

**John: sermon #15**  
**Reassurance for Troubled Hearts**  
**(John 14)**

## **Introduction**

*13:36 Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." 37 Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38 Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times! 14:1 **Do not let your hearts be troubled.** Trust in God; trust also in me.*

John 14 continues Jesus' conversation with his disciples. It opens and closes with our Lord's loving admonition: "Do not let your hearts be troubled" (14:1, 27). In between these 'bookends' are wonderful words of reassurance to all who follow Christ.

It's no surprise that the Apostles were troubled. After all, Jesus announced that one was a traitor, and that Peter was going to deny him three times. But perhaps the most disquieting blow was the realization that Jesus was going to be leaving them (13:33). Where was he going? Could they go with him? How could they get to where he was going? These were surely some of the perplexing questions that tumbled around in their minds and hearts and were tossed back and forth in their conversations at the table in the Upper Room that night.

Ever the loving servant-Savior as well as their Lord, Jesus' words were intended to calm their troubled hearts by imparting **six assurances**. Let's consider these six assurances of encouragement and strength for our own journey with Jesus.

### **1. We will be with God forever (14:1-6)**

*1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2 **In my Father's house are many rooms**; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare **a place for you.** 3 And if I go and*

*prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.* <sup>4</sup> *You know the way to the place where I am going.* <sup>5</sup> *Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"* <sup>6</sup> *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

**According to Jesus, his leaving was to his disciples' advantage for he promised that he was on his way to the Father's 'house' to prepare a 'room' for them.** The Greek word for 'room' (*meno*) is translated 'home' in verse 23 and refers to a place to stay—a **place of dwelling**. Jesus had referred to the Jerusalem temple as the Father's 'house' (John 2:26), but **here that house is God's heavenly home to which Jesus is now going and in which his people are promised a place of dwelling with the Father.**

**Earlier that week Jesus had said, 'where I am, there my servant will also be' (12:26); now he is reassuring them that he is going to the Father to get a place ready for them, and having done that, he will come back and take them to be with him.** This place, this home, is described in Scripture as 'heaven' (2Cor. 5:1), an eternal kingdom (2 Peter 1:11), an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4), a country (Heb. 11:16), a city (Heb. 11:16), a 'new heaven and a new earth' (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1); and here as a 'home' with many rooms (John 14:2) in which Jesus' followers have a 'place' (14:3).

**It's interesting to note that on earth Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), and now he is returning to the Father to build his church on earth** and to prepare rooms for his followers in the Father's presence in a heavenly home. And what a wonderful home that will be. When John tries to describe it in Revelation 21-22 he runs out of symbols and comparisons so he lists the things that will not be found in that home: death, sorrow, crying, pain, night, etc.

**Thomas' question (John 14:5) revealed his keen desire to be with Jesus (11:16), and this meant that he had to know where the Master was going and how he himself would get there. The Lord made it clear that he was going to the Father, and that he was the only way to the Father—the 'way, the truth and the life'. Note that Jesus does not simply teach the way or point the way; *he IS the***

**way.** Our Lord's statement, "No one comes to the Father except through me," negates the idea that there are alternative pathways to glory such as good works, religious ceremonies, etc. No, there is only one way there—by and through Jesus Christ. This truth is both *exclusive* (he is the *only* way) but it is also a reassuring *inclusive* truth—i.e. there IS a way to heaven and Jesus is the way for all. We need not depend on our own feeble efforts (which ultimately fail us at our best). No, the way to the Father is wide open in Jesus and he will take there all who follow him.

**But how would this assurance of a home with God in heaven calm the disciples' troubled hearts? The answer is that it enabled them (and us too!) to bear joyfully the obstacles and battles along the way from here to there.** This same assurance encouraged Jesus in his time of great suffering and shame: "who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame" (Heb. 12:2). Paul also had this truth in mind when he wrote, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). Lord God, thank you for his assurance of heaven!

