

“I AM The Way, The Truth and The Life”

John 14:1-6

7.24.22

Have you experienced times when your heart was troubled? When you experienced deep emotional stress? Maybe you worked for a great boss and she is transferring to another area and you will no longer work for her. Maybe a fellow employee that makes your job more bearable is quitting. Maybe you had a best friend who told you that he is moving to another state. Maybe you experienced deep emotional stress at the loss of a pet or a loved one.

Maybe your heart is troubled right now because of a work situation or a family situation. Or maybe you are thinking about death a lot lately and your heart is troubled.

No one is immune from having an anxious or distressed or troubled heart. Jesus' disciples experienced a troubled heart. So too did Jesus as He battled the thoughts of His impending suffering and crucifixion.

That Thursday started out great. Jesus had an upper room prepared to share the Passover meal with His disciples. It was during this time that Jesus said many intimate things for it was finally just Him and the 12 disciples together. No crowds. No Pharisees.

This intimate time is covered in John chapter 13-16 cover this time. Many scholars call this section of scripture the “Upper Room Discourse.”

In the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus washed the disciples feet- a very intimate and overwhelming experience for them. While sharing the Passover meal with the disciples, He instituted the Lord's Supper.

It was also during this intimate time that Jesus said several troubling things. He told them that He was going to die. He told them that one of the disciples would betray Him. He told Peter, the leader of the 12, that he would deny Jesus three times.

Naturally the disciples were troubled by these words. If Jesus was going to die then that means He won't rise up against Roman occupation? If Jesus is going to die then He is going to leave us stranded. And one of us is going to betray Him? Peter is going to deny Jesus? What? If Peter is going to deny Jesus three times, what would the other disciples do?

The internal questioning of their own resolve and commitment to Jesus would run through their minds. They were troubled in heart and Jesus recognized it.

Jesus sees when we are troubled in mind and heart. He doesn't ignore it. Instead, He offers loving words and hope so that our hearts can rest in Him.

What did the disciples need to hear 2,000 years ago? What do we need to hear in 2022? Please turn with me to John 14:1–6 (ESV). Page 901 in the Red Bibles. “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Jesus provides four hope filled statements to lean on when our hearts become troubled. The first hope filled statement to encourage Jesus' disciples is:

Trust in God. Trust also in Me.

Verse 1, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.”

Jesus recognizes their troubled hearts and He doesn't want them to remain troubled so He commands them to stop being troubled.

Why is that important to know that Jesus commands His disciples to not be troubled? A command means there is an option to obey or disobey. For Jesus to command us to not let our hearts be troubled means **we have a choice in what we allow our hearts to experience.**

You and I do not have control over what happens in our lives. But we do have control how we will respond to those actions. Right now in this church we have three fairly new widows. They didn't dream of being a widow and yet here they are.

Some widows are so broken and refuse to take steps to work through their loss that they just give up. They stay in their homes and don't get out. I am proud of our three widows for taking steps to grieve and continue on in life. They are showing us how to move forward when we experience huge losses in life.

When we are experiencing a troubled heart, Jesus offers the solution to experiencing peace.

First, Trust in God. Trust also in Me. Commentators are not in agreement on what the mood is for two statements. Are they both indicative statements? "You trust in God." And "You trust in Me." Or are they both imperatives or commands? "Trust in God. Trust in Me." Or is the first one an indicative statement and the second an imperative or command? "You trust in God. Trust in Me." Most likely it is the last option- statement and command.

The Eleven already believe in God whom they have never seen. But their relationship with Jesus had always been visible. They believe in Him because He was right there. Jesus is going to die, rise again and then go back to Heaven. He was commanding them to keep believing in Him even though He would no longer be physically present. Trust In Me disciples. Focus on Me Disciples.

Is your heart troubled? Trust in Jesus. Focus on Him. For you are focusing on God- the God who loves you and gave His life for you. There's no greater love than to lay down your life for a friend. What a friend we have in Jesus!

The second hope filled statement to encourage Jesus' disciples is:

I will go and prepare a place for you.

Verse 2, “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?”

Jesus is not going to be a disappearing act where we don’t know where He is. He has made it clear that He is going to where His Father’s house is.

According to the Son of God, Heaven is “My Father’s house”. And Heaven is “home” for God’s children!

“Several years ago, a London newspaper held a contest to determine the best definition of “home.” The winning entry was, “**Home is the place where you are treated the best and complain the most.**”

Jesus is going to prepare a place for His disciples. A home was and is important.

