

A LITTLE WHILE

JOHN 16:16-22





SMOOTH SEAS
DO NOT MAKE
SKILFUL SAILORS.

John 16:16-22

¹⁶ "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." ¹⁷ Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?"

John 16:16-22

¹⁸ They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying." ¹⁹ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?"

John 16:16-22

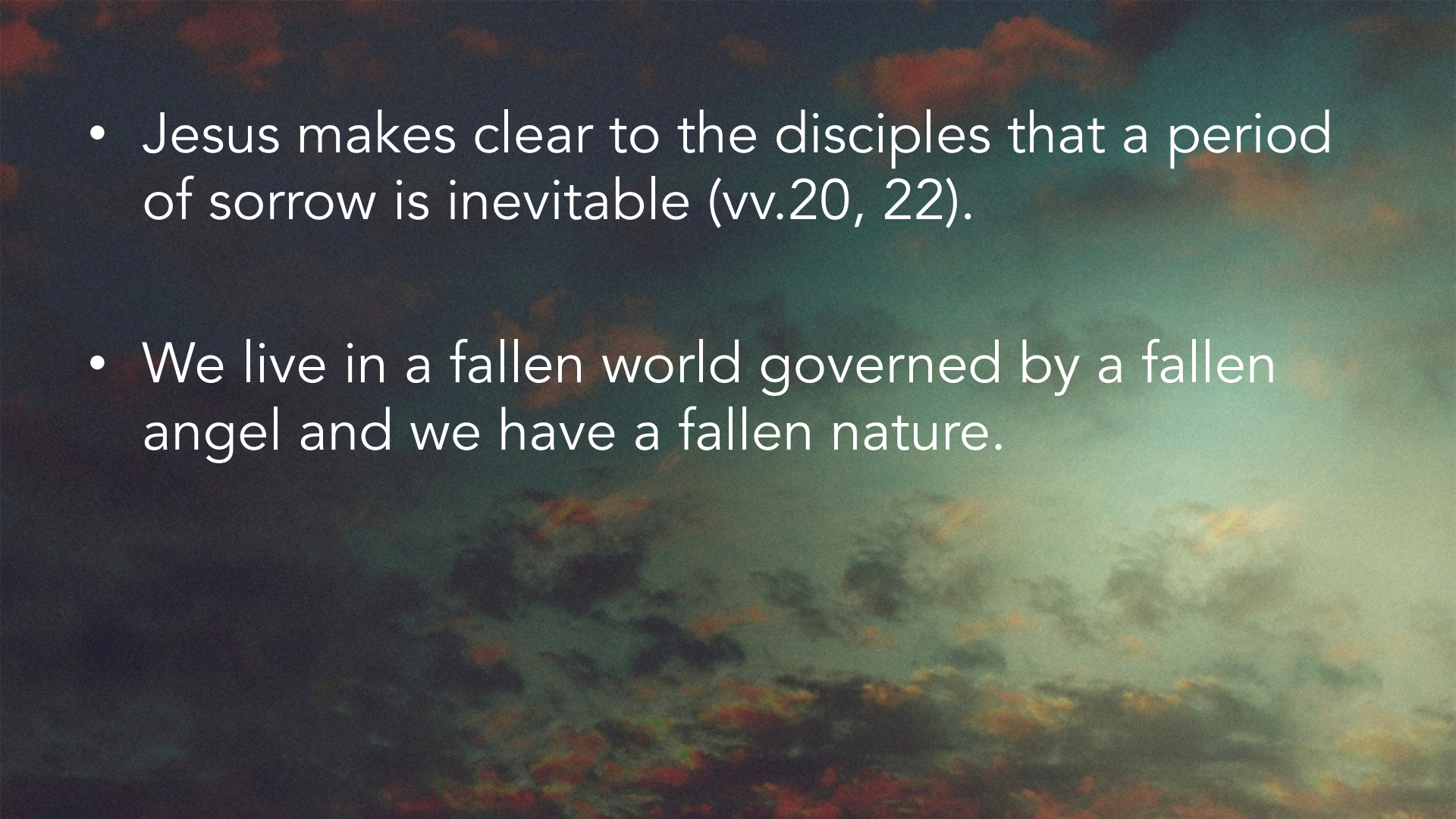
²⁰ I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. ²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. ²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

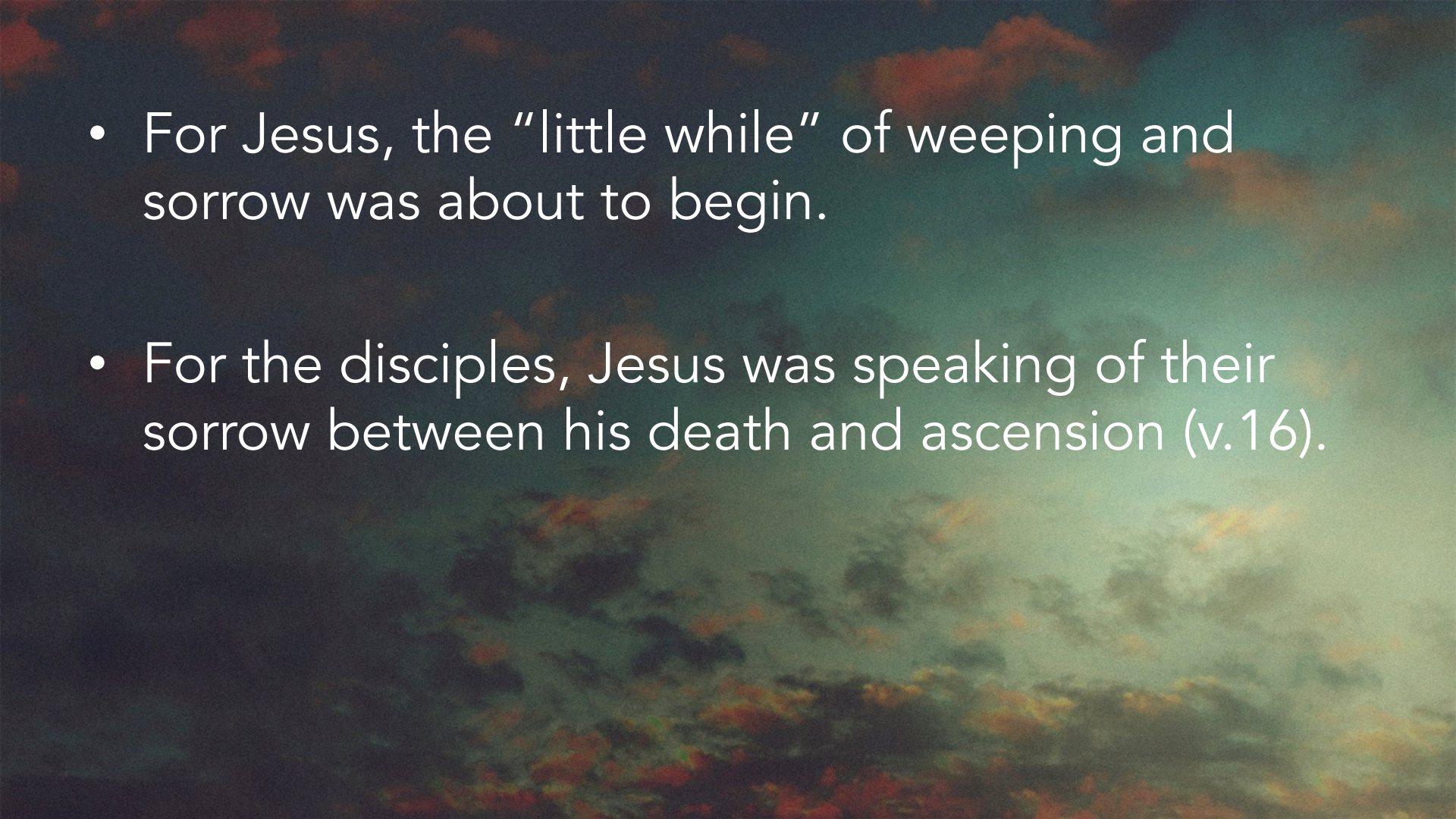


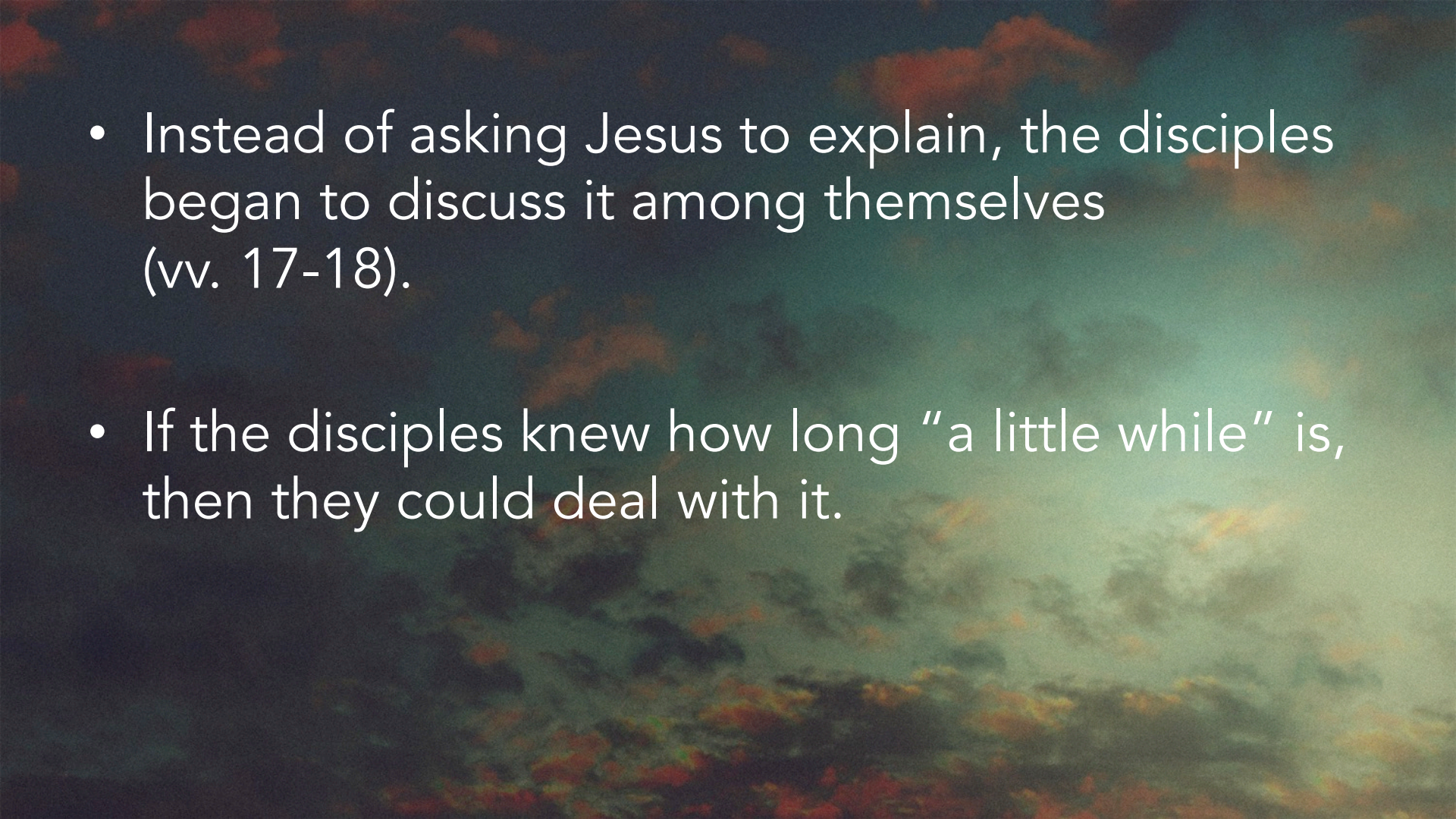
“A little while” (7X)



We will have Sorrows
in this Fallen World.

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- Jesus makes clear to the disciples that a period of sorrow is inevitable (vv.20, 22).
 - We live in a fallen world governed by a fallen angel and we have a fallen nature.

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- For Jesus, the “little while” of weeping and sorrow was about to begin.
 - For the disciples, Jesus was speaking of their sorrow between his death and ascension (v.16).

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- Instead of asking Jesus to explain, the disciples began to discuss it among themselves (vv. 17-18).
 - If the disciples knew how long “a little while” is, then they could deal with it.



The risen Christ will Turn
our Sorrows into lasting Joy.

Perspective on “A little while”

- Jesus ignores the whole matter of *time*.
- He defines this as the experience of weeping, of sorrow and pain *in comparison* to what comes after it.
- He is focused only for the inevitable *outcome* – the increase of joy.



Two Perspectives On Joy

PERSPECTIVE 1:

The world's joy - that comes from things that perish - is temporary (v.20).

Jesus says there will be a time when the disciples will be in sorrow whilst the world will be rejoicing (v.20a). But Jesus says "your sorrow will be turned into joy" (v.20b).

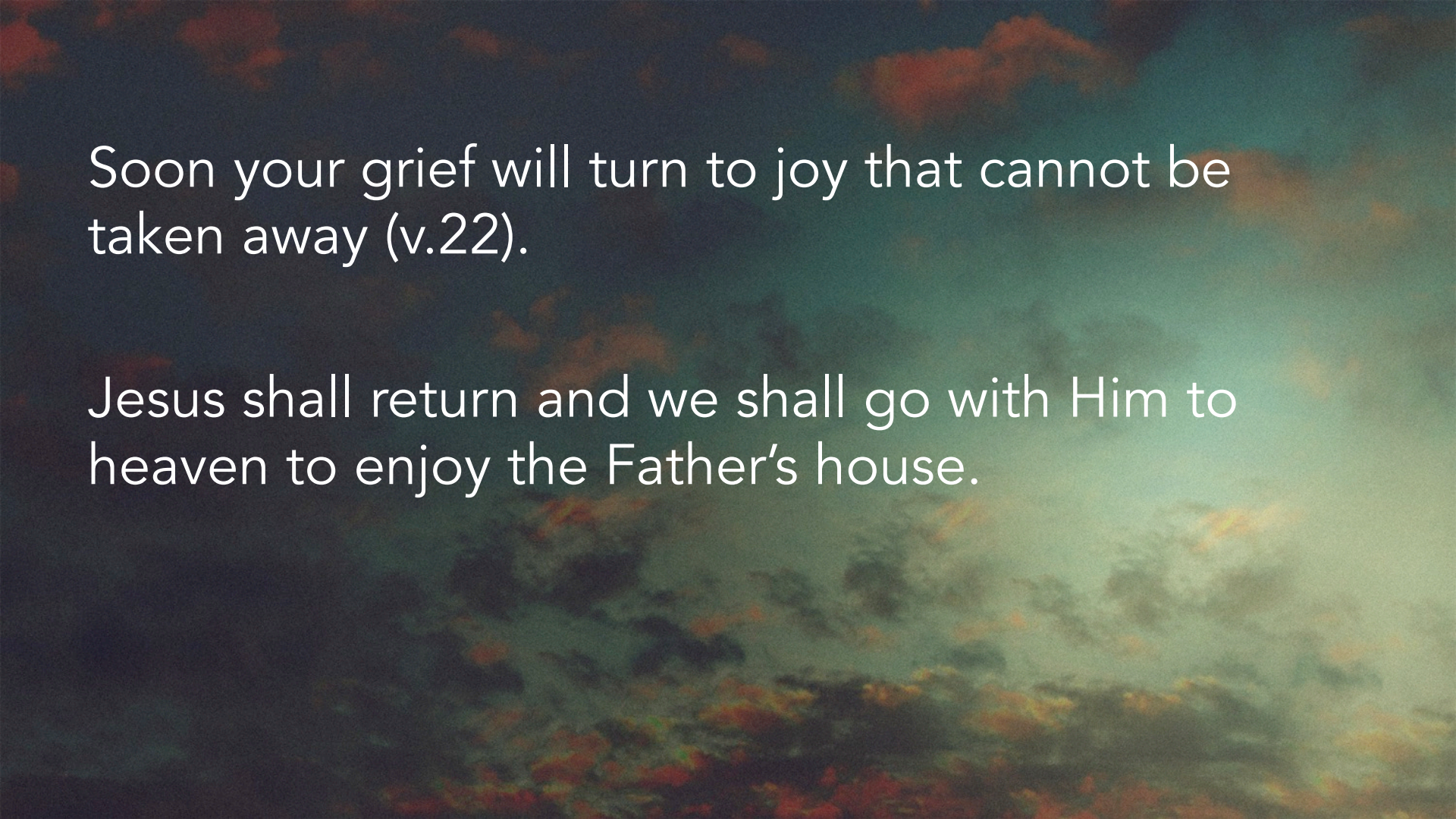
The world (v.20a) is all that is hostile to God as well as the prince of this world.

