

GOING TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In 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? ³And 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. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going.”⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Introduction

1. Trouble is normal. You've probably figured that out. Job was right. “Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward” (5:7). When there is trouble, we are troubled in our hearts. Circumstances, people and things are all sources that cause us trouble. As we struggle, we wonder why. As we wonder why, we worry. We ask questions, maybe even assuming there are no answers, but still we ask. Like Martha, we are “troubled about many things.”
2. Certainly the disciples were troubled about many things. Jesus was leaving and He made it known that they could not come with Him, at least not now. He had made it known that one among them would betray Him. He specifically told Peter that he would deny Him three times. Even though Jesus had pronounced Peter clean, you can imagine how unsettled all of them were! And if the authorities were going to take Jesus – what would they do to the disciples? Jesus had taught them often that they should expect to be treated as He was treated. That's not much comfort! They were troubled – greatly troubled!
3. Jesus lays out a solution to the trouble in their hearts – a cure for their fears, and an answer to their questions. The answer is a triumphant faith – a faith that overcomes, a faith that quiets hearts and soothes anxieties and strengthens hope. A triumphant faith is confidence in Christ. It is certainty and stability and assurance that rest in knowing and trusting Him. That faith is identified and explained by Jesus in this discourse. Today we consider only the first six verses.

4. Kids, I have some work for you to do. Jesus talked about His Father's house. He said that it had many what (**rooms**)? Jesus said He was going to prepare that place for us. Mostly that preparation had something to do with what Jesus was about to do. What was Jesus about to do (**die**)? Jesus described Himself to His disciples with three words. What are those words (the **way**, the **truth**, and the **life**)? Finally, Jesus made it clear there was only one way to get to the Father. Who was that one way (**Jesus**)? Ultimately Jesus was teaching His disciples and us that we must _____ Him. What word correctly fills in the blank (**trust**)?

I. TRUST ME – I'M GOING TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

- A. The role of faith when hearts are troubled - ***"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."***
1. What was Jesus saying? It's not as clear as we might first assume. All of these translations are possible: a) "You believe in God. You believe in me." Both of these would be affirmations of faith. b) "You believe in God. Believe in me." The first would be a statement and the second a command. c) Believe in God. You believe in me. The first is a command and the second is a statement. d) "Believe in God. Believe also in me." Here both would be commands. My guess is that they said they believed in God. Jesus is commanding them to believe in Him! That's the focus of this discourse. Whether these are statements or commands, we arrive at the same place.
 2. Ultimately only faith in Jesus will result in a quiet confident heart. Jesus starts here. If we do not trust Him we will never trust His promises. His promises would explain why He was going away and where He was going. Let's look at the promise.
- B. The role of revelation when hearts are troubled – ***"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?"***
1. A mansion? A palace? A room? ("I've got a mansion just over the hilltop"; "A tent or a cottage, why should I care? They're building a palace for me over there"). Are we missing something here? John MacArthur may help us here. ***Sometimes heaven is called a country because of its vastness. Sometimes heaven is called a city because of its inhabitants. Sometimes it's called a kingdom because of its ruler and order. Sometimes it's called a paradise because of its beauty. Sometimes it's called a house because of its family. It's the Father's house. In ancient times,***

fathers had a house and their children were raised in the house. And when they got married, they build an addition on the house, and the father's house kept getting larger and larger...as apartments were built for every married child in that family.... And the heavenly Father's house is very large and there are many, many dwelling places. I can make it simple for you. You don't need a map of heaven, there's just one house... I heard as a kid growing up, you know, if you don't live the right kind of life, you're going to end up 30 miles out of town in some low-level track made out of pine boards because that's all you've sent up to heaven to build your mansion. Mansion really confused a lot of people. This is the word for "rooms." You're not going to be down the street, or out of town, or off below the tracks; you're going to be in the Father's house. This is a family and you're going to be in the Father's house, one house with... many, many rooms.

2. The disciples were not interested in a plush country estate or a fat eternal inheritance. They were troubled about losing Jesus. They were afraid of what they might have to face without Him. They want to know where He is going. "I am going to the Father's house."
3. Jesus made it clear that He did not come to be with them just to abandon them. If that were the case, He would have told them. The next several hours would all be part of the journey to the Father's house and the preparation that needed to be made in order for the disciples to eventually join Him. His would be a perilous journey as He cut the trail for them. But that was His promise to them.
4. In what way is Jesus "going to prepare a place" for us? What does that mean? The place is not in disrepair. It doesn't need improvements. Jesus even said in Matthew 25:34 that what has been prepared for us has been ready from the foundation of the world. The preparation had to do with our redemption. When Jesus said this, He still had to endure the cross. He still had to endure the Father's wrath against sin. And that was exactly what He was about to do.
5. Jesus was going home to the Father. It was a permanent home and a perfect home. The disciples would have to trust Him that this was where He was going. And they would eventually be there with Him forever. But how does that help them in their troubled condition?

II. TRUST ME – I'M COMING BACK TO TAKE YOU TO MY FATHER'S HOUSE

A. The role of faith when the way is dark - **“Lord, we do not know where you are going.**

How can we know the way?”

