



Remember our little fella from last week? He’s got his hand stuck in the jar because he won’t let go of the banana. How’s it been for you this week? Have you let go of the banana? For the disciples of Jesus, on their walk to Gethsemane, (the night before Jesus’ crucifixion), they’ve been hanging on to the banana of their desire for Jesus to set up His kingdom on earth and to put them in charge. But that’s not happening. All He’s been talking about is leaving and they’re distraught. But church, they ain’t seen nothing yet. It’s getting ready to get really bad. Judas is coming with soldiers who will arrest Jesus, and then He’ll be executed the next day.

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Knowing all of this, Jesus has been seeking to prepare His disciples for trouble, and He’s trying to get them to stop seeing things the way they want to see them...and to let go of the banana and trust Him for what is to come. The title of today’s message is: “**Jesus Overcomes the World.**”

**John 16:23-33**

<sup>23</sup> In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. <sup>25</sup> “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. <sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.” <sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. <sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

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You know, normally when I teach, we look at a passage of Scripture, and we’ll go verse by verse, until we get to the end of the passage. But today, we’re going to start with the last verse...because this verse is really the key to everything Jesus has said for the last four chapters of John’s Gospel. Today, we come to the end of what is often called: “**The Upper Room Discourse,**” even though I believe all of chapters 15 and 16 have been expressed by Jesus to His disciples, while they were

walking from the upper room, to the Garden of Gethsemane. Nonetheless, we come to the climax of everything Jesus has been saying since chapter 13...and what a conclusion:

**Luke 16:33**

<sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

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The world. What is the world? It's the “kosmos,” remember, we talked about this...the kosmos (order) that was left in chaos after Adam and Eve ruined what was created as perfect, holy and good...paradise lost...the world system became corrupted and polluted by sin. Jesus said, “I've overcome all of that.” He didn't say, “I WILL overcome.” He said, “I HAVE overcome.” It's a done deal, even though it's not happened yet. How? Because in the mind of Jesus, it's already as good as done, because He's omniscient...He sees and knows it all and He offers peace.

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How do we have peace? Jesus said, “In me.” We have peace in a person, not things. Peace is found in Jesus...tribulation or trouble is found in the world...the world system. You can have all the money in the world...you can have all the fame and power in the world...but, know nothing about peace. Some of the most miserable people on the planet are the wealthiest, best looking, most famous and most powerful...and they're absolutely miserable and it's because they don't know Jesus...so, they don't have peace.

Jesus said, “take heart,” Those two words are just one word in the Greek and it's a verb form, and it's in the imperative, meaning it's a command. It means “take courage,” or put another way, “cheer up.” In fact, every time it's used in the New Testament, it's spoken by Jesus. He's saying, “Take heart, have courage...because what I'm telling you will give you hope and joy, if you'll listen!”

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So, we can “take heart,” no matter what we're going through...have courage...no matter what comes our way, it's going to be okay! And that's what Jesus has been saying for the past four chapters. “Let not your hearts be troubled...” He's going back to the Father, but He's still going to be interceding for them!

**John 16:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

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“In that day” speaks of when Jesus returns to the Father...to be seated at the right hand of the Father as our intercessor. Think about it...Jesus had met all the disciple's needs for the last 3 years and they had watched Jesus pray to the Father over and over again when they were in need, and that was not going to change...because Jesus is in heaven interceding on our behalf right now!

**Romans 8:34**

<sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>□</sup>

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Jesus is interceding for you to the Father, just like He supplied for the needs of the disciples while here on this earth, He is in heaven interceding on your behalf for our needs. Jesus continues...

**John 16:25**

<sup>25</sup> “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father.

Throughout this “upper room discourse,” Jesus had spoken in figures of speech or symbolic terms, such as when He washed the disciples’ feet (to show humility, love and service, versus arguing over “who is the greatest”). He spoke about the rooms in the “Father’s house” to assure them that THIS is not the end...Heaven is coming. He spoke about “vines and branches” to point out the true versus false believers, (Judas being emphasized as the false). He spoke women in child bearing to speak of how an event that can be extremely painful, can also bring great joy...which is exactly how the cross will be...from awful to joy...from death to life, in a matter of three days! All of this would soon be very clear and understandable.

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Because the resurrection caused the veil to be lifted. The veil of “not understanding.” Because they could not understand that the Messiah had to suffer, die and rise again. And so, as we’ve come to learn in our study of John’s Gospel, it’s not until after the resurrection that all of this would make sense. The resurrection lifted the veil of unbelief. For now, Jesus is expressing; yet again, that the time is coming when the disciples could pray and ask God the Father, in Jesus’ name. Verse 26.

