

Relief and Rest for the Troubled Heart

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[0 : 00] Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me.

! 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? 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.

And you know the way to where I am going. Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth.

And the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? The disciples were having a really bad day.

Jesus had just revealed to them that Judas would betray him. Peter would deny him. And he himself would soon lead to go to a place where they were not able to come.

[1 : 39] And so the stability of this little group, the stability that this little group had known in this moment appeared to be unraveling.

One of them was a traitor. One of them was a traitor. The most courageous of them would act cowardly. And Jesus would soon be gone.

This ministry that they had left everything behind to devote themselves to appeared to be headed for a catastrophic end.

This was a lot to take in. And it was happening all at once. Their minds were spinning. Their hearts were sinking.

And their faith was shaken. Have you ever experienced something like that? I know I have. And I'm pretty sure that you have too.

[2 : 37] And you know what? That may even describe you today. Right now. We've all been there. We've all been troubled.

But did you know that Jesus was troubled too? In John 12, 27 and in 13, 21, Jesus said that he was deeply troubled in both his heart and in his spirit.

He was troubled because he knew that his hour had come. That he would be arrested. He'd be slapped. He'd be spit on. He would be stripped. He would be tortured. He would be mocked.

He would be humiliated. He would be crucified and forsaken by his father. Certainly, the trouble that he was facing was greater than any trouble his disciples were experiencing or any trouble that you and I will ever know.

And yet, here we see Jesus, as troubled as he was, taking notice of his disciples. Seeing their troubled expressions and comforting them.

[3 : 52] Don't you love Jesus? He doesn't say something like, you know, you guys think that you have it bad? What about me?

The trouble you're experiencing is nothing compared to the trouble that I've faced. It's nothing compared to the trouble that I'll soon endure. Jesus doesn't make light of their trouble.

He doesn't belittle them for it. Because you know what? That approach doesn't really help someone who is troubled, does it? And so, if you're troubled this morning, know that like the disciples, then Jesus sees you.

He sees you. He knows what's troubling you. And he doesn't belittle it. And he doesn't make light of it compared to what he suffered.

He wants to comfort you. Let's pray. Lord, we come to your word now and ask that through it, you would wrap your comforting arms around us.

[5 : 03] That we would know and be reminded that you comfort the troubled. You heal broken hearts. You bear our burdens. You pull us up when we are drowning in despair.

You nourish us when we are hungry. You clear up our confusion. You forgive our sin. You clothe us in your righteousness. You give us peace which surpasses understanding.

You shepherd us to greener pastures. You restore our souls. When we feel threatened by death's shadow, you remind us of your presence. And your faithfulness.

And your goodness. And your graciousness. And your never-ending love. Heavenly Father, comfort your people. Wash us in your word.

Strengthen us by your spirit. Prepare us for your kingdom. Make us like you. Amen. Amen. And so in this passage, Jesus gives two commands to comfort those who are troubled.

[6 : 04] And both of them come from verse 1. He begins by saying to his disciples, let not your hearts be troubled.

So the first command that we see here from our Lord is this, that Jesus does not want you to be troubled. Jesus does not want you to be troubled.

And so in a very real sense, Jesus looks at the expressions of his disciples. He sees their gloomy faces. He sees their shattered dispositions.

And he says, stop it. Stop it. He knows this isn't the end. He's got some wonderful things that he is going to tell them in this meeting, this last meeting that he has with them before they go to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Some things to comfort them with. But before he can reveal those things to them, they need to be ready to listen. They can't stay in this troubled state of mind.

[7 : 08] Or they won't hear the comforting things that he has to say to them next. The great things he has to share. And so he says, in effect, right here, snap out of it.

Stop it. Stop it. Stop it. Stop it. But before I continue, please understand that being troubled is not a sin. Being troubled is not a sin.

Because again, as I've already mentioned, Jesus was troubled. In John 12, 27, Jesus says, now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. And then in John 13, 21, where we've been very recently. After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit and testified, truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.