1. How is it that the disciples could be comforted with the news that Jesus was going away from them? Even the part about making ready the room did not help much. The question remained, “How do we get there?”
2. I have never been too good with directions. Tell me, “North, south, east or west” and you might as well be speaking a foreign language. (I accept the label that I am directionally challenged. Not long ago I lost my car in a hospital parking-garage in Chicago and it took 45 minutes to find it). But if you give me a guide, someone to follow – I can do that! Verse 3 is a great encouragement to me - **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.**
3. Some have interpreted this as reference to Christ's return at the resurrection. That is possible, but the disciples did not ascend with Jesus to the Father's house when He appeared to them. Others see this as a promise at death. That is not bad, and it may be included in what Jesus was saying to His disciples. Though we have not experienced death, He has, and even the most frightening things can be faced with confidence when we go through them with a trusted friend who has gone through those things before and promises to go with us through them.
4. Another possibility is the promise of His return. He has promised to come and when He does, we who trust Him will be with Him! At no point and in no circumstance has He ever or will He ever abandoned us. All of the disciples were struggling at this point. Peter had asked the Lord (13:36), “Where are you going?” Thomas asked in 14:5 in a slightly different way, but essentially the same question. Philip asks in his way (14:8). And then Judas (not Iscariot) asks in his way, **“Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?”** (14:22). Jesus is the answer to all of their concerns. Eventually He will come and we will follow Him. For He is the way, the truth and the life, and to have seen Him is to have seen the Father, and while He is gone, His Spirit will remain with us! And we can rest assured that He will come back for us. We can trust Him!
5. Mostly I think the point Jesus is making is connected with His atoning work on the cross. Think through this with me. **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. Jesus' going away from them involved His death on the cross. His death secures our place with Him. He goes ahead preparing the way by His atoning sacrifice making it possible for us to be with Him.

B. The role of faith when holding only a promise – **“I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”**

1. God's promises do not have an expiration date. When He promises us a promise, He promises it forever. He said He would come and He will. He promised that we would be with Him forever and we will.
2. It may have seemed as though He was gone, but even those few hours between Jesus death and resurrection, the disciples were not really alone. They had His Word and His Word was gold. “Trust me. I'm going to the Father's House and I am coming back to take you there to be with me. But there is one more thing you need to know and believe.”

III. TRUST ME – YOU MUST GO WITH ME TO GET TO THE FATHER'S HOUSE

A. The specificity of faith in Jesus - **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”**

1. In spite of what Jesus said, there remained some confusion. Thomas was still looking for a map. Jesus said in effect, “Forget the map; look at Me!” Hear again these familiar, amazing words.
2. **I am the way, the truth and the life.** This was an exclusive declaration. Jesus never suggested in any way that He was one way among others, or that He was one truth among other truths about other gods, or that He was one life among others that also offered and could deliver life. In case we missed the exclusive nature of Jesus' words, He further clarifies, **“No one comes to the Father except through me.”**
3. I have often said at funerals, *“When we don't know where to go or how to get there, He is the way. When we don't know who or what to believe, He is the truth. When we don't know how to live or how to die, He is the life. Spiritually speaking, we are lost, but He is the way. We are ignorant, but He is the truth. We are dead, but He is the life.”* So faith is specific. It is in Jesus. It is also exclusive. It must only be in Jesus – and it must be in Jesus.

B. The exclusivity of faith in Jesus – **“No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

1. ***“The modern church has created a new wave of heresy related to this foundational truth that people somehow can be saved and welcomed into heaven when they die, or even taken up to heaven when Christ comes who never had a Bible, never heard about the true God, never heard about Jesus Christ. They’ve even come up with some names for it. They call it ‘later light’ or they call it ‘natural theology.’ ‘Man can reach God by natural reason, which can lead him to live a good life. And if he lives a good life, he’ll be acceptable to God.’ That’s Roman Catholic theology, Vatican One. And then there’s one called ‘wider mercy.’ Men can be saved in other religions. Peter Kreeft in the book Ecumenical Jihad has all kinds of different religions sending people to heaven into the Father’s house. Some would say if you’re monotheistic you’re really okay because you’ve hooked onto the idea of one god. Larry King said to me one time off television, ‘I’m going to be okay. A very well-known evangelist told me because I’m Jewish I’m going to be okay.’ Really? An evangelist told you that? There’s even a view called “trans-dispensational salvation” which means that people who never heard about Christ will be treated by God as if they lived in another dispensation before Christ ever came. So we can call all the missionaries home, leave them to their natural reason, or leave them to some wider mercy, or leave them to some other dispensation. But the Bible says, ‘Go preach the gospel to every creature because no one can get to heaven without believing in Christ, no one’” (John MacArthur, from a sermon preached February 15, 2015).***
2. There is no provision for salvation outside of Jesus Christ. There is only one way and it is through Him. Reject Jesus and you will perish.

CONCLUSION

1. There are rich promises and there are grave warnings in this brief passage. Ultimately it is about trusting Jesus – who He is and what He said. We must not only trust Him, but in regard to eternal salvation, we must trust only Him. Failure to trust exclusively in Him will result in eternal punishment. It will result in eternal separation from God.
2. There are few passages that lend themselves so clearly to a call to salvation than the one before us now. I am calling you, pleading with you to trust the Savior – right here, right now. Your trust might be exercised in prayer between you and the Lord right now. It might look more like a quiet affirmation with requests for more information and

further explanation. But it must be confident trust in Him and only in Him. It can't be Jesus plus something and it can't be trust in something other than Jesus. What is it going to be? He is the way, the truth, the life. This is an exclusive claim and it is a truthful claim. This is a call to adults and kids alike. It's time for you to trust the Savior.