

Overcoming A Troubled Heart

John 14:1-11

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Introduction: A lot has gone on for the disciples during the Passover meal. What was typically a joyful occasion had been rocked by several realizations. During the meal Jesus assumed the place of the most humble servant and washed each one of their feet. Whatever allusions they still held about being great men of honor in Christ's Kingdom were altered at that moment. In explaining it to them Jesus said...

John 13:15-16 ¹⁵ "...I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. ¹⁶ "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor *is* one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

After sitting back down Jesus revealed that one of their intimate group would actually betray Him

John 13:21 ²¹ When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me."

Before they can really even let that sink in, Jesus tells them He is going to leave them very soon and they will not be able to follow Him.

John 13:33 ³³ "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

When Peter objects saying that he is ready...right then.... to lay down his life for Him.....

John 13:38 ³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times

As these things go...this has not been a joyous celebration. It has been deeply troubling and disturbing. Everything Jesus has done has dashed their desires for greatness, human loyalty, enduring fellowship and even devotion. They sat down to eat with one set of expectations and now they are all changed. Chapter 14 continues the account of that evening. It is seldom read or discussed in this context but this is where it belongs.

John 14:1-11 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ "And you know the way where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do 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 but through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus

said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'?"¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."¹¹ "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

I want to talk about the things that trouble **our** hearts and how we should understand Jesus' command to "not allow your hearts to be troubled." Let's start with some common ground..... things that trouble us today just as they did the Disciples.

- Like the disciples we expect to be treated well by others. When we are the ones doing all the work and making all the compromises it is troubling.
- Like the twelve we are distressed by betrayal. A close friend or family member who turns on you with malice or just plain indifference. Very upsetting!
- Even more upsetting is the fact that...like Judas.....God lets them get away with it. In our day Jesus is not even here to comfort us. He has returned to heaven just like the Disciples feared He would. In the meantime the one who mistreats us again and again seems to do it without opposition. Like the Disciples we expect God to be there for us. To protect us and vindicate us...when He is absent it is very troubling.
- Perhaps the most troubling thing we face....if we are honest.....is our own besetting sins and weaknesses. As Peter discovered that night....it turns out that we are not nearly as strong as we imagine ourselves to be, even though we have believed in Jesus and tried our best. Peter put up a front. We often talk the talk, but have failed to walk the walk because we are still mere men. No amount of saying we have faith will actually make it so when the trial comes. We need help to live for God and we are troubled by our own sins and failures.

Jesus spent three and a half years with these men. They are very weak and almost unchanged by the end of this time. During their final meal, Jesus shocks them into reality. They do not really know Christ. They don't know His purpose in the world. They are following Him to greatness, but He is going to the cross. Troubling Indeed!!!

After troubling them with reality, Jesus offers them relief and hope. Your reality, as we have seen, is not all that different. So let's look at the solutions Jesus offers. Not surprisingly they begin and end with Him.

"Do not let your heart be troubled [1a]: The grammatical paraphrase of what Jesus said here is this; "Stop allowing your heart to be troubled." But does saying it make it so? Of course not. Jesus has revealed troubling things to them and opens His instructions with this command. What follows is "HOW" not to let your heart be troubled.

If you do not know this yet let me be the first to tell you. Life is troubling! The Christian life is, in some ways, even more troubling. Unbelievers just get even when mistreated or they hate them. They don't have troublesome commands from Jesus to obey....like...love one another, serve one another, forgive one another. Life is troubling!

Believe in God, believe also in Me.” [1b]: Well, you may say, we have tried that and it doesn't work. I believed in Christ! I prayed to receive Him and I believe my church's doctrinal statement, but my heart is still troubled. Here is the reason so many Christians are troubled. They think that belief is mental agreement with something. Like....”I believe the world is round,” or “ I believe in Aliens.” It may or may not be true. It is just mental assent. That is NOT “belief” in Christ. It makes no difference whatsoever if you believe that Christ exists or that the Bible is true. That is not what God calls faith that saves and it will not help with a troubled heart.

