

4Ws So That You May Know The Joy

John 16:16-33

Dgroup's Curriculum: Leader's Copy

WORSHIP

Consider reading **Psalm 54** together, taking turns reading a verse at a time, or reading responsively with the leader reading a verse and the group responding with the next verse. You can discuss the Psalms you read and share what they mean to you.

Consider singing some of the songs on the sheets that were included in your packet if you have someone in the group that plays the guitar or can lead music and/or play the guitar.

WELCOME

Questions.

Have you ever been rewarded for your service or your efforts? How did the reward make you feel? In your opinion, was the reward more or was it less than you deserved? Tell us the story.

WORD

Discussion Questions.

1. Jesus has admitted that He is speaking figuratively there in the Upper Room. What three things has He expressed to them in figurative terms? What is He concealing from them as He uses this figurative language?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 16:16-18.) Jesus has said three things to His Followers in figurative terms: In a little while you will see me no more, in a little while after that you will see me again, and, this is because I'm going to the Father. He is speaking figuratively to conceal from the Followers what is about to happen to Him when they leave the Upper Room. When He says, "in a little while you will see me no more," He is concealing the reality that in the morning the Gentiles are going to nail Him to a cross. When He says, "then in a little while you will see me again," He is concealing the reality that He will rise from the dead on the third day. And, when He says, "I am going to the Father," He is concealing the reality that He will once-and-for-all establish an unbreakable relationship between His Followers and God the Father. He is concealing these things from His Followers, but that is not because He doesn't want them to know the truth. He wants them to know the truth, but He is relying on the Spirit of God to journey with the Followers and teach them the truth that they need to know. The next question will talk about why Jesus is concealing these things right now.

2. Jesus DOES want His followers to know the truth, but He's concealing it right now. Why is He concealing it? What would likely happen if He decided to just tell them about everything right there in the Upper Room?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 16:25-28.) Jesus has already said that there are other things that He wants to tell His Followers, but they are not able to bear them right now. There are really two reasons for this. First, He doesn't want to overwhelm them with worry or fear. If they were to know everything that is about to happen as Jesus is arrested, tried, flogged and crucified, they would be so overwhelmed with fear that they would not be able to function. We can begin to appreciate how they would have felt if we just put ourselves there in the room with them. Jesus seems so sad already and has let them know that His body will be broken and His blood will be shed. They don't know the details yet and they don't yet know when it will all begin, but perhaps we can imagine how devastating this little bit that they knew would have been for them that night. The second reason He might have had for concealing the truth from them is, quite simply, there was way too much that He would have needed to tell them, and there simply wasn't enough time to fit all that in that night. Besides that, there wasn't enough room in the heads and hearts of the Followers for them to fit all that they would eventually learn about Jesus. Had Jesus told them everything He wanted to that evening – had He pushed the 'truth button' – they would have blown a fuse!

3. When Jesus anticipated the Followers' questions and answered them, the Followers said that they NOW believed that Jesus had come from God. Why was this an odd thing for them to say? In what ways do we sometimes respond to God in the same way?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 16:31.) Jesus anticipated their questions before they found the courage to ask Him. He then answered their questions even though they had not asked Him. This would have been an incredibly easy thing for Jesus to do, so it seems odd that the Followers would have chosen that moment to be so impressed with what Jesus had done that they say that 'now' they believe that He has come from God. These are the same men who saw Jesus walk on water. They are the same men who had heard a dead man take a breath just because Jesus had told him to. They are the same men who had seen Jesus create eyes for a man who had been born blind. That's why it seems odd that they would have chosen that moment – that moment when Jesus had merely anticipated their questions and answered them – to decide that this was the evidence they were waiting for that would prove to them that Jesus had come from God. They had had three years of overwhelming proof and then chose this minor event as the point at which they would believe. In response, it seems like Jesus is saying, "Oh, so NOW you get it! Good for you!" Help the group to understand how common this sort of thing is in our own lives. God helps us to draw 15 breaths a minute and He helps our hearts to beat 60 times a minute. We are still able to move around, and see, hear and speak, but we're usually not as thankful for those things as we should be. We tend to complain more than we give thanks. We seem to go through life like that until a moment comes when God answers prayer and we say, "Well, there you are, God! Now I get it: You really are working in my life!" We miss almost everything that God does for us and thank Him far too seldom. Help the group to think this through in a way that leads them to be more conscious of what God is doing for them every day, and to be more thankful for all the blessings He brings into their lives daily.

