrous atonement and the fruits of it - holy joy, peace, bliss? One day the Lord commenced to unfold the sublime and glorious truth that He ~~was~~ on His way to Jerusalem to suffer and be killed, and to rise again on the third day. Dear Peter, so loving, would have spared his Master. "This shall not be unto thee." The Lord rebuked Satan. It was temptation through Peter. He had little understanding of divine truth. This will lead me to the subject.

My friends, how it emphasises that it is impossible for us to know anything aright apart from divine revelation and teaching. You know only what the Lord has revealed to you. There is a word that is so inseparable from this, and I must go in a slight diversion. When He spoke of His cross and His death, that He would be killed and rise again, He turned to them and made a personal application of the fundamental, holy doctrine and glorious truth. He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Has the Lord revealed that to us? For to every child of God there is a cross. You have a cross in your path and your best things. Whatever the Lord leads you into you have a cross. It may be for a while you do not know, then you begin to see it is a cross, and it may be it would be called a bed of nails to lie on. This is a word for all of His beloved people at all times. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Poor soul, you have got a cross. Only the Lord knows the extent of it, and you do not complain. The Lord favours you with a large degree of submission because you are a sinner. "Wherefore ~~should~~ doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" O this cross! Did you carry it to the Sanctuary tonight? The Lord knows what it is. "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." That is the path of a child of God and it is painful, it is crucifying: it is distressing to your flesh, but your greatest comfort, peace and ease is when the Lord enables you by grace, seeing your Saviour bearing His cross, and knowing He expiated your sin, this will make your cross light. It may disappear for a while. Here the Lord was preparing His dear disciples for the time unprecedented for sorrow in their lives, when they would lose their Beloved as to His physical presence, His bodily presence with them and agony entered into

their breasts; agony that was inexpressible because of love. So He prepared them for when they would not see Him, and the time when they would see Him. How tenderly does He prepare them for the time when they would lose the comfortable enjoyment of His physical presence with them.

I want to touch on a word in the early part of the Chapter. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will <sup>not</sup> come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." You will know on Christ's ascension to Glory the Holy Ghost was promised. When the blessed Comforter came to the Church of God, He came with all the blessings Christ had wrought and merited by His finished work of redemption; His priestly, finished work of atonement. If we follow this for a few moments, Christ in the perfection of holy obedience magnified and restored honour to the moral law, and all was put by the Father to the account of the elect, the righteous. He had drunk the cup of wrath, exhausted the vengeance of God, and God rested in His love. There is no wrath, no curse for the people of God. Then He gave His life sacrificially, voluntarily, vicariously to expiate all our sins. He opened the fountain of purgation to cleanse and atone. He condescended to be buried; the seed of corn was sown and He died. Think of the fruit that sprang from it! And He ascended. He said in the Canticles, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." Then rising from the dead and opening His glorious eyes, He looks on the bride He has travailed for and brought forth, and as He looks He says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." It is the work of redemption. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men" - in Man. The Comforter came and He has got everything to bring. He has the precious righteousness of Christ, wrought for His people to bring and apply. He has the precious, shed, vital blood to apply. He has all the blessings Christ wrought and the fruits of the atonement to bring with Him. That is why He says, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." I hope this blessed facet and tenet of truth will be abundantly clear to your souls. The redemption of His people was accomplished, so all the blessings and

favours of it the Comforter brings with Him to the waiting Church of God.

One or two points on this: we have named one. There is no curse, no wrath, no vindictive anger for the people of God. You bear your cross and what you pass through of afflictions, deep trials, and you prove the blessed Person of Christ, the dear Substitute, precious Surety has completely extracted all the curse, wrath and anger so the Comforter comes to you with love. This is something that is permanent, perennial. What you enter into, child of God, you drink your cup, pass through deep waters, go in the fire and there is no curse: there is love in it. We could say to you if you are entering affliction or trial, the day will come when the Lord will visit you and you will taste love and compassion. O the sweetness of love when you taste it! So, "Not in anger, But from His dear, covenant love." Can you contemplate the divine blessing through life where there is no curse? "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Think of a soul in hospital, in deep affliction, and you taste love divine of the Trinity - no curse; you are happy. Another blessing is the peace He brings. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." And all the fruits of the dolorous, vicarious sufferings of the Lord Jesus He brings to your soul - reconciliation, love, tenderness, communion, joy, deliverance. So think what the Comforter has to bring with Him! If you ponder and are led by the Spirit into it, you will see the vast degree of divine blessing He has to bring with Him because it is an accomplished salvation; it is all finished. So all the fruits of the atonement the Comforter brings to the people of God. Whatever you need - wisdom, strength, grace, mercy, compassion, reproof, correction He brings with Him. Balm to heal, wisdom and clarity of thought to clear your troubled minds, peace to distil in your spirits and dispel servile and craven fear. Beg of the Lord that He make it clear to you that He has sent to you another Comforter. A wonderful title this for the Holy Ghost, even the Spirit of truth, that He may abide with you for ever. He is never going away. In early life, in middle life, in old age, in infirmities, distresses, sorrows, in prosperity and adversity the Comforter comes to you and He will never go away. I wanted to give that brief comment to the friends as a seed thought.

