

John 16:20-27 God Will Provide for the Children! May 13, 2018

Grace and peace are yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior who cares for you. Amen. God's words of strength, comfort, and love are spoken by Jesus in John 16:20-27 This is Your Word heavenly Father. Sanctify us by the truth of Your loving care. Your Word is truth!

Dear Christian Friends, especially Mothers,

It's usually easy to say "Happy Mother's Day" when families are together or can at least stay in touch with each other. But that isn't always the case. Last Friday night I watched the ABC 20/20 interview of the pilots and passengers of Southwest Flight 1380. I couldn't help but wonder what the passengers were thinking. Many said that were praying for God to save them. Others were quickly calling their spouses, children, or parents to say that they loved them in case the plane might crash. Jennifer Riordan wasn't able to call home. Her husband had to tell his two children that their mother wasn't returning. He took them to their Christian church and told them there that their mother had gone to be with Jesus. If there is an observance Mother's Day in heaven, I'm sure Jennifer Riordan is having a wonderful time! But, for the family left behind, it won't be easy. Although most family situations are not so drastic, there are many moms who are not able to be with their children today or children with their mothers. Yet, because we have Jesus as our Savior we can be certain that God is watching over our family members wherever they may be. And, despite the uncertainties in our world, there will be a time when God will reunite us.

God will provide for the children!

1. We all face a dilemma. We've haven't experienced a plane accident, but we live in a world affected by sin. Jesus spoke the words written in our verses only hours before He was to be arrested and eventually die by crucifixion. The disciples were like young children unable to grasp His situation. Jesus talked with them as like a loving parent speaking to them like he leaving on a trip and would return. He said, *"You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy."* (v.20) Jesus warned them of a dilemma, but God would care for them. Although He always keeps His promises, the disciples didn't understand and felt alone.

Perhaps some of us may feel that way today. We don't have our parents with us any longer. Even when we have loved ones nearby, busy family schedules, work, or sinful pride still may keep us apart. Any parent, no matter how old they are, remains concerned about what will happen to their children. We cannot stop tornadoes from striking or prevent all accidents. But, we can listen to God's Word and trust in Him. Jesus promised to give the Holy Spirit to help us focus on the good things that He has done for us including that we are all God's children through faith in Him.

2. God has a blessing for every problem we face in life! Whenever we are troubled about the past, present, or future, we can trust in Jesus. He told us in our verses that 1. sadness and trouble are temporary and 2. God will turn our sadness to joy. He said, *"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. 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."* (v.21-22)

Jesus told His disciples that God had a hidden blessing that would result in joy despite the pain. He gave the example of a mother's pain and yet joy in child-birth. So the disciple's deep sadness over Jesus' death would lead them to the greatest joy of His resurrection! After Christ ascended, He sent the Holy Spirit to them at Pentecost and their joy increased even more because they were certain of their future with Christ. He had died to pay for their sins and He was raised to life to be the Way for them to live forever in heaven. All parents that are concerned about their children or children about parents have the same Savior. Jesus has died for all of our sins. His rising to life assures us that, even with something as tragic as a plane accident, nothing will keep us from entering heaven with all believers. Jesus promised, *"Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned...."* (John 5:24)

The second blessing from God is that He will answer our prayers. Jesus said, *“In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.... Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”* (v.23-24) Parents far away from their children can communicate by internet, texts, or phone. God sent His Son to become one of us so that we can now speak with God directly. It’s not that we’re miles apart, but our sins had separated from God and had kept Him from listening to us. But Christ, as our Savior, by His death destroyed the barrier of sin between God and us. Paul wrote, *“We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”* (Romans 5:1-2) God is eagerly waiting to hear our prayers! As we pray, blessings will result by God’s grace and God will be praised!

Another blessing of having Christ as our Savior is that we are certain of being God’s loved children. Whether we’re in a plane or in a car or in our homes, whatever God allows to happen to us or to our families will be out of love! Like the disciples, we may not understand how trouble, sickness, pain, or death is allowed by a loving God. But in time God will encourage us with His love that goes beyond understanding. We don’t know how the immediate future will turn out. But, by God’s promises we know that God will work everything for our eternal good. When we arrive in heaven, we will fully know the love of God and understand the path He led us on to get us there!

Jesus said, *“The Father himself loves you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came from God.”* (v.27) Jesus was about to leave His disciples, but His leaving would give them direct access to God the Father. Christ is the perfect Mediator between God and us. (1 Timothy 2:5) The moment we had faith in Him we had a perfect connection with God the Father. God credits Jesus’ perfect love to us. Our faith shows itself in love to God as the Holy Spirit works that love in us.

The Lord provides for His children with a better understanding. Jesus said, *“Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father.”* (v.25) Since the time of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has guided generation after generation of people to know and believe the truth. Faith is not about our strength or wisdom. It’s about how the Holy Spirit connects us to Christ’s strength. Faith is not about having a perfect prayer life, but about being connected to Christ who prays perfectly for us before God the Father. Jesus has taught this to us in His Word. We need to daily remember it, as the disciples did, so that we can have confidence in our God.

I pray that all Christian mothers will have a safe and blessed Mother’s Day. As nice as this day may turn out, it still won’t be perfect. The temptations of the devil and the power of sin are always at work. But, God knows our needs and He knows our future! In Christ, He surrounds us with His love. He will provide for us just as He did for Jesus’ disciples. He will raise up all believers in Christ and will reunite us with Jesus in heaven! That’s where all the children of God will meet and be fully at home. We will be there praising our God for His love and wisdom that have kept us as His own children forever. Amen.