

March 12th, 2017

# LET NOT YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED

John 14:1-3

It is simply unimaginable how Jesus speaks to his disciples on the eve of His death. “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.” Here is Jesus, just a few short hours away from the worst suffering and death that has ever or will ever occur on planet earth, and yet His concern is not on Himself but on His disciples. This is a powerful evidence of what John said when this meal began. **John 13:1** “Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

Now we must ask, why would the hearts of the disciples be troubled? For that answer, we must look back in chapter thirteen. After Judas the betrayer left into the night, Jesus looked at his disciples and said in v.31 “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.” Jesus was speaking of His crucifixion. Jesus came into the world to die. And now the machinery behind that death has been set in motion. His disciples did not understand this yet, but Jesus made it clear that He was leaving. v.33 “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’” This was the first reason why their hearts were so troubled. Jesus, their Master, the one whom they left their families, their occupations, and their reputations behind for was telling them He was leaving them. Imagine this moment. “Lord” as Peter said in another place ‘We’ve given up everything to follow you<sup>1</sup> and now you are going to leave us?’ From this perspective, it’s easy to see why Peter glossed over Jesus command to love one another (v.34-35) He was deeply troubled. “Lord, where are you going?” (v.36) Peter then insists that he will follow him all the way to death if necessary, he does not want to be separated from Christ. But Jesus then strikes a deeper blow still in v.38 “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 19:27

Now Peter is face to face with the prophecy of the failure of his life. And the other disciples had to be wondering “If Peter is going to fail, what will become of me?” The heaviness in that room must have been suffocating.

However they are unaware of the true trouble that was coming. In less than 24 hours, it will appear that Jesus’ whole ministry was an absolute and complete disaster. A theological abortion. Jesus will be dead and buried. The disciples to their shame will have abandoned him at his most crucial hour. The Pharisees and chief priest will have appeared to won. The fever of Messianic revolution will have abated. And they will begin to believe that the last three years will have been utterly meaningless. As D.A. Carson says the disciples would be under such “substantial emotional pressure [that they] were on the brink of catastrophic failure.”

That’s what Jesus sees. Therefore His speech is aimed at fortifying their soon-to-be devastated hearts. Several times through this farewell discourse he tells them why he tells them the significance of his speech.<sup>2</sup>

**John 14:25** “*These things* I have spoken to you while I am still with you.”

**John 16:12** “I still have *many things* to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”

**John 16:4** “But I have said *these things* to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”

**John 16:1** “I have said all *these things* to you to keep you from falling away.”<sup>3</sup>

Their troubled hearts would very soon be in danger of falling away from Christ. And that is the danger of troubled hearts in our lives. The trials and tribulations

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<sup>2</sup> “These things” 14:25; 16:1, 4 (x2), 6, 12, 13, 25, 3

<sup>3</sup> D.A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), pg. 487

and troubles of this life can be so overwhelming, that many have stopped from following Jesus altogether. What divine remedy did Jesus offer His disciples? What divine remedy does He offer us? He doesn't offer to remove all our problems down here. Instead He offers us Himself. He offers us the promise of an everlasting dwelling place with Him where we will never be troubled again.

“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.”

That is the divine remedy for everything that troubles us down here.

- ☆ The Cause of Troubled Souls
- ☆ The Comfort of Troubled Souls
- ☆ The Cure of Troubled Souls

### *The Big Idea...*

Jesus will not fail in bringing us to Himself, therefore let not your heart be troubled

## I. The Cause of Troubled Souls

### What is the source of troubled souls?

Jesus says in v.1 “Let not your hearts be troubled.” When Jesus speaks of the *heart*, He means the entire inner life of a person — not just your affections but your whole soul. The heart can be *troubled* ταρασσω tarassō. It's the same word used in John 5:7 where the healing water was stirred up (tarassō). Jesus had a

troubled soul as He contemplated awful wrath of God in **John 12:27** “Now is my soul troubled.”

