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Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

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John 14:1-14



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Good morning, Providence. Special morning to get it celebrated, Bob. Just to put perspective on Bob, most pastors out of church only stay for three years and so it's amazing to have Bob stay here at Providence for 20 years. Almost 20 years he served. Bob, that's a challenge for me. I hope that I get to stay and serve at Providence for that long.

Five years now, hopefully I'll get there. Thank you for your faithfulness. We're going to be in the gospel of John this morning. The gospel of John chapter 14. We've been marching through the gospel of John. We're going through our series fully alive because John tells us later on his book what the whole book of John is about and it's that you would know that Jesus Christ is the son of God and through knowing that he's a son of God, you believe and have abundant life and so we've caught it fully alive.

We're going to be in the gospel of John chapter 14 and let me just give you the context before we dive in to chapter 14 because chapter 13 and 14, they're all linked together and Jesus has been having a meal with his disciples. He's been eating with them and honestly laying a lot of heavy things on his disciples. I mean, imagine having a dinner and Jesus is saying this.

He says, "Hey, I'm going to depart. I'm going to leave here. I'm going to leave you guys, just so you know. When I leave, don't worry. You're going to forsake me or betray me and so let's eat now." I mean, that's the heaviness of this situation. That's the heaviness of this picture that we see here is that Jesus is looking at these men and he's saying, "You're going to forsake me or betray me and I'm leaving."

That's a heavy, heavy spot to be in. Here we start in verse 1 of chapter 14 and this is what Jesus says in spite of leading up to this, all this heaviness that he says. He starts in verse 1 and he says, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me." Verse 1 is key to everything else that Jesus is going to say. Let me read it again. Don't miss it. "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 have I told you that I go and prepare a place for you?"

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself that where I am you maybe also. You know the way to where I'm going." Thomas says to him, "Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?" Jesus says to him, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my father also." From now on, you do know him and you have seen him.

Phillip, another one of the disciples said to Jesus, "Show us the father and it's enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long and you still do not know me, Phillip? Whoever has seen me has seen the father. How can you say show us the father? Do you not believe that I am in the father and the father is in me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority but the father who dwells in me does his works."

“Believe me that I am in the father and the father is in me or else believe on the account of the works themselves. Truly, truly I say to you whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. In greater works than these will he do because I am going to the father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do that the father maybe glorified and the son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” Let’s pray.

Take a moment right now to just pray silently and ask that God would speak to you through his words this morning. Take a moment just to pray for me that I would communicate God’s beautiful word and glorious gospel clearly this morning. Lord, you are great and greatly to be praised. Lord, thank you that through this text, you speak to our troubled hearts that in the midst of heaviness or things that we have heard this week, Lord, you desire to comfort our hearts and give us peace. This morning, Lord, give us understanding to this text, help us to apply it to our lives so that we would live differently because of your great, grace. In Christ’s name we pray, amen.

Now, as I read this text and as a study in this week, the theological nerd within me would love to settle on several issues in this text. There’s a lot that we could talk about in this text, but just for clarity and just for the time that we have, I really want to zone in on one thing that I think Jesus is showing us in this passage and it’s this, that Jesus is the way to find lasting peace for troubled hearts. Jesus is the way to find lasting peace for troubled hearts.

If you don’t get anything else, that’s what I want you to walk away with that it is through Jesus and Jesus alone that we can find not just comfort, but peace that is ever lasting. I don’t know where you are, what happened this week, but most of us in this room are settling with troubled hearts. We sit here and there’s a lot of things racing through our minds whether it be family related or work related or relationship. All these things are maybe wrestling within our hearts, this heaviness.

I mean even for me, as I’m reading through this text, and studying and prepping for this text, my heart is a little troubled because I read at the end where it says, “Ask anything in my name and I will do it.” The reason why I’m a little troubled about that is because we’ve been teaching my daughter how to pray. She’s four years old and the first thing we taught her is just to be thankful. She was thanking God, thanking God for her mother, and thanking God for her stuffed animals, thanking God for her brother. I really tried to push her and encourage her to ask God for something.

She’s praying and she does her normal, “Thank you for mom, and thank you for my stuffed animals. Jesus, please give me a puppy.” I’m like, “Okay. I’m a little troubled because he says here anything you ask in my name, I’ll do. I’m like, “Oh, no.” I’m a little concerned. For you guys, you might not be troubled about a puppy, you might not be troubled about much in your life, but there’s something that’s probably troubling your heart. I mean what is it that wakes you up at night?