The world's joy will be turned to sorrow when those things perish and they face God in judgment.

"...Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh... Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep." Luke 6:21, 25

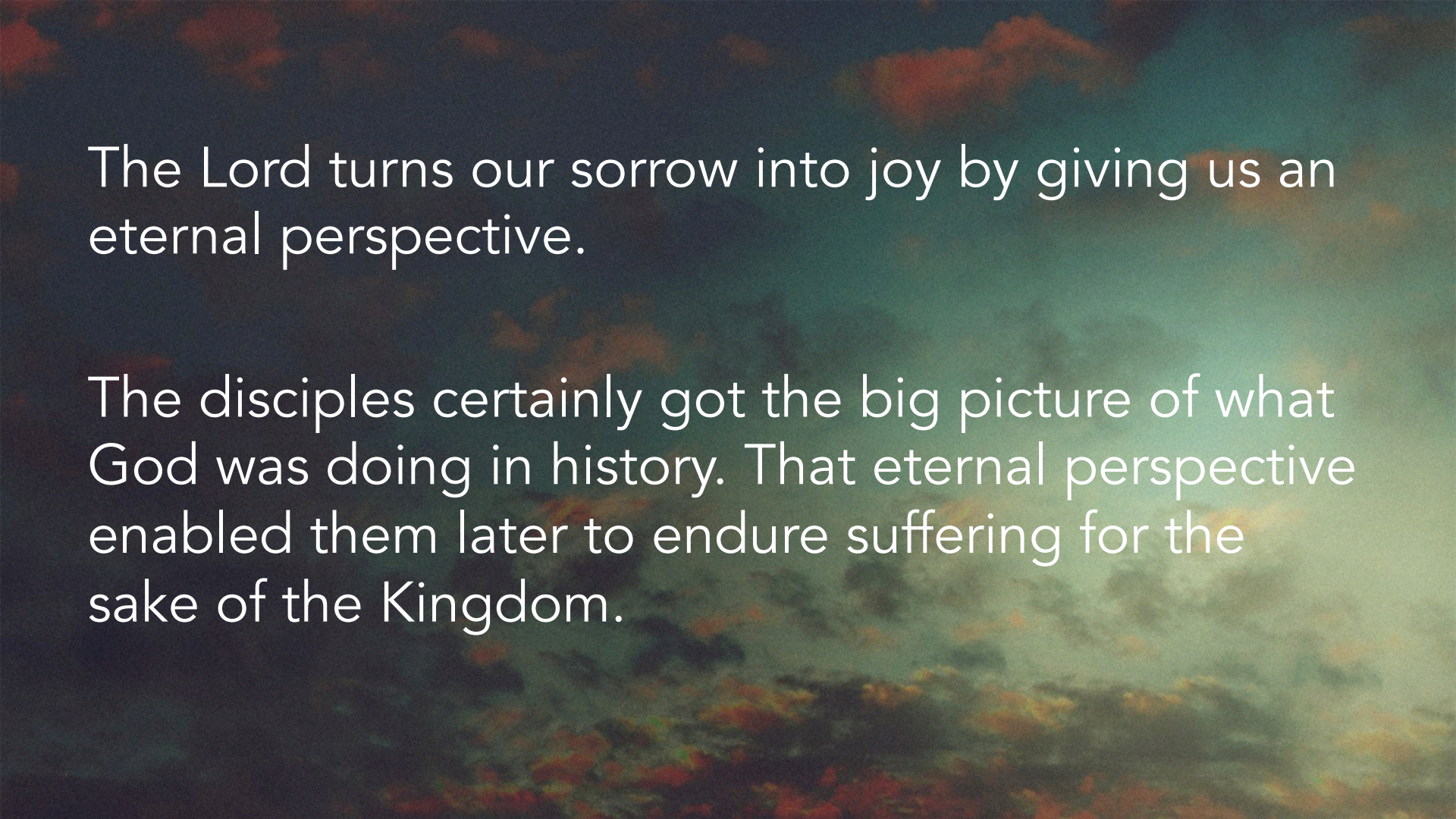
Psalm 73

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials." 1 Peter 1:3-6



Soon your grief will turn to joy that cannot be taken away (v.22).

Jesus shall return and we shall go with Him to heaven to enjoy the Father's house.



The Lord turns our sorrow into joy by giving us an eternal perspective.

The disciples certainly got the big picture of what God was doing in history. That eternal perspective enabled them later to endure suffering for the sake of the Kingdom.



In comparison to eternity, the time that the church has been awaiting the Lord's return has really been "a little while".

Life on earth is short. Be consoled that whatever difficulties you are facing, stay faithful. It will be over in a little while.

PERSPECTIVE 2:

God brings joy to our lives, not by substitution, but by transformation (vv.20, 21).

Jesus used the picture of childbirth.

Jesus did not say the mother's sorrow of birth pain was substituted by joy. Rather that the sorrow of pain was transformed into sheer joy of her new baby.



The way of substitution for solving problems is the way of immaturity.

The way of transformation is the way of faith and maturity.

“... weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.” Psalm 30:5b

The Lord turns our sorrow into joy because we grow to be like Him through the process of suffering.

It is a process. The outcome at the end of this process is becoming like Jesus.



Summary



Jesus' disciples will go from excruciating agony to inexpressible joy.

So often we face the dark night. Remember that the Holy Spirit who lives in us is our assurance of a dawn of joy, blessing and triumph.