That is the kind of trouble the disciples were facing. But what I want to ask is: what was the *main cause* behind the disciple’s troubled hearts? It would be easy to give a less-than-ultimate answer to that question. Perhaps their trouble would stem from that fact that they forsook everything in order to follow Jesus. In **Luke 18:28** Peter says “See, we have left our homes and followed you.” With Jesus gone and all their stuff forfeited, that would be a cause for great trouble. Was losing everything the main source of their trouble? Or perhaps their trouble would stem from the utter meaninglessness they would soon sense. Before Peter was restored by Christ after his denials, he was so defeated that he told the other disciples “I am going fishing.” Meaning, he was going back to his old way of life. And the other disciples felt the same way “We will go with you.” (John 21:3) Was a dislocated vocation the main source of their trouble? It’s important to answer this right, because we will be troubled in this life, and if we answer it wrongly, we will seek after the wrong remedy.

What was the main source of their trouble? Jesus was going away. He reiterates this throughout His farewell discourse.

**John 14:12** “I am going to the Father.”

**John 14:19** “Yet a little while and the world will see me no more,”

**John 14:28** “I am going away.”

**John 16:16** “A little while, and you will see me no longer.”

**John 16:28** “I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

### **Jesus’ absence is the source of all troubles**

*A feeling* of the absence of God is the ultimate source of all troubles that we will face in this life.

It was the source of David's trouble. **Psalm 42:1-2** As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. *When shall I come and appear before God?*"

Feeling absent from God was Job's main trouble. **Job 13:24** "*Why do you hide your face and count me as your enemy?*"<sup>4</sup>

The absence of God was the Preacher's main trouble in the book of Ecclesiastes. **Ecclesiastes 2:17** "*So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.*" The Preacher saw that something was more important than mere physical existence.<sup>5</sup>

Dear congregation, there are lots of things that can trouble our souls in this life. Perpetual health problems. A crumbling marriage. Same-sex attraction. Our empty bank account and burdening debt. The unpredictability of our job. National politics. Global terrorism. The uncertainty of life and the certainty of death.

But underneath all these problems, whether we know it or not is the ultimate question: Is Jesus with me? That is the ultimate cause of both the disciples' troubled souls and ours: Is Jesus with me? Has He left me alone? We can endure all the pains of this life if we have an experiential knowledge that Jesus Christ is with us. If that knowledge is absent, we can find ourselves unable to even go to the grocery store.

That is what the disciples were facing. The imminent departure of Christ. There is nothing that can be conceived of that is more terrifying, more paralyzing, or more agonizing than to experience the absence of God. Jesus

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<sup>4</sup> Psalm 113:1-3 How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O Lord my God; light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,

<sup>5</sup> Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible, Ed. Joel Beeke, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), pg. 929

doesn't want either His disciples or His people now to be left in that state. And so He says "Let not your hearts be troubled."

## II. The Comfort of Troubled Souls

Jesus says "Let not your hearts be troubled," and then he offers us four comforts to ease our hearts.

### Comfort 1: Believe in Me (v.1b)

In v.1 Jesus says "Believe in God; *believe also in me.*"<sup>6</sup> Both parts here are commands, but the emphasis is on the second part "Believe *also* in me." Now, Jesus was not telling them to believe savingly upon him, as if they had not already done that.<sup>7</sup> Last chapter in v.10, Jesus declared them all to be clean except for Judas. Meaning they had already believed savingly. No what Jesus is telling them is to believe Him not merely for salvation but for all of life. v.1 is the foundation of the first fourteen verses.<sup>8</sup> Jesus is calling us to *believe* that...