**John 16:26**

**26 In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;**

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You know, this concept was absolutely alien to the average Jew of that day. For them, God was distant. You didn’t even talk about God as your Father. You didn’t even say His name. You certainly didn’t call Him: “Abba, Papa.” Church, Jesus was speaking of the fact that they would have direct access to God. We now have direct access to the Father. The veil has been torn! This is called the “Priesthood of the Believer.” We don’t go through a priest or Mary. We can go boldly to the throne of grace, straight to the Father all because Jesus made the way.

And then He reminds the discipoes of something that’s so comforting and so beautiful!

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**John 16:27**

**27 for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.<sup>[a]</sup>**

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Let me ask you: Do you want to be loved? Sure you do...we all want to be loved...that’s innate in us and that comes from God, because we’re made in His image and God is love and true love emanates from Him. So, Jesus is saying, “If you love me, you are loved by me and my Father.” That really goes back to John 3:16. Verse 27 is kind of the “inside/out” of that. Meaning: “Do you want to be loved by God? Then, love His Son. Because if you love His Son, you’ll be loved by the Father.

Yes, people may come and go in our lives...some may say they love us and the next week turn against us. Have you felt that? Sure you have: abandoned, forsaken, maligned... Jesus will never do that to you. He’s friend that sticks closer than a brother! In Him, you will be loved with a love that will never diminish.

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And you know what...if you and I have the certainty of the love of Jesus, then we can suffer anything. Bring it on. Put me in jail. Kill me. It’s okay. Because God loves me and no matter what, I’m going to be okay. “For to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” And here’s what’s really beautiful! God loves us even though He knows everything about us. God knows absolutely everything there is to know about you and me. All our foibles. Our struggles. Our pain. Our weird fears. Our criticalness, bitterness...but, through it all, He never stops loving us. He says, “Let go of that and come to me.” That’s agape love, Church. Unconditional love.

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Now watch verse 28...Jesus continues this line of thinking...

**John 16:28**

<sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

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Remember, Jesus came to this earth because He was sent by the Father on a rescue mission to buy our redemption and once that was completed, (It is finished)...He went back to the Father. And that's the story of redemption and the love of the Father and the Son for the world. And finally, the disciples respond again...I love their response. Verse 29.

**John 16:29-30**

<sup>29</sup> His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! <sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.”

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They acknowledged they believed! You ARE the Son of God. So, this is the happy ending we all want, right? Wrong. They say they believed, but they're going to run, aren't they?

**John 16:31-32**

<sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.

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The apostle Paul said, “If we are faithless, He remains faithful.” You know, it's easy to think that we would have reacted differently than His disciples. We'd like to believe that our faith is mature and can handle anything, but we get weak sometimes. They got weak. And remember, these are very young people...the apostles are in their late teens to early 20's. Peter was the only married and the rest pretty much came right out of their father's homes or boats to come follow this itinerant Rabbi. Yes, they'll run, but Jesus said, I'm not alone! The Father is with me,” and He caps off this fact with verse 33:

**John 16:33**

<sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

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Jesus said: “I have overcome the world.” That's past-tense. It was already done in His omniscient, all-knowing mind. Church, there is no true peace in this world outside of Jesus. Ye, this world is filled with trouble; and yes, this world will persecute followers of Jesus. For these men, according to church history, they would all die a martyr's death except for the Apostle John and they tried to boil him to death.

Church family, the world will persecute you and me. But Jesus said to His Apostles and to us: “Take heart...take courage...” Why? “Because I have overcome the world!”

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I want to begin to close with a story about this man. Jim Elliot:

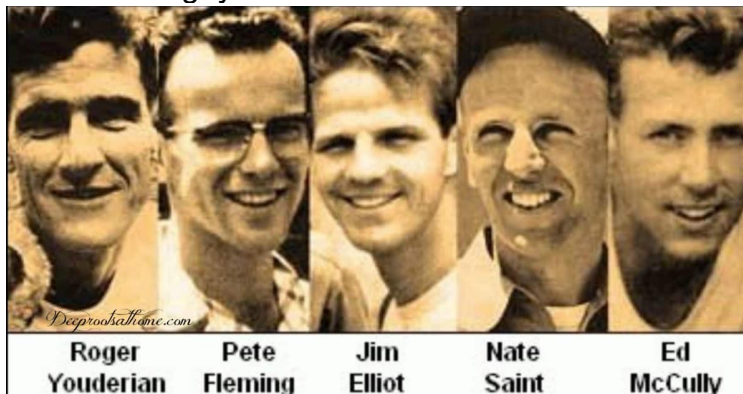




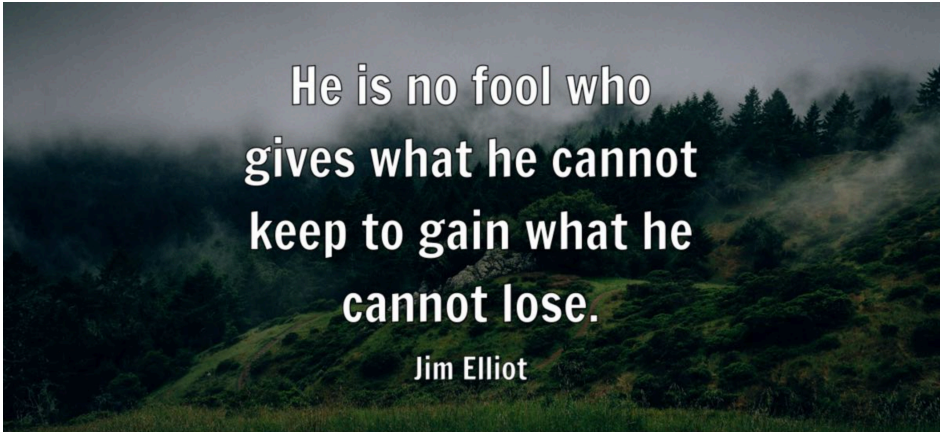
He was a missionary in the 1950's to this country:



Ecuador. Ecuador, as you can see, is a country in the northwest corner of South America. Jim Elliot and four other missionaries...these guys...



became convinced that they should take the gospel to Ecuador to a primitive, hostile, unreached tribe, called the Auca tribe, (aka: Hourani Indians). At that time, these people had not had contact with anyone from the outside world. They lived in huts and hunted for food with spears and wore very little clothes. After months of planning and preliminary contact with the tribe, the five missionaries landed a small plane near their village, but within a week, they were attacked and killed on January 8, 1956. Jim Elliot became famous for these words:



Jim and his wife Elisabeth...here they are:



had been married for less than 3 years. Amazingly, Elisabeth and her daughter, Valerie, and Rachel Saint, the sister of one of the other missionaries, remained in Ecuador and looked for an opening to take the gospel to the Hourani. The opening to take the gospel to the tribe that had killed her husband came when a Hourani woman, Dayuma Caento came to them. Here's Elisabeth and Rachel with her...



Dayuma fled the violence of the tribe and came to Elisabeth and Rachel for help. They led to her Jesus and Dayuma agreed to lead them back to the tribe, talk about courage. Dayuma became a bridge for the Gospel. Elisabeth would teach the children with her daughter at her feet...



She would gain the trust of the other women



and eventually the men became open to listening to their wives tell of their faith in Jesus. Many of the men would eventually say that the constant reminder of the presence of these women, even though they had killed their husbands, brought an understanding of forgiveness and love that eventually captured their hearts.

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Elisabeth, Valerie, and Rachel lived with the tribe for several years. They translated the Gospel of Mark into the Hourani language. Elisabeth returned to the United States in 1963. She began a ministry to women that eventually went nationwide on many Christian radio stations, emphasizing sexual purity, biblical gender roles, growth through suffering and obedience to Jesus.

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Quite simply; Elisabeth was totally sold out to Jesus and she found her peace Him. He had overcome the world for her. She said some amazing things:

**“There is nothing worth living for, unless it is worth dying for.”**

**“Faith’s most severe tests come not when we see nothing, but when we see a stunning array of evidence that seems to prove our faith in vain.”**

**“Sometimes life is so hard you can only do the next thing. Whatever that is just do the next thing. God will meet you there.”**

**“To be a follower of the Crucified means, sooner or later, a personal encounter with the cross. And the cross always entails loss.”**

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That's letting go of the banana.



That's the Christian life. Not letting anything enslave us. Understanding that Jesus is Master. And this was what Jesus was trying to get across to His disciples for three years. It's this:

**John 16:33**

**<sup>33</sup>I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."**

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What are you living for? If it's not His kingdom, then you're just like the world. You see, for many, they'll walk out of here today having done their Sunday deal...they're church deal...and go chase the world this week. Chase the money...the stuff...watch the garbage...soak in the world...and forget that Jesus said we're to seek His Kingdom first. That means we die to our own wishes. Like Elisabeth Elliot... It wasn't about her comfort...it was not about her grief. She saw that what her husband was doing was kingdom stuff.

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If you're not doing kingdom stuff...then you are not living! You've still got your hand in the jar...leaving Jesus standing three feet away...the One...the only One in whom you can have peace. You've got to die to yourself, become a martyr, and lose your life to gain it.

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Tim's written this song called the Martyr's Song...listen to the words and ponder them and your life...