

Discussion Guide | John 16:16-33

Gathering Question:

What is one way you've experienced God in your life this week?

Gathering Prayer

Father, by Your Spirit, would You guide us into all truth. Help us to hear and be attentive to Your voice as we work through this study. In the name of Jesus, Your Son, we pray, Amen.

Opening Questions

- What stood out to you in the sermon?
- What insights did you gain?
- What questions did it raise?

Read John 16:16-33

The Paradox of Joy

- Why do you think today's society works so hard to avoid grief and sadness?
- What are some common ways that we try to "manage" or escape sadness?
- How is Jesus' promise different from the idea that we can manufacture our own joy?
- Have you ever experienced joy that came *through* hardship rather than *around* it?

The Paradox of Acceptance

- What do you normally think of when you say, "In Jesus' name"?
- Why is "self-forgiveness" ultimately insufficient?
- Do you ever find yourself trying to prove, earn, or justify yourself?
- Jesus was rejected on the cross so that we could be accepted. What would it mean to actually receive Christ's forgiveness rather than attempt to generate your own?

The Paradox of Victory

- Why does the cross look like defeat from a worldly perspective?
- What kinds of "trouble" do you personally find most destabilizing?
- How does Jesus' statement, "I have overcome the world," reshape how we interpret suffering?
- Can you give an example of something - in your current situation - that feels overwhelming or out of control?
- How might viewing that situation through the lens of the cross change your perspective?

Closing Prayer