## **2. We know the Father right now (14:7–11)**

***7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." 8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." 9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.***

So heaven is our future and ultimate home with God. But what about now? The good news is that we do not have to wait until we enter glory to know our heavenly Father. We know him right now because we know Jesus.

**For John, to *know* is to experience. And to know God is to have a deep, personal relationship with him (see 17:3 where such**

**knowledge is the definition of eternal life). So Jesus says that to know him (which is synonymous with ‘seeing’ him) is to have a deep, personal, intimate relationship with him; and this relationship with him is the same as a relationship with the Father because the Father and Son inter-relate—they are united one in the other.** Here again Jesus is speaking to the truth of the incarnation and is thus claiming divinity—he and the Father (God) are one. And from now on these disciples would understand more and more about their Heavenly Father, even though Jesus was leaving them.

**The evidence Philip and the others (including us today) are to look at to know Jesus and the Father are Jesus’ own words and works which are inseparably linked and testify to Jesus being truly God and truly man; truly in eternal communion with the Father and Spirit in the one God: One in Three and Three in One; the divine Trinity.**

Note that *believe* in John 14:10 is singular in Greek, for Jesus was addressing Philip; but in 14:11, it is plural as Jesus addresses all the disciples. The meaning of both uses in Greek is “go on believing.” Jesus is admonishing all his disciples: “Let your faith grow!”

**What a blessing! We know the Father and Creator of the universe, for Jesus Christ who is the eternal Son of God has revealed him to us. Why should our hearts be troubled when the Creator and Ruler of the universe is *our own Father*?**

### **3. We have access to God in prayer (14:12–15)**

The old hymn says it so well: “O what peace we often forfeit, o what needless pain we bear; all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.” **Prayer is the privilege of all who know Jesus, for in our relationship with him we enter into the divine, internal communication of the Trinity—in Christ, with the Father, through the Holy Spirit. What reassurance it is to know that Jesus, who is fully God and still fully human (now glorified) is in heaven interceding—communing with the Father and the Spirit—for us and with us and in us.** This reality invites from us a three-fold response as **we participate in Jesus’ prayer life:**

#### ***a. We pray in faith (v. 12)***

***12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.***

**Jesus’ “I tell you the truth” is an emphatic pronouncement: “listen up!” As we participate in Christ’s glorified humanity, through faith, great things will result.** These “greater things” applied initially to the Apostles who were given power to perform special miracles as the credentials of their office. These miracles were not greater in *quality*, for “no servant is greater than his master” (13:16), but greater in scope and quantity. Peter preached one sermon and 3,000 sinners were converted in one day. The fact that ordinary people with extraordinary trust in Jesus performed these signs made them even more wonderful and brought great glory to God (Acts 5:13–16).

**Prayer in faith by the faith of Jesus connects us to the mighty works of Jesus—works he performs through all believers and thus multiplies his work on earth.** What a privilege to have a part!

***b. We pray in Christ’s name (vv. 13–14)***

***13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***

To end a prayer with the words ‘in Jesus’ name’ is not a magic formula. Rather it’s **the statement of a Jesus follower in prayer acknowledging the reality that we pray *with* Jesus—within the scope of his name, authority, power and will.** This is both a great privilege and responsibility.

The “whatever you ask” (verse 13) and the “anything” (verse 14) are qualified by all that God has revealed in Scripture concerning prayer and concerning his will. “In my name” is the controlling element, for to know God’s name means to know his nature and his will. Jesus grants our requests in order to glorify the Father, and thus such grants are always according to God’s will (1 John 5:14–15). Remember that the first request in “The Lord’s Prayer” is, “Hallowed be your name” (Matt. 6:9).

**c. We pray in loving obedience (v. 15)**

***<sup>15</sup> "If you love me, you will obey what I command.***

**Our relationship with God in Christ (which includes prayer) is one of reciprocal love whereby we say ‘yes’ to Jesus’ commands. Thus prayer is part of a dynamic relationship of trust expressed in obedience—seeking out and living faithfully our Lord’s will for us.**

Note that *love* is a principal theme in the Gospel of John; it is used as a verb or noun a total of fifty-six times. And here we learn that we express our love for Jesus by doing what he tells us—this is prayer in action. What a privilege!