Jesus was troubled. And so being troubled isn't a sin. But it's when you don't snap out of it. It's when you allow trouble to become worry.

[8 : 16] And worry to become anxiety. And anxiety to become despair. And despair to become doubt in God's providence and in God's provision that you sin. Jesus was troubled.

But he didn't allow that trouble to overtake him. He didn't allow that trouble to cripple him into inaction. He was troubled, but he pressed on.

And he pressed on towards the cross. He saw through the trouble. He saw what was beyond the trouble. He trusted in his Father's will. When you allow trouble to overtake you and you become trapped in a troubled state of mind, imagining that the worst that can happen will happen, aren't you in that frame of mind acting as if there is no hope?

Aren't you acting as if the one who said that he's overcome the world hasn't really? Aren't you acting as if God's word isn't true? Doesn't a troubled state of mind suggest that you aren't truly seeking his kingdom, but you're trying to maintain and hold on to your own?

Holding on to a world that will one day perish in flames? See, Jesus has a plan and a purpose for your life. And a troubled state of mind will distract you from it.

[9 : 44] He preached about this very thing in many different places, but primarily we see it in the Sermon on the Mount, talking about worry, talking about trouble, talking about anxiety.

He begins in John 6, 25, that portion of his message about worry by saying, therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.

Is not life more than the food and the body more than clothing? And then from there he goes on to tell the crowd, look at what God, look at creation, look how much God loves and cares for his creation.

And they're not worried. And you are made in his image. So why are you worried? And then he says in verse 33 through 34, but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own troubles. In other words there, like he says here, snap out of it.

[10 : 50] Have faith. Don't waste your life sputtering and spinning your wheels and worry about troubles as if you could do something about them in some way that could lengthen your life.

There will always be trouble. There will always be trouble in this world, Jesus says. And worry does not add to your life. In fact, it wastes it. So don't waste your life in worry.

Don't waste your time in despair. You have hope. So snap out of it, brother. Snap out of it, sister. Don't let your heart be troubled.

You have Jesus. And in him, you have all that you will ever need. Do you believe that? Do you believe that?

Jesus wants you to. Because look at his second command in the rest of verse 1. Let not your hearts be troubled. Then he says, believe in God. Believe also in me. And so there we see that Jesus wants you to believe in him.

[11 : 54] He doesn't want you to be troubled. Instead, what he wants is for you to believe in him. And he talks about how God exists.

Only a fool would believe that something can come from nothing. And that nothing created everything. It takes more faith to believe there is no God than to believe that there is.

But sinful humanity is so desperate to escape God's judgment that they think that they can cancel God. They can't.

Jesus says here that God exists. That's a fact. And then he says, I am the factual representation of him. If you want to know what God is like, all you have to do is look to me.

Isn't that what we see all over scripture, especially in Colossians 1, 15 through 20 about Jesus? He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.

[12 : 59] Whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church.

He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

So to keep yourself from worry, to keep yourself out of a troubled state of mind, you must believe in the truth that there is a God who has been fully revealed through Jesus Christ, his only son.

And then Jesus proceeds to comfort his disciples by giving them promises to believe in. Look at verse 2. He says, 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? So Jesus wants you to believe in him. He wants you to trust in him. And here we see that he wants you to trust in his preparation.

[14 : 14] He wants you to believe in him. He wants you to trust in him. Right here he wants you to trust in his preparation. And so he describes heaven as a large house with many rooms.

The idea is of a family dwelling with lots of space. This is a metaphor. In other places, heaven is described as a country, a kingdom, and a city.

Here Jesus pictures heaven as a house to illustrate an important truth. I had a lady many years ago up in Kansas who knew that her time was coming, that she would soon pass on from this life to the next.

And she wanted me to read this passage of Scripture at her funeral, John 14, 1 through 6. But she had a stipulation. You know what it was? Some of you might. I had to read it out of the King James Version because she didn't want her mansion to be downgraded to a room.