1. He is our everlasting rest (v.1-3)
2. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (v.4-7)
3. He is in the Father and the Father is in Him (v.8-11)
4. He is the source of all our service (v.12)
5. He is the power behind all our prayer (v.13-14)

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<sup>6</sup> For an excellent breakdown of the indicative/imperative comparison of this verse, see D.A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), pg. 487-488

<sup>7</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: John 12-21*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Publishers, 2008), pg. 99

<sup>8</sup> "The general scope of this chapter is in the first verse; it is designed to keep trouble from their hearts; now in order to this they must believe." Matthew Henry, *Unabridged Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Kindle Edition, Location 248467

You see Jesus is attacking the very temptation that all Christians face. “I get into heaven by faith in Jesus, **but** the answer to my problems down here, is more complex than *simple faith*.” Wrong. Faith is what overcomes from first to last. The apostle John who was listening to Jesus *got* this message. He wrote in **1 John 5:4** “For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—*our faith*.” Meaning, when we *entrust* our souls to Christ, when we *surrender* our hopes and dreams to Him, when we *place our well being* in His hands, that *is* the victory. Anxiety will not overcome. Worry will not overcome trouble. Fretting will not overcome trouble. Trusting in Christ overcomes. Cast “...all your anxieties upon Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). That is the first comfort Jesus offers to troubled souls. ‘Trust in Me. I am sufficient. Trust in Me. I will never let you go. Trust in Me. You will never be disappointed.’

### **Comfort 2: There are many rooms in my Father’s House (v.2)**

Look at v.2 “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?” Remember *the main cause* of our trouble is absence from Christ. So Jesus is aiming at the highest comfort for the Christian: Heaven. That’s what “my Father’s house” means. In other places in the N.T. the idea of a *spiritual house* refers to the church, not as a building, but as the saints being organically connected together (1 Cor. 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5).<sup>9</sup> But here it’s clear from the context that Jesus is not referring to the church, but to Heaven. And what He says about Heaven is most comforting to the troubled soul. He says “In my Father’s house are *many rooms*.” In other words, Jesus is saying ‘Beloved, I’ve never planned on being separated from you. As long as heaven as been heaven, there have been many

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<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Carson points out, “The point is not the lavishness of each apartment, but the fact that such ample provision has been made that there is more than enough space for every one of Jesus’ disciples to join him in his Father’s home.” D.A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), pg. 489

rooms. You don't have to fear, you don't have to be troubled, there is ample room for all the people of God.'

In fact, Jesus pressed this point home in the parable of the great banquet in Luke 14. The master told him bring in more guests. And the servant replied in v.22 "Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is *room*." There is abundant room in Heaven for all of God's saints that He has loved from before the beginning of time. **Revelation 7:9** "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb," That is the second comfort that Jesus offers His disciples — 'Yes I am going away, but there is room for not only you, but for all the children of God to come as well.'

### **Comfort 3: I go to prepare a place for you (v.3)**

Look at v.3 "And if I go and *prepare* a place for you" We spoke a few weeks back about the uniqueness of Jewish betrothal ceremonies. The betrothal is not marriage. It is a legal ceremony that would require a divorce to break it. But it is the preparation time before the marriage is consummated. For a period of a year, each betrothed goes back to their own homes and prepare for the day of the wedding. The woman is charged with purifying herself and sewing her wedding dress (Rev. 7-8).<sup>10</sup> The man is charged with preparing a home for his wife, planning, gathering materials, and building. That is the imagery that Jesus is drawing on here. Jesus is going away, to prepare for the wedding. Meaning, that Jesus' departure was for our advantage.<sup>11</sup> And that is what He says "I go to prepare a place *for you*." When the younger prodigal son came home from his life of debauchery, what did the father do? He made *preparations*. "Bring the best robe...[bring the] ring...bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and

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<sup>10</sup> "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints."

<sup>11</sup> "The reason is spelled out: Jesus' departure is for they disciples' advantage." D.A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), pg. 488

celebrate” (Luke 15:22-23) Jesus is preparing for our arrival in heaven. **Matthew 25:34** “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared* for you from the foundation of the world.” That is the third comfort that Jesus offers His disciples: ‘I’m going away for your highest advantage, so that I can prepare for your arrival.’<sup>12</sup>

#### **Comfort 4: I will come again (v.3)**

Look again at v.3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again.*” This language of “coming again” is used variously at different points in this farewell discourse. As D.A. Carson points out:

“Sometimes [coming back] refers to Jesus’ return to his disciples after the resurrection (John 16:16ff); sometimes [it refers] to Jesus’ ‘coming’ to them by the Spirit after he has been exalted to the glory of the Father (John 14:16ff); [and] sometimes to his ‘coming’ at the end of the age.”<sup>13</sup>