**4. We have the Holy Spirit (14:16–18)**

***<sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—<sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.<sup>18</sup> I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.***

**Jesus had a great deal to say about the Holy Spirit in this discourse, for Jesus lives in and through us by the indwelling Spirit. Jesus refers to the Spirit as “another Counselor” (‘Comforter’ KJV) and “the Spirit of truth.” The Greek word translated “Counselor” is *parakletos* and means “one called alongside to assist.” The Holy Spirit does not work instead of us, or in spite of us, but in us and through us. Some translations translate this word as “the Encourager,” and this is a good choice of words. In 1John 2:1 the word *parakletos* is used to refer to Jesus as the one “who speaks to the Father in our defense”—or the one who is our “Advocate” (KJV). An advocate is one who represents you at court and stands at your side to plead your case. This is Jesus’ role and the role of the Spirit who Jesus sends to be our counselor, comforter, encourager and advocate. What reassurance!**

**Jesus called the Spirit “another Counselor,” (verse 16) and the Greek word translated “another” means “another of the same**

**kind.” The Spirit of God is not different from the Son of God, for both are God. The Spirit of God had dwelt *with* the disciples in the person of Jesus Christ. Now He would dwell *in* them.**

As “the Spirit of truth,” (verse 17a), the Holy Spirit is related to Jesus who is the Truth (John 14:6; 17:17). The Spirit has inspired the writing of Scripture (the written Word) that tells us of Jesus (the living Word). The Spirit also illuminates our understanding of that word. Later on in this message, Jesus will explain the teaching ministry of the Spirit. Since he is the “Spirit of Truth,” he cannot lie or be associated with lies. He never leads us to do anything contrary to the Word of God, for again God’s Word is truth.

**The Holy Spirit abides in us (‘he will be in you’, verse 17b) as the gift from the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son. During his earthly ministry, Jesus had guided, guarded, and taught his disciples; but now he was going to leave them. The Spirit would come to them *and dwell in them*, taking the place of their Master.**

The world cannot accept (receive) the Spirit (verse 17) because the world lives “by sight” and not by faith. Furthermore, the world does not know Jesus Christ; and you cannot have knowledge of the Spirit apart from the Son. The presence of the Spirit in this world is actually an indictment against the world, for the world rejected Jesus.

**Jesus abides with us through the indwelling Spirit; he has not left us to be “orphans” (verse 18). We are not alone, abandoned, helpless, and hopeless! Wherever we go, the Spirit is with us and dwells in us. There is no need to have a troubled heart when we have the very Spirit of God dwelling within us!**

## **5. We enjoy God’s loving presence (14:19–24)**

***19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” 22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to***

***show yourself to us and not to the world?"* <sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup> He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.**

The last time the world saw Jesus was when Joseph and Nicodemus took him from the cross and buried him on Good Friday. But the disciples would not be abandoned (orphaned); he would return to them. This return certainly refers to his post-resurrection appearances, but it also seems to refer to his words in verse 3: "I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." Jesus (here through John's teaching) seems unconcerned about the chronology of all this. What's important is Jesus' reassurance: *I am coming to you!*

**But the very real and very loving presence of God in Christ through the Spirit is 'visible' now only to the 'eyes of faith.' When Jesus says to them (verse 19) "you will see me", is in the present tense and implies continuity stretching indefinitely into the future—a reality made sure by Jesus' resurrection and our incorporation into him. As believers we have in our communion with Christ unending life and fellowship with God: "Because I live, you also will live" (verse 19b).**

