

Times of Trouble

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Robert P. Myers

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 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.

I. Do you notice that our Lord began this speech of encouragement with something that tells us about the greatness of the heart of God toward His people? “Let not your heart be troubled...” He says! Now, we could apply that to what the disciples were obviously thinking about (in the previous chapter we read that He revealed to them that He was soon to go away), and we would find a lot of things to think about. We would think about what kind of turmoil their hearts must have been in as they thought about the fact that the One who had been leading them down spiritual paths that they had never traveled before was soon to leave them standing in those paths without His physical presence. Being physical creatures (as we all are) they must have had some real moments of doubt and nervousness about this. What would they do when the Master, the superlative Teacher was gone and could not be reached in the physical realm anymore? How would they know which steps to take down that unknown path? What would it be like to suddenly be left to their own devices?

I am almost sure those kinds of thoughts put them into the troubled state they were in. The Lord spent time and words both here and in the lecture of the next two chapters giving them information to be used to combat what they were feeling and fearing. He understood that they were about to enter a very trying time, and that they would need the strengthening they could get from His encouragements and warnings. You’ll remember that there was going to be three days in which they would be completely without His presence, while He lay in that tomb. Then, they would be facing several months after His ascension before He came to them again in the Person of the Comforter. These would be very upsetting times for His disciples. So, His concern is for their spiritual and emotional well being in times of the troubles to come. This shows us the greatness of the heart of our God and Savior Jesus Christ and it shows us that He concerns Himself with our troubled hearts.

Folks, we all have troubles (**Job 14:1** Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble. **Job 5:7** Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.). But we can thank our Savior that we will not spend one minute sunk in those troubles without some source of comfort. The Holy Spirit as divine Comforter has been sent to us to represent the very presence of Christ with us. Like those disciples almost 20 centuries ago, we should be able to hear our Master's voice saying, "Let not your heart be troubled."

II. Notice what reason our Lord gave to them for why they should not be troubled, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

- Now, at first glance this looks like He is simply saying, "**I am as real as the God you believe in.**" But, while He does mean that, He is saying more. He is saying, "You believe in the **power, protection, benevolence, concern, Fatherly oversight** of God, believe in me on that same plane."
- ▶ (If we notice the following exchange of words between Him, Thomas, and Philip [vv. 5-9], we know that He is really saying, "You believe in God. I am that God.")
- ▶ I show you a photo of a one-pound gold bar sitting on your kitchen table with your spouse standing beside it with a sign that says, "this is ours." But, then I take you into your own house and there lies that gold bar, with your spouse standing beside the kitchen table holding the sign. Which is more real to you? This is what the Lord was presenting to these disciples that day.
- ▶ Jesus Christ is the all sufficient Lord (See **Isaiah 9:6**) For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called **Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**
- "You put your trust in God whom you cannot see, put your trust in me, who am right here before you."
- ▶ Just a comment here about how this applies to us. By the eye of faith, we have our Lord Jesus right here before us. "Lo, I am **with you** always...."

III. **John 14:2** In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

- He makes the connection between Himself and the God He has referred to previously ("In my Father's house....")
- He leads them beyond life's troubled seas and points to a more stable existence (my Father's house...many mansions)
- He reminds them of His open honesty and the certainty of His statements
- ▶ When they think back on His statements, they are brought to realize that

everything He has said was true or came to pass just as He predicted it would (“...if it were not so, I would have told you.”).

- ▶ Nathaniel must have remembered Jesus seeing him under the fig tree before Philip even came and told him about the Messiah (**John 1:48**)
- Peter, James, and John would have remembered that time when Jesus stood on the seashore after they had fished all night and come in empty, when He has said, (**Luke 5:4**) Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught (draught in the Greek means “a haul [of fish]). The certainly remembered the net-breaking haul they caught that day when the did what He suggested.
- Peter would have remembered Jesus telling him where and how to get that tax money (**Mat. 17:27**).
- The seventy would have remembered, true to His word, how that they had been able to heal the sick and cast out devils when He had sent them out to tell the country-side about Him (**Luke 10**).
- He connects them with the eternal and unalterable existence and security of His Father and Himself (“I go to prepare a place for you.”)

IV. **John 14:3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself;

- Notice the ingenious link He makes between His going away and the certainty of return (“...And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again...”)
- ▶ In the old temple worship in Israel, when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies, a rope was tied to his waist in order that, if he died while in there, they could drag him out, because only the High Priest was allowed in there to make atonement for the people; others going inside faced death (the High Priest was their representative). Now, folks, you can see the practical application of the use of that rope, but can you see the spiritual message it contains? It was the connection the people on the outside of the Holy of Holies had with the High Priest on the inside. Now let’s forget the idea or prospect of that High Priest dying in there, and just think about the rope attached to him. When we see it that way, in our promise from Jesus here, we have that rope!
- Notice how he makes His return a thing of intimate reunion with them (“...receive you unto myself that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”).
- ▶ When my kids were little toddlers, and I got ready to go somewhere for awhile, I would let them and Mama know that I would be back soon. So, I would go away, and when I got back home I would give Mama a big hug and kiss, and let the kids jump up in my lap and tell me about their adventures. I received them to myself! Get the picture?