

Connect Group Questions

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Give a 5-minute review of Peppy's sermon

Please don't feel you have to cover every question. They become increasingly deeper and more thoughtful toward the end. It may help to highlight questions you want to be sure to cover, depending on the dynamics of your group and the time available. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

Miscellaneous: December 11, 2016 is the day to turn in your Project 3T talents. Take a moment in group to share stories of individual achievement and progress. There is still time to sign up for the baptism on December 4, 2016. Call the church office at (843) 871-2755.

CONNECT Group study questions for November 27, 2016

Title: "A Little While..."

Read John 16:17-33 *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'?" So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." 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'? 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. 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. 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 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. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*

"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. 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; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! 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.” Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? 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. 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.”

Question: Jesus’ disciples had no idea they needed encouraging, but Jesus did.

How important is encouragement? Share with the group a time when a word of encouragement made all the difference. Did the encourager ever realize the impact they made on your behalf?

Question: Scripture is filled with encouraging promises that believers can return to time after time.

Share with the group passages of encouragement to lift us all—perhaps one you claim as a life verse.

Facilitator: Here’s one: *“...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:37-39).

Question: Jesus’ first word of encouragement was one of perspective.

How did Jesus see what was about to happen? How is Jesus’ perspective an encouragement to us?

Question: We all experience times of pain or despair—perhaps grief over the loss of a loved one.

What is the principle in Jesus’ “a little while” message to his disciples that can encourage us? How does this principle encourage us to praise God in the midst of pain and grief?

Facilitator: Direct the group to Psalm 30:5 for the principle that momentary sorrow and unrestrained grief is always followed—even overcome and conquered—by lasting joy.

Question: Why would the world rejoice as the disciples grieved over Jesus' departure? At Jesus' resurrection, what was the world's reaction? Is the world's reaction any different today? Can you give examples?

Question: What do verses 23-30 teach us about prayer? To whom do we pray? How did the disciples' prayer-connection to the Father change after Jesus' resurrection and ascension?

Facilitator: We are instructed to pray "in Jesus' name." This speaks to relationship or chain of command.

Question: Jesus predicted correctly that his disciples would scatter and leave him alone to be crucified. Yet, he would not be alone in the Father's presence. Pastor Peppy used the Latin words, *coram dei*, to describe living in the continual presence and under the authority of God.

Is "coram dei" a reality available for those of us who love Jesus and obey his commands?

Question: Jesus promises that in the world we will have tribulation, which, if he stopped there, would not be encouragement. "*But take heart; I have overcome the world.*" he tells us.

Why is this reason for us to take heart? What verses can you cite that give us reason to take heart—other versions say "be of good cheer."

Facilitator: Some of us might say, "Isn't there a verse that says...." Encourage those who have a smart phone or tablet with them to google-search verses they think might apply.

For the Children:

Share about a time someone encouraged you. What did they say or do that was so special?

When do you feel like you need encouragement most?

Can you think of someone who needs encouragement? What are some ways you can encourage them?