Home for Abraham and Isaac and the Israelites living in the desert wasn’t a house or building. Home was a tent. A large family could have a lot of tents set up near each other.

Could you imagine living in a tent with your spouse close to the rest of your family? There were no thick walls. There was little privacy. You could hear conversations. You could hear arguments.

Think how it might be if you were not getting along? You are in close proximity with each other. You might say the situation could get quite in tents. :)

Why is Jesus leaving? The disciples would be thinking God didn’t care about them because Jesus was leaving them. But Jesus was leaving **for their benefit**. It was for their benefit because Jesus was preparing two things for them and for us.

First, He prepared the way to God by going to the cross and dying for our sins. He made a way for us to be able to be with God. We’ll discuss more about this in a bit.

Second, **He is preparing a physical space in a physical place.** Heaven is real. So is the living space we will have. Jesus is making room. Grant Osborne wrote, “Jesus imagines heaven as a huge home, telling them of the “many rooms” waiting for them, all furnished by Christ himself. The emphasis is not on the lavish nature of the rooms..but on the ample provision Christ has made. There is more than enough room to hold all the saints.”

Just to give you an idea of how much space there is in the new Jerusalem that will one day come down out of Heaven. Revelation 21 gives us its dimensions. The dimensions will blow your mind. New Jerusalem- 1,400 miles cubed. 1,400 miles from north to south, 1,400 miles from east to west and 1,400 miles high. 1,400 going west is traveling from Eastern Iowa to eastern Nevada. And going north to south is like traveling from Minnesota-Florida. And then it is also 1,400 miles upward. That is higher than weather satellites in space.

Scientist Henry Morris did some calculating regarding the New Jerusalem. He wrote, “A city that size could safely take on 20 billion inhabitants and would use only 25% of the city for housing.” Leaving the remaining 75% free of housing. The housing area could give each inhabitant a square of 75 acres. That is only the New Jerusalem.

The point of Jesus’ statement is that He will make sure there is room for you and for anyone who trusts in Jesus. Don’t let your hearts be troubled; you will not be homeless. You are thought of and Jesus is preparing an incredible place for you.

The third hope filled statement to encourage Jesus' disciples is:

I will come back for you and bring you with Me.

Verse 3, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

What hopeful words to hear from Jesus. He was not deserting the disciples. He was going away for a while to prepare their future home but He is coming back to get His disciples and take them to the place He had been preparing. He is coming back to bring His disciples to heaven.

Growing up my Grandparents lived 400 miles away. When we got a little older they would prepare their house for us- stocked with great food and activities and then would drive down, pick us up and take us back to their home at the beach. I was so excited for them to come back to get me so I could go back with them to their prepared home.

The Lord left to prepare a place. Just as sure as He left will He come back. He will come back for those who have a relationship with Him. And He will take us to be with Him forever.

Jesus will keep His word. He has to or else He is not God. For God does not lie. Do you believe this?

Jesus is preparing a place and will come back. Are you prepared for His return? Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus? Have you been made right with God the Father thanks to Jesus' sacrifice?

Child of God, are you walking in obedience so that when Jesus returns you won't feel ashamed? Are you helping others to get prepared for Christ's return? Will there be others in Heaven because of you?

The fourth hope filled statement to encourage Jesus' disciples is:

I AM the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Verse 4, "And you know the way to where I am going."

After Jesus gave them the three hope filled statements, He said "You know the way to where I am going." Have you ever been in a situation where you were unsure of what the instructions were but were afraid to ask so you just waited hoping that you would gain some clarity.

Years ago, my father-in-law worked for Mattel Toys. Don was a salesman. The salesmen and upper management did their work with pencil and paper. That is how they did their job back then. The owners wanted to transition their employees to laptop computers to get on the front end of the push in technology.

So Mattel flew all their management and sales staff to Chicago to be trained in how to use their new laptops. Picture a room full of men with very limited or no computer skills.

Mattel hired a computer specialist to teach them how to use their computers. Unwisely, they picked a man who didn't speak English very well and had a difficult accent to pick up.

Many of the guys could not understand him and they were afraid to ask for clarification. After three days of training, Don's boss who was completely confused leaned over and asked him what is "Crick the etch" and "Double cricket"? Don didn't know either so he asked the person next to him. Finally, Don received the answers from a co-worker to also pass on to his boss. Crick the etch is Click the edge and double cricket is double click it. Do you know what Don did with that brand new Toshiba laptop? It was a door stop in his office.

