BGCC Community Group Guide

Take Heart

November 8th, 2026

Jesus Has Overcome

John 13-16

Taking heart is more than believing that Jesus is with us; it is putting that truth into practice. Because Jesus has overcome the world, we can face trouble with peace and courage by serving, praying, abiding in His Word, loving one another, and remembering what He has done.

Introduction: Courage in Action

Courage isn't the absence of fear. It's choosing something else is more important than it. Jesus doesn't promise His disciples a life without trouble. He promises that they can have peace in Him because He has overcome the world.

In the upper room, just hours before His arrest, Jesus prepares His disciples for what is coming. He teaches them how to live when life becomes difficult—not by relying on themselves, but by remaining connected to Him and practicing what He taught.

Significance in the Biblical Story

John 16:33 brings together Jesus' final teaching to His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion. He knows the suffering they will face, but He also knows that His death and resurrection will secure their victory. The disciples will experience hardship, but they will not be abandoned. Jesus has overcome the world, and He calls them to live with the peace and courage that come from Him.

Section 1 – Serve Others

Scripture: John 13:1–17

Key Verse: “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.” — John 13:14

Summary

Jesus demonstrates what it means to serve by washing His disciples' feet. This was a lowly task, yet Jesus willingly takes the position of a servant. He even washes the feet of Judas, knowing he will betray Him, and Peter, knowing he will deny Him.

Jesus doesn't simply give them an example to admire. He tells them to follow it. Recognizing that we should serve is not enough; we must actually do it. When we face hardship, serving others helps keep us from becoming consumed by our own circumstances. It reminds us that God still gives us purpose and opportunities to reflect Christ's love.

Group Question: Why do you think Jesus chose to wash His disciples' feet, especially knowing what some of them were about to do?

Personal Relevance

He was demonstrating how to properly meet suffering, trials, and uncertainty. When faced with the inevitable and when ‘all authority on heaven and earth’ had been given to Him, Jesus knew that the best thing He could do for others and Himself was to abide by the heavenly mandate for kings. To serve the people under them (see Matthew 20:25-27)

Flow Question: How can serving someone else change our perspective when we are going through a difficult season?

Reflection Question: Is there someone around you with a need you could meet this week?

Section 2 – Pray

Scripture: John 14:13–14; 16:23–24

Key Verse: “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” — John 16:24

Summary

Jesus repeatedly reminds His disciples to bring their requests to the Father. Prayer is an intentional act of bringing our needs, fears, and circumstances before God rather than trying to carry or control everything ourselves.

Prayer doesn't require impressive words or pretending that everything is fine. As C.S. Lewis puts it, “We must lay before him what is in us, not what ought to be in us.” We can honestly bring our struggles to the Father because He cares for us. Don’t pray what you think you should pray. Pray what is in your heart.

Prayer changes our posture. Instead of trying to control what we cannot control, we acknowledge that God holds everything in His hands.

Group Question: Why do we often try to fix our problems ourselves before taking them to God in prayer?

Personal Relevance

We are so practiced in trying to handle things ourselves. From the moment we are born we are taught to handle drinking, eating, crawling, walking, talking, and so on. We are taught to elarn and overcome. Suddenly that flips on its head and we are asked to pray to God to handle the next problem. That’s one of the reasons it’s so counter intuitive.

Unlike our parents, the goal of Jesus for our lives is not one of complete dependence. It is to grow in our character and live alongside Him in dependence. Prayer helsp us to depend on God. Prayer can become a physical practice: kneeling before the Father in the morning, taking a prayer walk, writing down requests, or simply turning off distractions and talking honestly with Him. This helps to fight the tendency of man to arrogantly say, “Well I’m doing wonderfully well and I can handle this.”

Flow Question: How does prayer help us respond differently to circumstances we cannot control?

Reflection Question: What is one burden you need to bring honestly before the Father instead of continuing to carry it yourself?