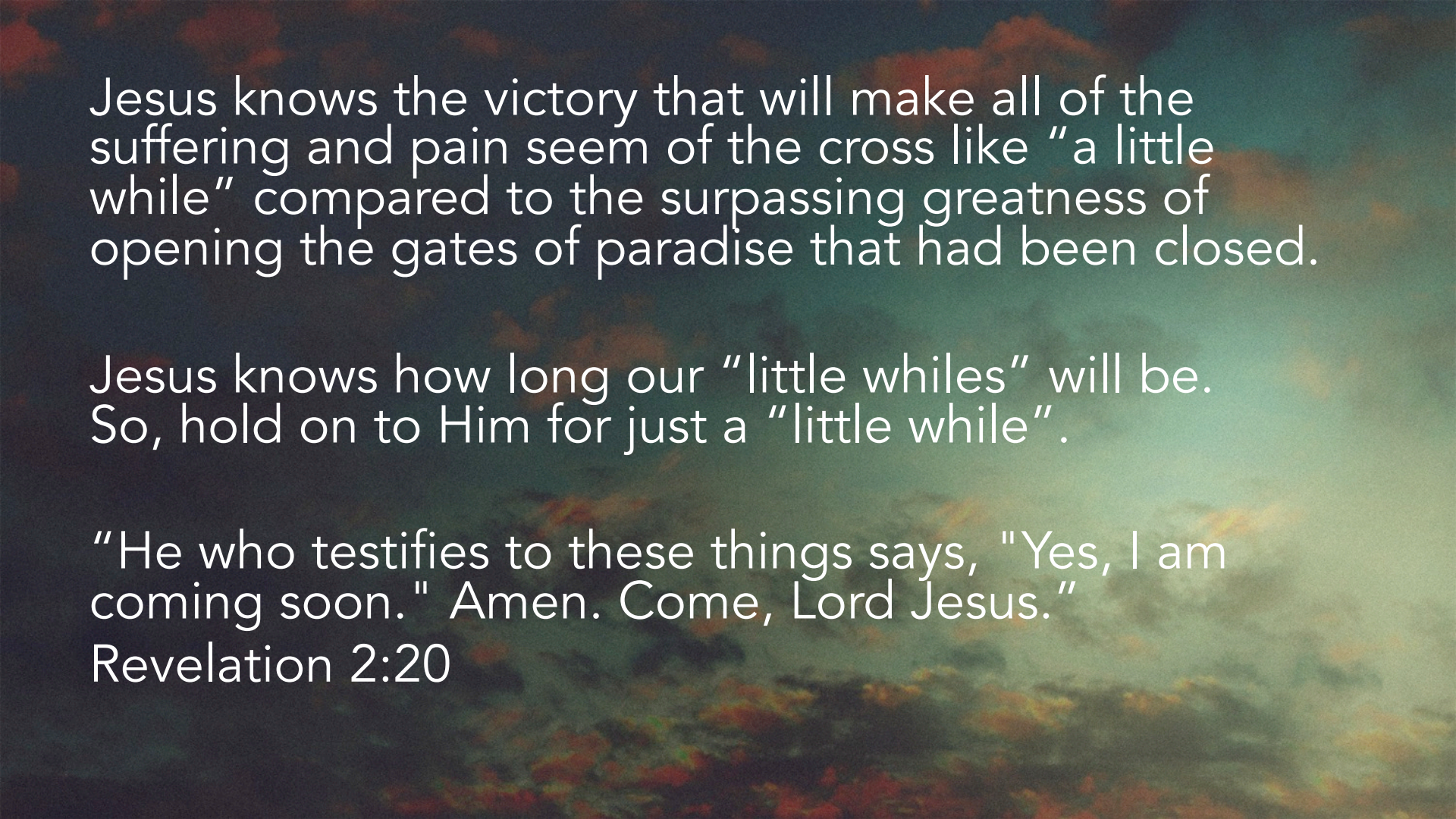
A little while is bearable when we know that the promise behind it will come true.



While we are waiting, we must deal with our trials and hurts on the basis of transformation and not substitution, if we expect to mature in the Christian life.

Develop patience based on the sure and certain hope that Christ is risen. How long is not significant; the inevitable result is the important thing.

Whatever you're going through now won't last long.



Jesus knows the victory that will make all of the suffering and pain seem of the cross like "a little while" compared to the surpassing greatness of opening the gates of paradise that had been closed.

Jesus knows how long our "little while" will be. So, hold on to Him for just a "little while".

"He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

Revelation 2:20

HOLY COMMUNION





CELL BREAKOUT TIME