What is it that runs through your mind throughout the day? What is it that's troubling your hearts because Jesus desires to speak to that today? He desires to encourage you today. The first thing I want us to see from this text is that let not your hearts be troubled because Jesus is the piece for our future. Jesus is the piece for our future. Those are huge because most of the stuff that we worry about, most of the stuff that brings us anxiety, in stress are things that are in the future?

We're thinking about, "Where am I going to work? Where am I going to live? How am I going to retire? What does retirement look like?" All of those are locations along the way, but what we find here in this text is that Jesus sets before us the ending point, the destination. Yes, all those locations are important but as long as we know the destination, it gives us hope all throughout and that's what Jesus does here.

In verse 2, he says, "I'm going to prepare a place for you. I'm going to prepare a place for you." He starts to describe it just a little bit. He talks about it's a place of many rooms or maybe your bible says many mansions. There's been ink spelt over this where it's like, "Okay. What exactly is he talking about here? What does this room look like? What does this mansion look like? Is it a five-car mansion? Has it got the columns on the front? What is this?"

I think if we were in this moment and we asked Jesus to describe a little bit more because he does, Jesus talks more about a person than he does about the place. Jesus talks more about the person than about the place because heaven is more about the person of God than it is the place. Look what Jesus says in verse 3, "I'm going to prepare this place for you that where I am, you may be also."

He even says right before that, that, "I will come again to take you to myself, Jesus is saying, "No matter where you are on this map, no matter what location you're at right now, I am with you and no matter where you think you're going, you need to know to speak to your troubled heart that I am at the end as well, that I am preparing the place that you can dwell with me forever.

Now, why is that such encouraging news? Why should that lift up our troubled hearts? Why should that lift up the disciples troubled hearts when they're like, "We're going to forsake you, we're going to betray you." What? Why is that encouraging? Because God's nearness is our good. If you desire a perfect peace, you're going to find it in the prince of peace.

If you desire for your heart to be stilled, it's found in the one that says, "Peace be still." It's the one that says, "Be still and know that I am God." The presence of God is where all our fears and anxieties melt because we are trusting in the one who is sovereign and good. That's why this is encouraging. When we think about the destination, when we think about heaven, we're thinking about God.

There's a little bit of humor in this text at least to me because Jesus talks like his disciples already know what he's talking about. He already assumes that they know what he's saying. Look at verse 4. He says, "And you know the way to where I'm going." Now ladies, you know guys well enough that if there's a destination set before them and they don't know how to get there, they're probably not going to ask.

I mean that's why MapQuest is a cash cow because they've made all this money on men that don't ask for directions. You see here Jesus talking about this and he says, "You guys know the way to where I'm going and it's my father's house?" I'm just guessing in a room full of men and room full of disciples they're probably starting to look around at one another. They're probably starting to be like, "Hey, do you know where his father's house is at?" "I don't know. Do you know how to get there?" "I have no idea."

I don't know if they draw straws or what happened in that moment but Thomas is finally the one that speaks up. He's like, "Okay, Jesus." First off, he's like, "Lord, we do not know where you're going. We have no idea what you're talking about right now. We certainly don't know the way. He just asked, we need the destination, Jesus and we also need the directions because we don't understand it."

Their hearts are even troubled in this moment because they don't even know what Jesus is talking about. Jesus responds and he says, "You want the destination? You want the directions? It's right here." He says, "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life." Jesus speaks the same truth to your troubled heart this morning.

He says, "You want clarity in the fog? It's right here. I am the way, I'm the truth, I am the life." It's found in him. He is the destination. He is the direction. Even in this moment, even though Jesus explains this, it's still not a clear picture yet. We will see in the Book of John continues to unfold that through Christ, death and through his resurrection, we see how he is the way, the truth and the life. Through his death our sins are forgiven.

Through his resurrection we have life and all of that is wrapped up as God's truth for you and for me. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and trusting in that and believing in that. He gives us peace for our troubled hearts. We will not find it anywhere else. Jesus is very specific here that he is the way, the truth and the life. The world is going to offer us a lot of comfort, a lot of temporary things to try to help us make from one location to the next location.