Section 3 – Abide in God's Word and Love One Another

Scripture: John 15:7–13; John 13:34–35

Key Verse: “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” — John 15:7

Summary

Jesus describes our relationship with Him as a branch connected to a vine. A branch cannot produce fruit by itself; it must remain connected to the vine. In the same way, we cannot

manufacture peace, courage, or spiritual growth through our own effort. We must abide in Christ and let His Word remain in us.

Abiding means staying, dwelling, and making our home in Him. We do this through reading Scripture, meditating on it, memorizing it, and allowing it to shape our thinking. When trouble comes, God's Word gives us something trustworthy to stand on when our circumstances and emotions feel uncertain.

Jesus also commands His disciples to love one another as He has loved them. Taking heart is not an isolated activity. We need to lean on our church family, care for one another, and demonstrate the sacrificial love Christ has shown us.

Group Question: What does it look like to make God's Word your home rather than simply checking off a daily Bible-reading task?

Personal Relevance

We often remember the things we regularly take in. If we fill our minds with distractions regularly, those things will be what come to mind when life gets difficult. But when we fill our hearts with Scripture, God's truth is available to remind us of His character and promises. It's not just about checking off Scripture reading each day. But comparatively outnumbering the moments of other things with those of Scripture.

Likewise, we need one another. God uses the love and encouragement of other believers to strengthen us when we are weary. Love others to become someone they can lean on and also be ready to lean on them.

Flow Question: How do abiding in God's Word and loving other believers work together to help us persevere?

Reflection Question: What is one practical change you could make to spend more intentional time in Scripture or to love someone in your church family?

Section 4 – Remember What Jesus Has Done

Scripture: John 16:33; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; Psalm 73:1–17

Key Verse: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." — John 16:33

Summary

Jesus knows His disciples will face trouble, but He wants them to remember what He has taught them and who He is. We are forgetful people. Like Asaph in Psalm 73, we can become so

focused on our circumstances that we lose sight of God's goodness. Asaph's perspective changes when he enters God's sanctuary and remembers who God is.

The Lord's Supper is one way Jesus has given us to remember. We remember His body given for us, His blood shed for us, and the forgiveness secured through His sacrifice. We remember that the cross is empty, the grave is empty, and Jesus has overcome the world.

Remembering doesn't make every problem disappear or give us every answer. It reminds us that we are deeply loved, that we are not alone, and that even death does not have the final word.

Group Question: Why is it so easy to forget God's goodness when we are focused on our troubles?

Personal Relevance

When you feel forgotten, discouraged, or overwhelmed, return to what Jesus has done. Remember His sacrifice, His grace, and His promises. Our hope rests not in how easily life is going, but in the victory Christ has already secured.

We often dwell on what we see. If we spend all day considering our troubles and stare them in the face, it becomes hard to think about God. Consider how hard it must be to be looking at your child singing “the wheels on the bus” while also trying to do some math for your job. It’s hard! “If you look for the light you will often find it. But if you look for the dark, that is all you will ever see.”

Flow Question: How does remembering Christ's victory give us courage to face present difficulties?

Reflection Question: What truth about Jesus do you need to remember the next time you feel overwhelmed?

Conclusion: Putting Taking Heart into Practice

Jesus doesn't promise that we will avoid trouble. He promises that we can have peace in Him because He has overcome the world. And He gives us practical ways to live in that truth:

1. **Serve others.** Look for opportunities to put someone else's needs before your own.
2. **Pray.** Bring your real fears, burdens, and needs before the Father.
3. **Abide and love.** Make God's Word your home and lean into the people of His church.
4. **Remember.** Return to the cross, the empty grave, and the hope we have in Jesus.

Taking heart isn't something we accomplish by sheer determination. We follow Jesus, depend on His Word, lean on His people, and trust in what He has already done.

Final Reflection Questions:

- Which of these practices is most difficult for you when life gets hard?
- What is one specific step you can take this week to put your faith into action?

Closing Challenge: Don't try to face trouble alone. Serve, pray, abide and love one another, and remember that Jesus has overcome the world. Keep following Him, one step at a time.