But the emphasis here, you must understand, is not so much about the lavishness of these places but the ample space, the ample provision that has been prepared for everyone who believes in Jesus and will one day join him there.

[15 : 38] There are no trundle beds in heaven. There are no pull-out couches in heaven. There are no unexpected guests in heaven.

If God has saved you, trust and know that he has a place for you. And one day, you will join him there with the church in this great sort of family reunion reunion with Christ in heaven in glory forever.

I had a family reunion of sorts a couple of weeks ago when I went up to Kansas City for my class. My parents don't live far from the school.

And so when I go up there, that's where I stay. I stay with my parents in the house that I grew up in. And every time I go, they always have a place prepared for me.

They are prepared for my arrival. They are prepared for my stay. When I wake up in the morning and leave for class, I come back and food is ready and my bed is made. They delight in taking care of me when I'm there.

[16:50] Because when I go home, I'm not a guest in my parents' house. I'm their son. I'm their child.

When God saves you, you become his child. And he has a place prepared for you. And it's not as a guest, but as a permanent resident in his house, in his kingdom forever.

But you know, as great as all of that is, and it is, it wouldn't be possible without Christ's preparation. So the focus really here of our trust isn't so much in a place, but in a person.

That person who prepared the way, who secured the place. Because you know, a lot of people believe in heaven. A lot of people believe that there is an afterlife.

But that doesn't save anyone. It's trusting in Jesus. It's trusting in what Jesus was prepared to do.

[18:08] It was the cross that prepared the way. On the cross, Jesus died for your sins. And without shedding his blood, there would be no forgiveness of your sins.

And Jesus was troubled, knowing that he would be crushed by the wrath of his father. But he proceeded to make that preparation, knowing what it would accomplish in the end.

He didn't allow trouble to prevent him from following through with God's will. Again, he saw through it. Knowing what came after it.

And so you may be troubled. But Christ has made a way to set you free from that trouble. And that trouble will not follow you to that place that he has prepared for you.

Like Jesus, see through the trouble. Knowing that on the other side of it, there is hope. He wants you to trust in that. He also wants you to trust in a hopeful future.

[19:20] A hopeful future. Look again at verse 3. Jesus says, And if I go and I prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

And so if you record up to this point, Jesus had told the disciples that he was going to a place that they could not come. In John 13, 33, Our Lord says to them, Little children, yet a little while I am with you.

You will seek me, just as I said to the Jews. So now I also to say to you, Where I am going, you cannot come. And then in John 13, 36, Simon Peter said to him, Lord, where are you going?

And Jesus answered him, Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward. Jesus told his disciples that he was going to a place they could not come.

But after he goes to that place, they will be able to then follow him to the place where he is going. What was that place?

[20:35] Well, it's the cross. If the disciples died on the cross, it wouldn't have accomplished anything as far as our salvation goes. They could not go there with the Lord.

The sinless Son of God was the only one who could go, who could atone for our sins. But once he has gone to that place, he makes a way for us to go to another place.

The cross upon which Jesus died paved the way to our heavenly home. Jesus will go to the cross. He'll prepare the way for the place.

But then he says he will come again. So what's he talking about now? Well, in part, he's talking about his resurrection.

He'll go to the cross. He'll die. He'll be dead for three days. And then on the third day, he will come back to life. But then we know that after he comes back to life, he'll appear to his disciples and to hundreds of others before he gives them the command, the great commission, to go and make disciples, to spread the gospel.

[21:40] And then he goes and ascends back into heaven. So here Jesus is talking primarily about not his resurrection or not his ascension, but his return.

When he comes back, when he takes his church out of this world and goes back up to heaven with them, something Scripture describes.

Look at 1 Thessalonians 4, 16 through 18. 1 Corinthians 15, 51.

1 through 58 shed light on this as well. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable.

[23 : 13] And this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

Oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law. But, thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now listen to this. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain.

And so the encouragement, the comfort here for troubled hearts who have trusted in Jesus Christ is this, you always have reason to be hopeful.

You always have reason to be hopeful. Your present trouble will one day come to an end. And so you, trusting that these things aren't just wishful thinking, but will come to pass, should not choose to remain in a troubled state because you have these promises that are from God, that your sins have been atoned for.

[24 : 48] The way has been made. Death is defeated by Christ, your Savior. You are His and nothing can change that. No matter the trouble that you are facing, it won't always be this way for you.

You have a future to look forward to. So be steadfast, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that it will be worth it when you see your conquering king in the sky descending for you.

Then it will be time to go home. Then it will be time to go be with our Savior who has made a place for you.

He will not abandon you in your trouble, but will take you out of it permanently. One day and forever. So until then, snap out of it.

Press on. rejoice in the certain future that you have because of your Savior who has prepared a place for you in your heavenly home.

[26 : 05] And this is all good, isn't it? But then in verse 5, as Jesus is sharing these things, as He's comforting His disciples with these promises, a hand slowly goes up in the back of the room.

You know whose hand that is? It's Thomas. Thomas always has questions. Thomas said to Him, Lord, we don't know where You're going.

How can we know the way? And you know, we tend to give Thomas a hard time, but I appreciate Thomas. And I'm thankful for his questions because his question prompted this amazing answer that we'll soon see that Jesus gives.

And notice too that Jesus is not annoyed by Thomas, is He? And don't you love that as well? Jesus allows His disciples to ask Him questions.

And in so doing, He's modeling discipleship for us. There needs to be room for questions to be asked in the church. Now listen to what Jesus answers in reply in verse 6.

[27 : 22] Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes through the Father except through Me. And so Jesus wants you to believe in Him.

He wants you to trust in Him. He wants you to trust in the certain future that you have. Here He points out that He wants you to trust in Him alone.

Jesus wants you to trust in Him alone. Why? Because as He said, Jesus is the way precisely because He is the truth, because He is the life of God.

Jesus is the truth because He embodies the supreme revelation of God. He is God in the flesh. Again, you want to know what God is like? Look to Jesus, His Son, who has perfectly revealed Him. Jesus is the life, the one who has life in Himself, as He said in John 5, 26, and the resurrection and the life, as He said in John 11, 25. Only because He is the truth and the life can Jesus be the way for anyone to come to God, the way for His disciples to attain the many dwelling places that are in the Father's house and therefore the answer to Thomas' question.

[28 : 42] Jesus hasn't just made a way. Jesus is the way and He is the only way. You see, the Father's house is large and the Father's house has many rooms but it only has one door.

There is no back door. There is no side door. There is no garage door. There is no secret passageway. There's one door and Jesus is that door. Jesus is that way. You enter through Christ and you enter through Christ alone. Entrance through this door cannot be purchased by your good deeds. Entrance through this door cannot be purchased by your perfect church attendance. It can be only entered through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone. Believing in faith, by faith, in who He is and in what He has done on the cross for you rising again three days later.

[29 : 55] There's only one door and that door is narrow. as Jesus said in Matthew 7, 13 through 14. Enter by the narrow gate for the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction and those who enter by it are many for the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life and those who find it are few.

There's one door and that one door is narrow in that it is precise. It's a precise door. It's a door that opens only by Christ by salvation and grace alone through Jesus Christ alone. It's a call for knowledge of the truth, repentance of sin, submission to Christ as Lord and willingness to obey His word.

It's Christ and it's nothing else. That's how precise this door is and He wants you to come to it. He wants you to enter through it. He wants you to believe in Him as the only way.

There's only one door but there are many rooms. Have you come to Christ? Have you believed in Him?

[31 : 23] Do you know that He died for your sins? Do you have faith that He rose again on the third day? If you do then rejoice.

Rejoice. You have a place. If not, I plead with you to come while you still can.

I don't plead with you. God pleads with you through His word. He says, believe in me. Trust in me. Enter through the door by faith alone in me and in what I have done for you.

So now that we've gone through all six of these verses, what does God want us to do with them? What is the desired response of God for you?

What does Jesus want you to know? Well, I think it's this and it's the main idea. Troubled hearts find relief and rest in Jesus Christ.

[32 : 29] Troubled hearts find relief and rest in Jesus Christ. So again, maybe you're in a place right now that you don't want to be in and you feel stuck in a place of perpetual trouble.

What should you do? Well, listen to Jesus. He says, snap out of it. Don't let your heart be troubled. Instead, believe.

Believe in God. Believe in me. He says, I've gone to the cross. I've given my life to atone for yours. I've made the preparation.

I have the place prepared and I'm coming back at the end of his time with his disciples before they left the upper room to go into the garden of Gethsemane where he would, again, soon be rested and then later crucified.

Jesus said this to them and he says it to us today. John 16, 33. I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace.

[33 : 42] In the world you will have tribulation. In the world you will have trouble. But, take heart, I have overcome the world.

So you see, your trouble will not last forever. All trouble will one day end. And so for now focus on Christ.

For now you believe in him though it may be hard to. You continue to walk by faith not by sight. But you've got a lot to have faith in, don't you? You trust in who he is.

You trust in what he's done. You trust in what he will one day do. You keep your eyes focused on Christ the prize. And you press on. And he promises that if you do it will be worth it.

Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in Jesus. So three application questions as we come to a close. For you to discuss tonight in your community groups or later on today or sometime this week just you alone with God and thought and reflection and prayer.

[34 : 58] First of all what things are troubling you today? Just identify them. What are the things that are troubling you today? And then second having identified those things why doesn't Jesus want your heart to be troubled?

what are the remedies that he provides in this text to comfort us during troubled times? What are the remedies he provides in this text to comfort us during troubling times?

And then thirdly read Proverbs 3, 5, and 6 read Psalm 91, 1 through 6 read Philippians 4, 4 through 8 what comforts you about these passages?

What comforts you about these passages? And then what action do they encourage those with troubled hearts to take? And then I encourage you to think about some other scriptures that God has used in the past to comfort you and to be reminded of those things and to share those things with your group tonight.

Here's the invitation today. Philippians 4, one of those verses 4 through 8. Rejoice in the Lord always.

[36 : 22] Again, I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

And so this is the invitation that I extend to you. I'll pray and then our praise team will come up. Do not leave this place choosing to remain in a troubled state of mind.

Instead, whether it's in your pew or while you're standing when you're singing or right up here if you would like to or come and find me, whatever the case may be, don't be troubled. Bring that burden to the Lord.

He wants to take it from you. He has a plan and purpose for your life. Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in Jesus. Let's pray.

God, what a great comfort it is just to know that we can pray to you. Just to know that we can come to you and you're not too busy and as important as you are, you don't express to us that you are too important for us and for our prayers and to listen to our concerns.

[37 : 40] And to act on our behalf. What a wonderful God you are. And so Lord, right now we come to you. We've heard your words. We know what it is that you desire.

That we not have troubled hearts, but that we believe in you. God, so often though when we are troubled we hold on to those troubles.

And we become worried and anxious and fearful and despairing and when that happens, Lord, we take our eyes off of you and we drown and we don't let our light shine and we are not successful in making disciples and loving people as you've called us to.

Lord, you know each and every person in this room. You know each and every person who is listening to this service. God, I pray that you would remind them and that you would encourage them right now to bring that trouble to you and to leave it and to press on as you pressed on for us, knowing that in the end you have a place prepared for us, that whatever trouble we experience right now, when we get to that place, it will soon be forgotten and we'll be so thankful.

We're thankful now to know, Lord, that that place is there. In the meanwhile, Lord, use your people to accomplish your way. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.