4. Jesus has told His Followers that they will let Him down in a major way. If He is not trying to discourage them by telling them this, what IS He trying to do? What valuable lesson is He teaching them?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 16:33.) Jesus is not trying to discourage His Followers as He tells them that they are going to let Him down. He is saying what He is saying to bring them some peace. He's doing that by teaching them a very valuable lesson as He prompts them to take their eyes off themselves and to focus instead on Him. He's teaching them to turn their attention away from their own failures and rest instead on His glorious success. The followers are about to be overcome by the world around them, and that will be the very thing that will lead to their failure. But, their failure as they are overcome by the world stands in sharp contrast to how Jesus relates to the world. The world was going to give the Followers trouble, and they would be overcome. The world was also in the process of giving Jesus trouble, but Jesus had already overcome the world. This is something from which all of us can take courage, something that should be an encouragement to all of us. The world that so easily overwhelms us as it overcomes us, did not have the same impact on Jesus. Jesus overcame the world that overcomes us. Encourage the group that this is a lesson we can and should learn: We can take heart and courage from the truth that Jesus overcame the world for us.

5. Jesus did not say, "I WILL OVERCOME the world," He said, "I HAVE OVERCOME the world. What, besides the tense of the verb is the difference between these two very different ideas? Why should we want to overcome as well?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read Revelation 3:21-22.) Jesus puts this in the past tense. It should be clear to all of us that Jesus is not talking about something that will happen when He goes to the Cross. He is talking about something that has already happened. This means that Jesus did not overcome the world through His DEATH, He overcame the world by His LIFE. This is something that can give hope to all of us. We don't have to DIE to overcome the world; we can overcome the world by the way that we LIVE. Jesus is of course speaking figuratively. He's not talking about defeating the world or destroying the world, He's talking about walking through the world, surrounded by the world without getting His feet dirty as He walked through the muck and mire that surrounded Him every day. The world had ideas for Him, the world tried to tempt Him, the world had plans for Him, but at every turn Jesus said 'No' to the world and 'Yes' to the Father. That's what it means to overcome the world. Help the group to understand that Jesus is offering a great reward to anyone who overcomes the world. He is offering to allow that person to sit with Him in His throne, in just the same way Jesus overcame and then sat down with His Father in His Father's Throne. This is an incomprehensible promise! God has said in Isaiah that He will not share His glory with another, and now Jesus is promising to allow the one who overcomes to sit with Him in His Throne – a Throne that He shares with God the Father. Even if we don't fully understand what it means, this promise should motivate us to want to overcome! Our hearts should be longing to receive the reward that Jesus is offering us, especially when all that Jesus is asking in return is that we learn to say 'No' to sin and 'Yes' to the Spirit of God.

WORK

Jesus has overcome the world and is inviting us to overcome the world as well. This does not mean that we are free to try to defeat the world or crush the world in some way. Jesus doesn't want us pointing fingers at the people around us; He wants us instead to reach out our hands to others. We have so much to offer others, but we still hesitate when it comes time to share the Good News with them. Let's work together as a group to encourage one another to get involved in the lives of those who still need to hear the Good News. Let's invite them to our Life Groups and help them to understand what we understand about Jesus. The time is shorter than we think and we will soon be standing before God Himself at the judgment. We will all wish on that day that we had been more enthusiastic about doing the things that God wanted us to do. Of course, when that day comes it will be too late to be enthusiastic. Let's get busy telling others today!

Those of us who lead should remember that there is no better way to motivate others to share the gospel than to set an example for them. Speak to others about Jesus when you have the opportunity and set an example of lifestyle evangelism for the members of your group. They will be much more likely to follow your example than they will be to simply do what you tell them to do. Ask the group to discuss this and then ask them to think through the list of people you have been praying for each week. Discuss how we can be more aggressively involved in sharing the good news with these folks for whom God has burdened us. We will pray for these people tonight and each night we're together until they come to Life Group, or come to Christ through some other means. Have each couple or individual share the name of one couple/person to pray for and then ask one of the other people in the group to pray for them.

Close your time together in prayer.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Singapore Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Core, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Singapore Facilities

- CCF Singapore Center
- Equipments

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends