

# Break Free...

*A Thought for the Week From Patrick Kemper at  
No Strongholds Ministries*

## Week 7

### Warning... or Warming?

*John 16:33 (TLB)*

*{33} I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."*

Today's thought is going to jump through a few hoops, over a couple hurdles and then crawl under a few fences before I finally get to the point, but try to keep up because I believe it's going to make sense to you in the end.

I am a self-professing gadget geek. I love electronics and the way technology makes life easier... most of the time. I must also confess, however, there are times I find I have bitten off more than I can chew, leaving me a bit frustrated. As a result, there is this rhetorical question that has formed in my mind: *Which is the bigger frustration – desiring a particular technology and not having it, or having it, and not having any idea how to make it work?*

I was reading in the book of John this morning, chapter 16, verses 17-33. Jesus had just finished talking with the disciples who were, once again, scratching each others' heads but still wondering why their own back were still itching.

And, as usual, Jesus knew they were confused so he started filling in the blanks for them. In verse 29, the disciples claimed to have a light bulb moment and now everything made sense! I can almost see them smacking each other on the back, laughing out loud, grinning proudly and folding their arms in satisfaction.

I see Jesus' head turn slightly and, with a one-sided, upturned smile and a twinkle in His eyes He says (with a funny rise in His voice), "Reeeeeeelly now...."

*John 16:31-32 (TLB)*

*{31} "Do you finally believe this?" Jesus asked. {32} "But the time is coming—in fact, it is here—when you will be scattered, each one returning to his own home, leaving me alone. Yet I will not be alone, for the Father is with me."*

He's saying, "Oh, you get it now, do ya"? Let's see how sure you are in, well let's say, about three hours..."

He knew they still did not get it. They were enjoying the increase in the breeze but

could not hear the oncoming train that was generating it. I believe that Jesus added what He said in verse 33 for us, as much as for the way they would soon need it.

*John 16:33 (TLB)*

*{33} I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."*

## *Application*

As many times as I have read, and heard, those last three verses, they offered a different perspective for me today. Jesus was telling them something very important that we all need to get a hold of, bathe in and rub in our hair for a while.

He was telling them that He knew they did not get it... but it was okay. He was telling them that He knew how they were going to respond and that it would not be long before the smiles of satisfaction and their light bulb moment would fade... but it was okay. He was telling them He was giving them the technology they needed but they were not listening to the directions that would allow them to use it... and it was okay. He was telling them that the time was upon them, right now, and He knew they would all run... but it was okay.

Then Jesus told them the most important part. He made it clear this was not an indictment, but an encouragement.

Look at verse 33 again. "... I have told you this so you will have peace of heart and mind." He was telling them they were going to continue to face difficulties and make mistakes, but none of it was going to be a surprise to Him.

He was about to prove it to them by dying for them... *anyway*. The world and all of its troubles would no longer be the dominant character in the show. Jesus was taking His rightful place and wanted them to "...*cheer up, I have overcome the world.*"

Do you struggle at times through life feeling like your light bulb moment has passed and you don't know what happened? You had been so certain just a moment ago...

Do you ever find yourself in a place where, just when you thought things were going to settle down and it would all make sense, the snow cone doesn't fit in your sandal and there's nowhere to plug the hairdryer in the refrigerator? Do you feel, just like the disciples did, and all you can do is stand there and blink?

Jesus said there would be days like that. He didn't offer a membership guaranteed to eliminate the trials of life; He said to take comfort, He had already overcome them. This means He has, and will provide, the answers to successfully navigate the rough waters ahead. He has promised to show you the way if you are more focused on being submitted and listening to what He tells you to do, instead of explaining to Him how bad the situation is.

There is no detail of your situation He doesn't understand. There is no part of your scenario He has not covered. Keith Green sang in one of his songs, "... no sin is too great, no problem too small... Jesus is Lord of all!"

You can be comforted by His words, and His patience, with the ones who followed Him everywhere, every day, for three years. The warning Jesus gives you about your troubles and trials (and your response to them) should be a *warming* of your soul.

# Homework for the Week...

1.) What light bulb moments have you had, that didn't seem to last very long? Do you struggle with reconciling the troubles in life with God's promises? Do you think your sin is too great or your problem too small for God's attention? Describe your worship and prayer time – are you getting lost in worship... is there a conversation? Is there a connection between the answer to these and the first three questions? Where are you still scratching your head in wonder? Ask God to help you connect so the light bulb can come back on. Who can you contact to help you? Write down what needs work and what methods you will use to begin accomplishing this. Be specific.

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2.) Mid-week check. List the opportunities you have had and how you responded (this is your obedience indicator). If you are still posting a doughnut, more than likely you weren't all that truthful when you asked God for chances to respond and improve. Check your heart; be authentic. Ask God to show you the way through what is blocking you from submitting in obedience.

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3.) How are you doing compared to the way you started the week? If you still need improvement, refuse to move on to the next session. Stay here, submit, and choose to be obedient no matter what it takes. Explain how you have improved, or make a commitment to continue working. When you are operating in obedience in this area of your life... turn the page and move to the next session.

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