I ask you, who indwells you? this Comforter? Could you name a

precious fruit of the dolorous and vicarious Passion of the Lord Jesus that He has brought and applied to your soul? Has He brought the precious cleansing, shed, vital blood? Has He clothed you in the royal robe? Beautiful His bride is. Has He brought peace, joy, resting in Him, patient waiting for Him to your spirit? He told them how it would be with them when He was on His way to His suffering and agony. He said, "Ye shall weep and lament." When they saw their beloved Saviour in all His agony and Passion and crucified on the tree, they wept and lamented. Have you seen this by faith? He said, "the world shall rejoice." When they saw Christ in His agony they rejoiced, and the more He suffered the more they rejoiced. It shows the division among men. Have you entered into this? Part of it is in the Communion service, to weep and lament.

"We would with Thee sympathise  
In Thy bitter Passion."

The heart is capacitated by grace for sorrow and joy. Wonderful it is to sympathise with Him. He said, "Ye shall weep and lament." Do we ever weep and lament concerning His sufferings, or are we carried away by mundane things and hardly think of the cross of our Beloved? Joseph Hart said when he ceased to weep for himself because his sins were forgiven, he began to weep for Christ. Do you? Is it what your soul longs for, to weep for Him who wept so much for you? "The world shall rejoice." This applies to the Lord's people. There are those who rejoice at the calamities of the Lord's people. There is a beautiful word as an appendix, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." The occasion of sorrow, the sufferings of the Redeemer, became the occasion of joy when they saw Him risen and knew His victory, and the principle is applicable to the people of God. I might say to you in this dear Sanctuary on Thursday evening - you may not be in it, may be you will know - "and ye shall be sorrowful," and you will be, and it is sorrow you cannot compute, not define. It is overwhelming. Dear Israel knew it when he saw the beautiful garment, the coat of many colours stained with blood, no dear Joseph.

I will make application of it to you. "ye shall be sorrowful." There are times and occasions in your life when this is your experience before God. "He puts you in mourning, the dress that you want,  
A meek suit adorning both sinner and saint."

This will be your path for a while. "ye shall be sorrowful" I do not know

how long it will go on.

"Should I go mourning to the grave,  
'Twere just; yet, Lord, from darkness save.  
Does not Thy tender word express,  
"I will not leave you comfortless"?

Faith puts in her plea. You are sorrowful, and you cannot tell any the dimensions of your sorrow. This is what the principle that operates from the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Christ will do for your sorrow. "Ye shall be sorrowful." If any in sorrow could enter into this by faith they would feel <sup>it</sup> strong meat, vital for their souls. This is the promise, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." not succeeded by joy - turned into - it is transmuted. What has been sorrow becomes joy, and the principle of it is the victory of Christ. You have got to prove it.

He says, "Ye now therefore have sorrow." There are many forms of sorrow. I am not dealing with natural sorrow though it is an excellent emotion. It is wonderful to see human beings sorrowful when they lose dear ones, or when they are in suffering. A number lost dear ones in the South Atlantic and in the bomb outrage in the Metropolis, and they are in genuine sorrow. It shows the love and regard one is held in. It is one of the lamentable things of to day that there are many tragic things and most are unmoved. A loving heart will know what it is to experience joy and sorrow. "Ye now therefore have sorrow." Here it is a spiritual emotion, loving and commendable, and a fruit of the love of God in the soul. Christ was first and their All in all. "And ye now therefore have sorrow."

"I miss the presence of my Friend,  
Like one whose comfort's gone."

It shows what Christ means to you. You are sorrowful because of the feeling loss of Christ. He is in the tomb. Shall I ever see Him again? Shall I hear His sweet voice, see His loving eyes full of compassion? "And ye now therefore have sorrow." Now He says three things to you, and there is the application of the context, the travail of a woman and the joy when the child is born. The two things go together, they are inseparable. You have sorrow and there is travail in it. "And ye now therefore have sorrow." Christ has been so precious to you and now He is so silent. You cannot see His face, as if He were in the tomb. He isn't. When He comes He always leaves something behind. "But I will see you"

again. I am coming back." When He rose from the dead they saw Him again, and He said, "Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side." Wonderful when He sees you again, under your roof, in your heart, and He smiles on you, and you say, "O Thou lovely, loving Saviour, let me hold Thee and not let Thee go. Lord, don't go away without me. Take me with Thee! I am weary and heavy laden. Take me Home. Don't depart." "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice." a wonderful fruit of the Passion of Christ. Your cup is full and runs over with His love. You rejoice, you are delivered, and you can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Your joy is of a divine, spiritual nature, and no man can take it from you because Christ is risen. He was dead, and is alive for evermore, and because He is risen your joy no man taketh from you. Forgiveness, pardon, justification, all blessings of a risen Christ are eternal, so your joy no man taketh from you. I wish I could speak of Him, extol Him, praise Him! The Lord bless you.