What Jesus offers us here is true and lasting peace through him and through him alone. The only way we get to enjoy that is through death, through the cross, through the resurrection. If there was another way, if there was another way that we could get this peace and this comfort that Jesus is offering here, then we can receive salvation.

If there was any other way then Jesus would have never come down to earth and died on the cross. It would have been the biggest mistake in history to have God leave his throne and come down and die if there was another way. Some people read this text and this text even brings them trouble in their heart because they're like, "Wait. This is really exclusive. You're saying there's only one way that I can know peace for my life and there's only one way to have salvation and it's found in Jesus? That's so exclusive. My heart just rubs against that."

Now the truth is this that it is exclusive. It is only through Jesus Christ but we have to know that it inclusive as well because it is available to all who believe. It doesn't matter what nationality you are, what race you are, what social status you have, none of that matters. It is available to all who have believed. Let not your hearts be troubled. Jesus can bring peace to your heart today.

Church, there's two points to application. There's two challenges for us. One is because Jesus is exclusive and he's the only way to find this peace for a troubled heart, we have to live on mission to tell others of Christ. We have to live on mission in our workplaces to be intentional to tell others about Jesus, to reach out to our neighbors and our family.

Even when it's been years that you've been praying for somebody and sharing the gospel, we have to continue steadfastly to live life on mission because there is no other way in which man can be saved. There's no other way. If you read this text and your heart is troubled about what about people in Africa that never heard of the gospel?

You're right. That's why we go there. That's what we're trying to get the gospel there so that all would know and God's kingdom would come. Church, live life on mission, taking the gospel, taking this good news to those who don't know, but second, church, rejoice and have joy in the peace that Christ gives us. Don't let anxiety rule your heart.

Don't let worrying about the future and what it would hold keep you from worshipping God today. Following him faithfully today, to live in mission and rejoice in the peace that God gives us. Let not your hearts be troubled for the future, it's already set in Christ. Also let not your hearts be troubled for Jesus is our peace for the present. Jesus is our peace for the present.

In verse 7, Jesus starts to talk about how personal God is. He starts talking about how glorious it is that we can know God and we can see God. Now, this is a big deal for our present right now because we live in a society that is so high tech and so high paced that we lacked the personal touch and our hearts yearn for it. I mean we often times feel like this guy that's surrounded by people and things are moving so fast but we don't have a relationship with anybody.

What trends are being set and what people are seeing is the more and more we are in this high technology revolution, the more and more our hearts are longing for something personal. It's not just on the technological side of it, although that's part of it. I mean, even on the mobile side of things. People used to buy house and live in it for years and now people move every four years. Have you ever felt like at work, you do your job and you work really hard and then you go home at the end of the day and you think does anybody even notice what I do?

I mean does anybody care about the work that I'm doing? I mean all of that is the heart within us longing for something personal. We're longing for something more. We're longing for that personal touch. Even for me we were changing internet services a couple of weeks ago and the internet service I'm calling to cancel on I can't even get a hold of them and this is a big company. I've called them three days in a row and they keep saying, "All lines are busy. Try again another time."

Then finally, I get through and then it's automated. It's like if you have a problem, push one. If you have a problem with this, and this, and this and this, push another number and I'm pushing it. About the fourth time I push a button, I'm just like, "I just want to talk to somebody. I just want to hear a voice. I want to know that there's somebody there."

All of these things, what they're doing is they're showing us our desire for something more and something personal. What Christ is showing his disciples in this text than what he's showing us that we can know the personal God. I mean look at the words that Jesus uses here. He says in verse 7, "From now on, you know him and you've seen him." This is a huge deal. You can know and you can see God. This is the God that spoke the world into existence.

This is the God that knitted you together when you were in your mother's womb. This is the God in whom we read about. The angels cover their faces because they can't see him. Then Jesus says, "This is the God you can have a relationship with. This is the God you can interact with. This is the God that one day when you get to that destination of heaven, you can touch. This is a big deal. This is a personal God in whom we serve."

So often we miss out on this glorious relationship with God because of our heads and our hearts. We miss finding this peace that God offers, this peace that Jesus wants to give us because of our heads and our hearts. Look at Phillip here in verse 8. Look at what Phillip asks. This is probably a very innocent question, but as Jesus responds, it's interesting to me.

Phillip says, "Lord, show us the father and this will be enough." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long that you still do not know me?" Phillip had walked with Jesus. He had worked with Jesus. He might have even known Jesus favorite color, I don't know. In this moment, Jesus looks at Phillip and he says, "You don't even know me?"