The disciples were in the same boat. They were unsure of the way and the location. Thankfully Thomas spoke up and asked Jesus. Verse 5, "Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" John 14:5

Thomas was a man of questions. Thomas didn't just accept things. He wanted to be sure in what he believed. It was in his disbelief that Jesus had rose again that he received the nickname doubting Thomas. But Thomas, after being personally visited by the resurrected Lord, proclaimed one of the most confident statements about Jesus anywhere in the Bible. He confidently said, "My Lord and my God."

Thanks to Thomas we get to understand clearly what Jesus was saying. Verse 6, Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

Here we see the sixth “I AM” statement in our series. Jesus said, “I AM the way.” What does it mean that Jesus is the way? Is He like someone who gives you directions when you are lost? “Go that way for 2 miles and then when you see the red barn turn left.” Or is he like a good employee when asked where to find the trail mix takes you to the item instead of telling you where it is? Or is He more than that?

He is more than that. **He IS the way. He IS the way to God.** And the way to God was made possible by His sacrifice on the cross. “But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. ⁹ And since we have been made right in God’s sight by **the blood of Christ**, he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation.” Romans 5:8–9 (NLT)

Who goes before sinful people to get thing right with God the Father? Who takes the wrath of man on Himself so that we can be reconciled to God the Father? **Jesus**. “For, There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim 2:5 (NLT)

No one else can reconcile you to God. You cannot make amends for your sins. You cannot pay someone else to carry your sins because they are sinners too. They have their own sin debt to pay. No one that came before Jesus or will come after Jesus can do what Jesus did. Therefore, “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 (ESV)

Jesus is the way. Jesus is the truth. Jesus is not like a prophet who speaks truth that is given to him or her from God. Jesus is not someone who has discovered truth over

time. Jesus is the truth. The truth is found in Him. Therefore, because He is truth, everything He says is true.

“Henry Augustus Rowland, professor of physics at Johns Hopkins University, was once called as an expert witness at a trial. During cross-examination a lawyer demanded, “What are your qualifications as an expert witness in this case?”

The normally modest and retiring professor replied quietly, “I am the greatest living expert on the subject under discussion.” Later, a friend who knew how humble Rowland usually was, expressed surprise at the professor’s uncharacteristic answer. Rowland answered, “Well, what did you expect me to do? I was under oath.” (Today in the Word)

Truth is not some idea or ideal. Truth is a person. His name is Jesus. “Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31–32 (NLT)

If you know Jesus, you are thankful that Jesus always keeps His Word. What He says, He will do. Again, what encouragement to the troubled heart.

Jesus is the way. Jesus is the truth. Jesus is the life.

The last two Sundays we looked at how Jesus is the life. He came to give life abundantly. A life of purpose here and now and eternal life to come.

But I want to emphasize another aspect of life that is in Jesus. **He is the life that regenerates the believer.** When we trust in Christ as Savior, He transforms us. “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

That means we don't have to be like we used to be. That means we can overcome the labels others may have of us. That means we have the power to say no to sin and yes to God. Real life comes through following Jesus.

To hear Jesus' claim that "No one can come to God except through Him." creates all kinds of responses. If your heart has been touched by God, it is great news. That means you can focus your attention on Jesus and not keep looking around for hope. Hope and the future God has in store for you is found in Jesus.

But those whose hearts have not been touched by Jesus yet can find that statement incredibly offensive. It is very exclusive. It denounces every other belief system as wrong. So that doesn't sit well with them.

They might accept Jesus a good man or moral teacher but God, the Only way? No way. C. S. Lewis, in his book *Mere Christianity* wrote, "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God."

C.S. Lewis popularized the argument "Liar, lunatic, or Lord" that points to Jesus being God.

The premise is this:

First, if Jesus claims to be God and yet in fact is not, he has to be a madman or a lunatic.

Second, if he is neither God nor a lunatic, he has to be a liar, deceiving others by his lie.

Third, if he is neither of these, he must be God.

Lewis wrote, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic...or else he would be

the Devil. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. . . . Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a liar: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God. (*Mere Christianity*, 55-56)

Who is Jesus? Do you accept His claim to be the way, the truth and the life to God?
Do you accept His claim to be the only way to God?

If you accept His claim to be who He says He is then **do you accept His rightful claim over your life? Over your time? Over your wallet? Over your dreams? Over your future?**

Focusing on Jesus and what He has promised and is completing should help you to say no to a troubled heart and yes to a peaceful and hopeful heart.

Let's pray

o.b.g.