**"On that day" (verse 20) is the day when Jesus will have returned to the Father and sent the Spirit to be with and in his disciples. Then they will learn in a new way the truth of his mutual oneness with the Father of which they had so often heard him speak. This 'coinherence' (God in Christ, Christ in God, Christ in us, us in Christ) speaks to inter-relationships of love. God's loving presence. Those drawn into this 'circle of love' of the triune God are those who love the living Lord, a love evidenced by obedience to his will (which involves acts of love which are acts performed through the agency of the indwelling Spirit).**

**Note in this passage the repetition of the word *love*. As we participate in Jesus' love and life, the Father and the Son, through the Spirit share their divine love with us and make their home in us (verse 23 and refer back to verse 2).**

Judas (not Iscariot) wondered aloud why Jesus would manifest himself to the disciples but not the world (verse 22). This seemed to contradict other statements Jesus had made, such as that recorded in Matthew 24:30. But Jesus' reference here is not his appearance to all humanity as divine Judge, but rather his appearing (his *revelation*) to them in love—within the divine family circle of love. **Where love and obedience are sown, the presence of God and of Christ is realized.** John records Jesus making a similar point in Revelation 3:20: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”

**When we feel like ‘orphans’, we need to let the Spirit of God reveal God’s love to us in deeper ways. Charles Spurgeon said, “Little faith will take your soul to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your soul.”** Our hearts can become “heaven on earth” as we commune with the Lord and worship him.

## **6. We have Jesus’ gift of peace (14:25–29)**

*<sup>25</sup> "All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. <sup>28</sup> "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. <sup>29</sup> I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe."*

*Shalom*—peace—is a precious word to the Jewish people. It means much more than just the absence of war or distress. *Shalom* means wholeness, completeness, health, security, even prosperity in the best sense. When you are enjoying God’s peace, there is joy and contentment. But God’s peace is not like the “peace” that the world offers.

**The world bases its peace on its resources, while God’s peace depends on relationships. To be right with God means to enjoy the peace of God. The world depends on personal ability, but the**

**Christian depends on spiritual adequacy in Christ.** In the world, peace is something you hope for or work for; but to the Christian, peace is God's wonderful gift, received by faith. Unsaved people enjoy peace when there is an absence of trouble; **Christians enjoy peace *in spite of trouble* because their lives are lived in communion with the triune God: with the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit.**

**The Spirit of God teaches us the Word and guides (teaches) us (not drags us!) into the truth. He reminds us of what Jesus' taught so that we can depend on God's Word in all circumstances. The Spirit uses the Word to give us God's peace (verse 27), his love (15:9–10), and his joy (15:11).**

**Again, Jesus assured them that they would see him again (14:28).** Why rejoice because he returned to the Father? Because his return made possible his wonderful intercessory ministry on our behalf as our High Priest (Heb. 2:17–18; 4:14–16).

## **Conclusion**

***30 "I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, 31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave."***

What wonderful assurance Jesus gives here to his disciples in the Upper Room – and now through the Scripture the Spirit inspired them to record (here through John) we are reassured as well. **In this chapter Jesus has promised that through his life, death, resurrection and ascension, God draws us into the circle of his divine love and life. We participate in that 'divine dance' of love with the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit.**

What wonderful assurance that is. And how **much we need that reassurance, particularly when the 'prince of this world' comes after us (verse 30) as he did in great fury that night and the next day for Jesus.** Indeed Jesus needed God's reassurance, and he received it.

**“Come let us leave” was Jesus’ direction** (verse 31b). Reassured of God’s love, presence, power and peace, we can go forward in faith and confidence. **We are not alone. We are not orphans. God is with us and for us and now dwells in us because we are in Christ Jesus and he is in us (14:20).** *Shalom*

***Sermon Series*** is provided by Ted Johnston via the Senior Pastor Team of Tom and Alberta Ecker to assist ... Bible studies in series covering a book of the Bible.

**This issue continues a series in the gospel of John** with material from *The Bible Expository Commentary* by Warren Wiersbe, *The New Bible Commentary*, *The Parable of Joy* by Michael Card, and *The Gospel of John* by F.F. Bruce.

**Note: Bold script above covered in Worship Services.**