Phillip knew all these facts about Jesus, but he didn't at this point have this personal relationship with Jesus. He will. I mean, he will. There's a day he's going to come and he's going to lay down his life for Christ because he knows him, but in this point, he's trying to understand who Christ is and his head is getting in the way. All these facts of what Jesus should be is getting in the way of who Jesus really is.

For us, it can be the same way. What looks practically is I can know facts about my wife, but it doesn't mean I know my wife. I can know that my wife is five-seven. I can know that my wife has a size eight shoe. I can know she has brown hair. I can know that she weighs ... You all thought I was going to say it, right? No, because I know my wife personally and I'm not going to throw that number out there. Honestly, I don't even know that number.

That doesn't mean I know my wife when I know these facts about my wife. Now, when I walk with my wife, I serve my wife and I love my wife. It changes me. It changes what I value. It changes how I live. When you come to not just know in factual manner but in a personal manner, God, he will change you. He will change your life. He will bring peace to a troubled heart.

Second reason why we miss this personal relationship with God, it's like another disciple. Jesus mentions this earlier but it's more like a Judas. It's a heart issue. Judas loved other things more than he loved Jesus. He knew the facts about Jesus, he just loved darkness rather than light. I've seen this. I was the gospel of the guy a while back and he's thinking through. He's knowing all this facts and he's repeating them back to me and we get to the end, I'm like, "Man, this is only a decision that you can make. Only you can walk on this path that Christ has laid before you."

He says, "Hey, I get everything you're saying. I understand that Christ died for my mistakes and my sins. I understand that he rose from the dead." He's repeating this back to me and he says, "But I also know if I do that, if I trust in him, believe in him, it's going to change my life. I'm not ready for that." I told him, "I appreciate you realizing that because that is true that Christ will change your life but ultimately, he's missing out on a personal relationship with God because he loves something else more than Jesus.

He loves something else more than Jesus. Knowing Jesus is going to change your life but with it, you will find peace in the present for your troubled heart. I love that. It's just not peace for the future but Christ gives is peace now because we will dwell with him now for this is eternal life that they know you, the only true God. That starts here and now and it's found in Christ .

The third thing I want us to see is let not your hearts be troubled because Jesus is peace for our past. He's peace for our future, he's peace for our present, but he's also a peace for our past. We find this in the last few verses but in order to see this, you really have to understand the whole picture, you really have to understand the whole context. Remember Jesus says just look at these men and he's told them, "You are going to fail."

Not just fail, I mean you're going to epically fail. You're going to forsake me, you're going to leave me, you're going to deny me. At the same time, at the same conversation around the same dinner, Jesus looks at them in verse 12 and says, "You will do the works that I do in greater works than these will you do." "What? What are you talking about here, Jesus? You just said we're going to leave you and forsake you and now you're sitting here telling us that we're going to do greater works than you? What are you talking about?"

I believe once the disciples did flee from Christ when they betrayed Christ. They had to have thought back to what Jesus said here. They had to thought back to their past and remember their failures, but also thought back to their to remember what Christ had said. If no other disciples did, we know that John did because he wrote it down in here.

I think this brings peace to pour troubled hearts because when we think of our past failures, the times that we've made mistakes and we've sinned and we think there's no way that God could use me. I think I go to this verse and I look at what Christ says, "Greater works than these will he do because I am going to the father."

We will do greater works because of what Christ did on the cross. Don't look at your past and be troubled by it. Don't look at your past and allow it to suffocate you, glorifying God today, I mean there's times where we think, "I can't show the gospel with that person today because of what I did last night." That is a lie. Christ has equipped you to share the gospel today because you are saved by grace. You aren't saved by those works that you did last night, you weren't defined by those works that you did last night, those sins that you did last night.

You were defined by Christ and his salvation. We can faithfully share the gospel. We can faithfully have courage to be bold, to tell others about Christ and live life on mission. Not because of our personality, not because of what we've done. Not because of our successes or our failures, it's because of Christ and Christ alone. It is found in him and the disciples did greater works and we would do greater works also. I mean, think about this. Disciples went and spread the gospel to the ends of the earth and that known time. Christ as he went and shared, he shared in the Palestine area.