So which one is it? Does Jesus mean his coming again after the resurrection, or his coming to them by the Spirit, or His final coming? From the context of v.2-3 it’s clear that Jesus means His second and final coming. And this is important for modern Christians. Because although the disciples were profoundly comforted by Jesus’ resurrection, and all Christians are comforted by the Spirit of Christ dwelling within us. The most absolute comfort is provided in Jesus’ second coming. And oh how John the apostle must have been encouraged by

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<sup>12</sup> “In the same way that God paid attention to the details of the home he prepared for Adam and Even in Eden, Christ is paying attention to the details as he prepares for us an eternal home in Heaven (John 14:2-3). If he prepared Eden so carefully and lavishly for mankind in the six days of creation, what has he fashioned in the place he’s been preparing for us in the two thousand years since he left this world?” Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, (Carol Stream, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), pg. 241-242

<sup>13</sup> D.A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), pg. 488

these words when he wrote them down.<sup>14</sup> Jerusalem had been destroyed, he was exiled on Patmos and it looked like the whole world hated Christianity. And he wrote down Jesus' promise: *I will come again*. The second coming of Jesus Christ is the what the whole universe is holding it's breath for. It is next most important event in human history. And it is the sustaining hope of shattered saints everywhere.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-55** "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, 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." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"<sup>15</sup>

The knowledge that Jesus Christ will most certainly come again and bring us to Heaven is an inestimable treasure. However, tragically, many evangelicals stop there. 'I get to go to heaven.' Stop. Many evangelicals preach a Christ-less heaven if they preach about heaven at all. And that is why the hope of so many is paper thin. There's no gospel if we end Christ's words there. The gospel is not mainly about how we get to go to heaven when we die. The gospel is mainly about how we get to be with Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup> That is not just a comfort for the troubled soul, it is the cure.

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<sup>14</sup> Both sources that I read cited that John wrote this most likely between 70 a.d. (when Jerusalem was destroyed) and 100 a.d. (when John died). Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible, Ed. Joel Beeke, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), pg. 1507; ESV Study Bible, (Wheaton, IL.,; Crossway, 2008), pg. 2015

<sup>15</sup> Also see 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1; James 5:8

<sup>16</sup> John Piper, *God is the Gospel*, (Wheaton, IL.,: Crossway, 2005), pg. 47

### III. The Cure of Troubled Souls

The main source of the disciples' trouble was not their lost property or their lost reputations, or occupations. It was that Jesus was gone. And Jesus finishes v.3 that would cure their trouble and ours forever. "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.*"

#### Being With Christ is the Deepest Longing of All the Saints

Jesus touches on the deepest longing expressed by all the saints that have gone before us.

This was David's singular longing to be with the LORD. **Psalm 27:4** "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."

Paul loved the church, but he said to be with Christ would be much better. **Philippians 1:21-23** "For to me to live is Christ, and to *die is gain*. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, *for that is far better*."

Or he says in **2 Corinthians 5:6, 8** "We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ...we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> cf. Exodus 33:18; John 17:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18

The Reformers spoke the same way about being with Christ.<sup>18</sup> Samuel Rutherford said “O my Lord Jesus Christ, if I could be in heaven without thee, it would be a hell; and if I could be in hell, and have thee still, it would be a heaven to me, for thou art all the heaven I want.” Martin Luther said something similar: “I had rather be in hell with Christ, than in heaven without him.”<sup>19</sup>

If these quotes sound unbiblical to you, it’s only because you’ve been fed an unbiblical notion of Heaven. The disciples would not have been comforted had Jesus told them that He was going to build a paradise for them, but He wasn’t going to be there to enjoy it with them. ‘Lord, take us to where you are, we don’t care where it is, as long as we have you, we have everything.’ Heaven is only good as a place if God is there. That is Heaven’s greatest gift, that there we have access to the LORD Jesus Christ, and to God our Father, and to the fellowship of the Spirit. That is why we can say that Heaven is truly Heaven. As one saint of old said “Wherever God is, there is Heaven...wherever God is not, there is hell.”<sup>20</sup>

