

In Times of Trouble

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John 14:1-3

Jesus' announcement in Chapter 13 that He was going away caused concern in more than just Simon Peter's mind. From His talk here in chapter 14 we must assume that several if not all the disciples were anxious as they had visions of trying to go on without Him. As is the very nature of Christ, He perceives this going on and in His eternally comforting way, He gives words here to calm, comfort and strengthen them in their faith and resolve, and prepare them for the day when He will no longer be on earth in person. Like His words about the coming of the Holy Spirit in vv. 16-18, He is building for them a basis of hope and steadfastness.

It has been almost 2,000 years now since Christ spoke the things recorded in Chapter 14. At this late date, scoffers have come and gone which have said in almost every generation, "where is the promise of His coming..." In almost every generation there have also been false prophets playing on the promise of His return for a number of selfish or demon empowered reasons and have said "He is here, or he is there..." or have even posed as Christ returned. With all this hoopla and deception, it would try the belief of any man about His imminent return. But, still today there is a multitude of believers that know His promise is true and will come to pass in due time. How do they continue generation after generation to do this? Well, we know it is operant faith that keeps the belief in this promise alive. Believers have the witness of the Spirit in them to continue to confirm in them that Jesus is coming.

This subject makes a great sermon in itself. But we want instead to contemplate today the things that make His coming so pleasing to the saints of God. We want to look behind the scenes and at the things that our Savior talked about which were recorded here. I think we can find a lot to be happy and hopeful about in His statements.

I. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me...": It Takes Trusting In Christ as God In Order to Get Comfort and Hope Out of What He Puts Before Us.

- The issue of the day was whether or not Jesus was divine.
- This issue has come back around today
- New age religion has cast Jesus as another wise man, a man on a level with

Buddah, Mohammed, Hare Krishna,

- This statement by Jesus has to be discounted by those who do not consider Him to be God the Son
- The eternal danger of this attitude about Jesus is that every mortal human's eternal destiny hinges on how they view Jesus Christ
- I don't hesitate to say that where you spend eternity depends on your attitude about Christ
- If you cannot trust Him you cannot go to heaven
- If you can trust Him you will
- But notice that He says this to His disciples. Those who we believe had entrusted their souls to him. So why is he saying this to them?
 - ◆ I believe it was because they were not sure of how things were going to turn out now that He had told them He was leaving. They had more or less been brought to the place to give up all hope of an earthly Messianic kingdom and He wanted to emphasize to them that there was something better. He was directing them to trust in Him about their eternal future and about His commitment to them.
 - ◆ Trusting an absent Christ is the true proof of the faith that saves and seals

II. "In my Father's house are many mansions...": The Expansiveness of God Has Prepared For Every One of His Children's Needs

- The disciples, like us, needed to be told and to learn that there is an abode of God that is spacious and accommodating
- The earth as it now is could not hold the expansiveness of the abode of God
- Solomon noted concerning God in I Kings 8:27: "...behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee;..."
- We can't begin to imagine the enormity of this our God
- But Jesus brings something home to us that we can comprehend: Where God dwells there are many dwelling places
- (how many are many? Enough to provide a place to live for every one of us)

III. "I go to prepare a place for you...": Christ Is Presently Making Ready For The Great Day of Homecoming each of us will experience.

- He has presented Himself as the blood sacrifice for our sins and that was His first act of preparing.
- Heaven is now ready to receive us because He, the forerunner has gone on before to prepare by first of all satisfying God's judgment against sin. Now we can come into the presence of God without facing wrath.

- Other things called preparing may be going on in heaven right now

IV. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”: He Confirms a Certain Return and Gathering of His People

- The fact of preparing us a place is a proof of His intent
- One of the most solid proofs about intent is what we call preparation - my Dad used to prepare to give me a whipping [when he gave me that scowl and pulled that belt off and that was an absolute proof that a trimming was coming my way];
 - ◆ Did you ever notice what expectant parents start doing at the house a few months before the baby comes; those parents are preparing to bring a baby home
 - ◆ Have you noticed lately that when a thunderstorm is coming, those thunderheads will start building in the southwest - the environment is preparing to deliver a rain
- Notice that Jesus is not sending a messenger or servant to get us (“I will come again and receive you unto myself..”)
- Notice that His motive is to bring us directly to Himself
 - ◆ The love of Christ for His people has caused Him to make a commitment to us
 - ▶ There’s something uniquely stated about our relationship with Christ in Hebrews 2:11 that I believe is in the mind of Christ when He considers us: “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are all of one*: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,..”
- “That where I am, there ye may be also.”: He intends that we should be where He is.
 - ◆ He intends to bring us where He is so that we may be in the place we are supposed to be.
 - ▶ With Him in the presence of God the Father
 - When Jesus ascended to heaven to present Himself after His resurrection, He sent a message by Mary to the disciples that opens a door to His compassion and purpose for us: Listen: John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto **my Father, and your Father**; and *to my God, and your God*.
- Jesus has reconciled us to God the Father

- He has gone back to heaven to prepare a place for us
- He is coming again to receive us to Himself that we may be there with him before God the Father...in favor forever

V. Conclusion: I Thess. 4:14-18