Peter's first message where he preached 3,000 people come to know the Lord, come to believe and trust that Jesus is the way and all the ministry we have recorded by Jesus, we don't have anything that amounts to 3,000 people repenting and turning to Christ. Today, we get to take people from death to life. We get to help people come from the kingdom of darkness, to the kingdom of light and that is all found in Christ Jesus.

Let's not read this and get cocky. Let's not read this and say, "Okay, we're going to do greater works that Jesus. We're going to do amazing things because it's really not about us, it's about him and this also should give us great courage for our troubled hearts. Look at what Jesus says, "You're going to do greater works." This is the last part of verse 12. "You're going to do greater works because I am going to the father."

Next week when he goes to the father, he sends the spirit. That's something that Christ did. He's going to the father and then he says, "Whatever you ask in my name, what you will do? No, I will do." Then in verse 14, "You ask me anything in my name, who's going to do it? Christ will do it." It all rests on him. he's the author and finisher of faith.

He's the one that saves you, he's the one that sustains you. It's all found in him so our hope is not in our self, our trust and our hearts are resting in him. When I read this passage and I think of this text and just the trusting in Christ. I think about the Virginia Creeper Trail and maybe you guys have written this before, somebody told me about it and it's a trail up in Virginia where you're going through the mountains, somebody said it's a 35-mile trail and they asked me if I wanted to come and ride it with them.

I said, "No. 35 miles is a long way. I do not want to ride that." he's like, "No, no. You don't understand. This trail is actually a trail where you get a bike and they take you to the shuttle to the top of the mountain and then you ride down the mountain. I'm like, "That, I can do." I can sit and just ride because if you want to pedal, that's great but you don't really have to because you're just going down the hill.

That's what I picture when I read this text is that Christ is the gravity that is doing all the work and he's saying, "You're going to do greater works but it's because I'm the one, I'm gravity that's pulling you to do these great works that glorify God." Don't be troubled. Don't be stressed that I've got to do all of these works. Come to Christ and find peace in him because it is in him and him alone that we can find this peace.

I'll close with this. This was a couple of months ago now but I will never forget it. We got a phone call here at the church and there was a man who had found out that his wife was given 48 hours to live. He used to be a member of Providence, but had retired and moved away. His wife was getting medical attention at Duke and so they had called us.

Larry Gilson and I are going to the hospital and along the way, Larry is telling me that this man has been through a lot. He's had a lot of troubled times because just a few months earlier, he'd found out that he had a tumor the size of a football in his chest. They had done surgery and things had gone well. Just a few months later, he finds out that his wife is struggling. I really expected to see this desponded man when we got there, but there's something different.

You can see there was a heaviness on him, but it didn't troubled his heart. It was really odd. I didn't just see it. The doctors were actually asking him about it. We're talking to this man and he said, "The other doctors are asking me how in the world are you so calm in the midst of all this?" He said, "I told the doctors and I'll tell you guys," as he said, "I truly believe that God has fashioned every day of my life because that's what his words says."

He said, "So when I woke up three months ago and I realized there was a tumor in my chest, I had peace because my God is good and he's fashioned that day for me. I could live in peace in that day." He said, "Yeah, all that went well, but it doesn't change the fact as things go ill, that God has fashioned this day from my wife and he's also fashioned this day for me. I'm going to trust in him."

He is glorifying God by the peace God is giving him for his troubled heart. I mean him and his wife are sharing the gospel with people in the hospital. When we pray for them, the nurse stayed in the room because she wanted to know what this was all about. This is the beauty we find in Christ. This is the space that we received for our troubled hearts because it's found in Christ and Christ alone.

I believe I know that God's desire is that you would have that peace in your life just like that man had. The way I know it is because this conversation continues. We'll cover it next week but John chapter 14, verse 27, this is what Jesus says, "Peace, I leave with you. My peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give you. Let not your hearts be troubled neither let them be afraid." Jesus desires that we would have peace for our troubled hearts through him, the way, the truth and the life. Let's pray.

Father, thank you that you don't live so high above us, that you don't see or know our problems. God, you came down and you lived our problems. Your heart was troubled to take away sin. Our hearts are troubled because we live in sin. So God help us to see that you are the way to peace, you are the way to truth, you are the way to life and in you may we fill the stress and anxiety leave because your desire is our hearts would not be troubled but instead find rest in you. It's in Christ's great name that we ask this, amen.



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