Dear congregation, this is the cure that Jesus gives us for our troubled souls. The promise that one day we will see Him, face to face, to be in His

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<sup>18</sup> Likewise Matthew Henry said: “The quintessence of heaven’s happiness is being with Christ there” Matthew Henry, Unabridged Commentary on the Whole Bible, Kindle Edition, Location 248572; and “Heaven would be an unready place for a Christian if Christ were not there.” Matthew Henry, Unabridged Commentary on the Whole Bible, Kindle Edition, Location 248561

<sup>19</sup> Both of these quotes came from <sup>19</sup> Randy Alcorn's *Heaven*, (Carol Stream, IL.; Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), pg. 187

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

presence, to hear His voice, to feel His touch, to have Him call our names, to embrace Him, and never be separated from Him, ever.<sup>21</sup>

No power of hell, no scheme of man;  
Can ever pluck me from His hand<sup>22</sup>

## Application

Our Doctrine: Contemplating Heaven is the Divine remedy for all our troubles

Randy Alcorn tells the account of the swimmer Florence Chadwick, who in 1952, determined to swim from Catalina Island to the shore of California. She had already been the first woman to swim the English channel. The weather was not favorable that day. Foggy. Cold. She could barely see. She swam for fifteen hours. Finally she begged her mother, who was in the boat alongside of her to take her out. Her mother told her she was so close and not to give up. But Florence was too exhausted and stopped swimming. When they drug her in the boat, she discovered she was only less than a half mile away. At a news

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<sup>21</sup> Jonathan Edwards said Edwards' quote "...the redeemed have all their objective good in God. God himself is the great good which they are brought to the possession and enjoyment of by redemption. He is the highest good, and the sum of all that good which Christ purchased. God is the inheritance of the saints; He is the portion of their souls. God is their wealth and treasure, their food, their Life, their dwelling-place,... their everlasting honor and glory. They have none in heaven but God; He is the great good which the redeemed are received to at death, and which they are to rise to at the end of the world... The glorious excellencies and beauty of God will be what will forever entertain the minds of the saints, and the love of God will be their everlasting feast. The redeemed will indeed enjoy other things; they will enjoy the angels, and will enjoy one another; but that which they shall enjoy in the angels, or each other, or in anything else whatsoever that will yield them delight and happiness, will be what shall be seen of God in them." Jonathan Edwards *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2009), pg. 5

<sup>22</sup> "In Christ Alone" Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

conference the next day, she said “All I could see was the fog...I think if I could have seen the shore, I could have made it.”<sup>23</sup>

Those words are so instructive, if I could have seen the shore, I could have made it. Jesus shows us the shore in our passage. Heaven. So let’s consider it for a moment, because Jesus intends that in our consideration of Heaven, we would find a remedy for our troubled souls.

### **What’s not in Heaven?**

Nothing that would offer you the slightest discomfort. No anxiety, no depression, no hardness of heart, no strange glances or uncomfortable feelings towards one another. No loneliness. No more warring against the sinful nature. No longer will we say ‘the things I don’t want to do I do, and the things I do want to do I don’t’ (**Rom. 7:15-20**). We will only ever do exactly what we want, and it will perfectly please the Lord. The devil will no longer be roaming around like a roaring lion seeking to devour us (**1 Pet. 5:8**). He will have been cast into the lake of fire with all the rest of the demons and all the ungodly. (**Rev. 20:7-10**) There will be no more sorrow, no more grief, no more pain, or fear. **Rev. 21:4** “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

### **Why is Heaven so great?<sup>24</sup>**

First heaven is so great because it is inexpressible. Human language cannot contain it’s glories. After Paul returned from heaven, he said that “he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter” (**2 Cor. 12:4**) At the end of C.S. Lewis’ classic the Last Battle when all the children arrived in Heaven, Lewis wrote “...for them this was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the

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<sup>23</sup> Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, (Carol Stream, Il.,: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), pg. xx