Jesus means this....”You must trust God and you must trust Me also.” Jesus has a stated purpose of revealing the mind and nature of God to men. If we want to know the realities of this life and of God's solutions for a peaceful heart we are going to have to TRUST God and Christ rather than the circumstances and people in our lives. This is precisely why so many people reject Christ. He explains and reveals God for who He truly is and they don't like it. They want God and life to be what they want it to be and Jesus does not allow for that. Jesus tells you the truth about God, your universe and your life.

John 1:18 ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

All comfort with a troubled heart is found in Christ. Total confidence in what He says provides the comfort for our troubled heart. The first step in no longer letting your heart be troubled is to decide once and for all that Jesus can be trusted with your troubled heart.

”In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.” [2]: Jesus is going home to heaven. He has repeatedly said that He came from the Father

John 8:23 ²³ And He was saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

Jesus says, The first thing you need to trust me in is this....Heaven has a ton of room for you. I have always told you the truth and you can trust me on this as well. I have been there. I have no reason to deceive you. I am going away to prepare a place for you in heaven.

This cannot be overstressed. In a troubled world full of evil, malice and hatred you must believe Christ when He says...This is not all there is for you. There is heaven and it is not crowded and there is plenty of room for you! People despair when they have no hope for the future. If you are very sick but your doctor says you will get better, you take heart. If you have lost your job but you are assured of another very soon...you are encouraged. Jesus is changing our despair over the state of life on this earth into glorious hope for the future.

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also." [3]: This is marriage terminology that would have been familiar to the disciples. The typical steps of a marriage in Jesus day were:

Betrothal: The prospective groom would take the initiative and travel to the prospective bride's home where he would negotiate and pay the price for the bride. Jesus did that for you.

1 Peter 1:18-19 ¹⁸You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.

The Marriage Covenant: After the price was paid the bride was considered set apart for the groom or sanctified. The bride and groom would drink from a cup of wine to symbolize their covenant.

2 Corinthians 11:2 ² I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

Period of Separation: The groom would return to his father's house to prepare the living quarters in the father's house for his bride. The Bride would prepare herself for married life during this time while remaining in her father's house.

The Marriage: When everything was ready the groom would come unannounced in the middle of the night to take his bride back to his father's house. Someone was sent ahead to shout out to the bride that the groom was coming at that moment.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. Or....Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled.

The Marriage Feast: When they arrived at the groom's house the marriage guests would be already assembled and a seven day long wedding celebration feast would begin.

Revelation 19:7-9 ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of The Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) ⁹ Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of The Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Jesus is comforting His disciples about His departure. It is temporary and necessary. BUT His return will be joyous and we should wait for it with eager expectation. "I will not send someone for you! You are not going to be abandoned! I will personally come again and receive you to Myself!"

NOTE: The house is incidental to Jesus' promise. The important thing is that we will be with Him. That is the promise of heaven for Christ's Bride. Even death cannot alter this promised coming. Our bodies may die and our souls return to God, but Christ will come for and resurrect His physical bride. He will gather every single believer and take them bodily and physically back to heaven for a great celebration.

"And you know the way where I am going." [4]: Jesus was not mistaken about the knowledge they had. He is setting up the central teaching here. Jesus is actually saying that they DO know the way to heaven because of everything He has shown them about Himself. The problem is they do not think they know the way.

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" [5]: Thomas speaks for the disciples. Just moments before.....

John 13:36 ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later."

Jesus just said He was leaving to return to heaven. Their concern is that they will not be able to find the way to follow. But they are still not understanding that there is nothing they have to do to get to heaven. They were seeking a physical solution to spiritual need. Jesus used real life circumstances many times to demonstrate this to them. The world can satisfy your worldly needs but only Christ can satisfy the hunger and thirst of a troubled heart for all eternity.

John 6:26-29 ²⁶ Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. ²⁷ "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal." ²⁸ Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" ²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

John 4:13-14 ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

Jesus said to him, "I am the way[6a]: The Bread that satisfies your eternal hunger is me! The Water that quenches your eternal thirst is me! The way to eternity in the Father's House IS ME! You DO know the way! You are not on your own. Your time here is temporary and so are your troubles. Trust Me and quit letting your heart be troubled!