<sup>24</sup> Much help in this section came from Wilhemus A Brakel’s *The Christian’s Reasonable Service: Vol. 4: Ethics and Eschatology*, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Reformation Heritage Books, 1995), pg. 361-363

cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."<sup>25</sup>

Second, Heaven is great, because Jesus said that it is “My Father’s House.” John said earlier in this gospel that “to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,” (**John 1:12**) Everyone whom God brings to Christ are His children. Good fathers leave a legacy for their children. God who is the best of all Fathers could not fail to prepare for His own dear children the very best of all inheritances. We inherit everything that Jesus inherits. **Romans 8:17** “and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,”

Third, we know Heaven is great because of what it cost. The cost of our salvation was infinite. Peter says “you were ransomed...not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.” (**1 Peter 1:18-19**) It would be an insult to the Son of God to have suffered the infinite wrath of God only to purchase us a small measure of happiness in heaven. No the infinite purchase price shows us the infinite worth.

Dear congregation, our biggest problem is the love affair that we have with this present world. God uses trouble and heartache and pain “...to unfasten us from this earth, and to set our minds on what lies beyond.”<sup>26</sup> When Jesus spoke to His disciples about their troubled hearts, He was teaching them the real marrow of their existence. Him.

That is our doctrine. To realize that contemplating Heaven is the Divine remedy for all our troubles. Therefore our duty is...

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<sup>25</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, (New York, NY.: HarperCollins, 1956), pg. 210-211

<sup>26</sup> Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, (Carol Stream, Il.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), pg. xix

## Our Duty: "Believe also in Me"

My main focus here is to speak to those of you who have not closed with Christ. Some of you perhaps think that you are too great of sinners and that you are unworthy to come to Christ. But Jesus' words should be of the greatest encouragement "In my Father's house are many rooms." Heaven will be full of men and women who were some of the most scandalous sinners on earth. And Jesus prepared a room for them.

Others of you perhaps are thinking that you have time to close with Christ, and you are arrogantly putting off the call. You have lived this many days, and you conclude that you will live many more days. How do you know when you will live and when you will die? Just as heaven is prepared for God's own children, hell is also being prepared for God's enemies. On the day of judgment, Jesus tells those who have rejected His call 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire *prepared* for the devil and his angels." (**Matthew 25:41**)

What is required of you? Jesus says in our passage: "Believe in God; believe also in me." This gospel was written "...so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (**John 20:31**) Surrender to Christ. Taste and see that He is good. He alone can make you clean. He alone can purify your heart and make you as white as snow. He already knows all of your secret sins, all of your evil thoughts and desires. He knows all your past and all your future. And He still says "Believe...in me. Surrender to Me. Entrust your soul with Me. And I will give you rest."

## Our Delight: Jesus Christ is the gospel!

The chief good that Jesus offers his disciples and us, is not Heaven but Himself. Jesus Christ is the gospel. Too many Christians have separated the benefits of Christ from Christ himself, treating grace, or faith, or justification, or even the gospel in some theologically abstract way. Dear congregation, grace

and faith and justification and gospel mean nothing if gaining Jesus Christ is not the emphatic chief end of all those words.

Think about a marriage. How tragic would it be to get the ceremony confused with the consummation? The blessedness of marriage doesn't consist in walking down the aisle, or reciting one's vows, or exchanging rings. Not the blessedness of marriage consists in saying of my beloved "You are mine and I am yours." How much more so is this true of the gospel? Jesus dying for our sin on the cross is not the best news of the gospel. Jesus requiring that we only trust Him alone for salvation is not the best news of the gospel. Jesus promising us that He will never lose one whom the Father gave Him is not the best news of the gospel. The best news of the gospel, and the cure for every troubled soul is found in our passage in Jesus' words: "I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

Listen to the words of our heavenly Bridegroom "I will take you to myself." No better words have ever been spoken. Jesus will look on us on that Great Day, on that final day, on that day when every trouble will melt away. The betrothal will be over. Our room will be prepared, and He will take us to Himself, that we may be where He is also.