And the truth[6b]: He is the origin or source of all truth. All that is true in the universe is so because Christ created it. He is therefore the truth. This does not mean that men do not discover this truth in science and nature. It means that that truth is there to discover only because Jesus Christ created what they found and set its fundamental laws in motion.

And the life[6c]: He is the origin or source of all life. There would be no life were it not for Christ the Eternal Son and Life Giver.

John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

No one comes to the Father but through Me. [6d]: This puts the exclamation point on the entire thought. Jesus is the only way back to God. There are no exceptions. Men will not get back to God through meditation, good works or moral character. Sincerity will not be enough to bridge this broken gap. Christ is exclusive here. You don't think you know the way, but you do....It is to entrust your eternal life into my hands and be comforted by my assurances. I will take you into the presence of God for all Eternity. This is not a formula of religious doctrine or ritual....NO! It is trust in Christ Alone!

"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." [7]: This is another big step out of the darkness. Something else to know and trust about Jesus. **To know Christ is to know God the Father.** If you see Christ you see the Father. The Disciples have not understood this. They have been living for 3.5 years with God. Eating with God. Listening to and being taught by God, but they still didn't grasp it. There are only a few hours left for Jesus to teach them. Starting now, He says, you will know that you have seen the Father.

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." [8]: Wellmaybe not. Phillip is still not getting it. The Jews knew about God. But they did not know Him. This is the revolution of Christ. By the incarnation He has brought God down to man and through the resurrection and ascension He will soon take man back to God. Philip has seen the Father, but has not grasped it. When we see Christ on the pages of Scripture we are seeing the Father. You Do Know The Way!! IT is Jesus Christ!

Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father '? [9]: This is Jesus' unwavering teaching on His own Deity. Human religion cannot bear to put Christ in this place. Most cults claim to honor the Father, but they do not see God when they look at Christ. They cannot provide a way back to God. They are not telling the truth about God or Christ and cannot therefore impart eternal life. They talk about God, but they will not exalt the Son to His place as the only way, the only truth and the only life. This is what Jesus says about Himself. If men do not believe it then they categorically DO NOT BELIEVE IN CHRIST!!

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? [10a]: "If you don't believe this then you should," is the plain intention of Jesus' words here. The Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. Illustrations fail to grasp this fully, but if you immerse a pitcher into a tub of water then the pitcher is in the water and the water is in the pitcher. This is an expression of oneness. Of complete unity of nature. They are in one another. This is true of you and me. We are, at the same time in Christ and Christ is in us.

1 Corinthians 1:30 ³⁰ It is because of him that you are **in Christ** Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Colossians 1:27 ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory.

The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. [10b]: I am not just a teacher instructing men about God. I am delivering the very Words of God to you. I am not a miracle worker with some special power from God. My works are the very works of God. It is difficult to read this any other way.

"Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. [11]: So we have come full circle from the opening verse. There is a lot to be troubled about in this world. You have troubles and very likely have or have had a troubled heart. If not, you will. Christ's solution...."Trust ME!" "Trust what I say, Trust who I am and trust what I do." Do not be confused about me and my supremacy in the World. You have a bright future and as we will see next week we have very real and powerful help here on the earth.

CONCLUSION: All pretense and allusion are set aside here. There are just hours left for them to understand who it is they have been following, watching, listening to and even loving.

This troubled world with its broken people and relationships is not going to disappear. This is where we live. Jesus will soon tell His disciples not to expect anything else from this world. You should not either.

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Peter soon figured this out as well and addressed his first epistle to Aliens and Strangers.

1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world,

The solution is to hang on every word of Christ. To believe that the things that trouble us are the human condition. We should not expect to live in the bridal suite until the Groom comes for us. For now we are trusting in Christ. We are trusting that He absolutely loves us and like that bridegroom of long ago is even now preparing a place where we will live with Him in heaven. This world is not your home. These trials are not permanent. We do not need to find our own way to heaven. The awesome creator of all things has found it for us and will guarantee our arrival there. He is the God of Creation who became a human man. This truth is the very heart of the Gospel. It cannot be minimized. Christ must and will be exalted to the highest place. May God help you... while you wait to.....

Philippians 2:5-11 ⁵Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.