Easter 5 John 14:1-12
May 10, 2020 528-141-760*-439
*CW-S – "When Peace Like a River"

"Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled!"
I. Because of Jesus' promise of heaven.
II. Because of who Jesus is.

Dear Christian friends,

I don't know **how many times** I've heard it but it's been a lot. "Pastor, I never expected this to happen. It's a good thing we **don't know everything** that's in store for us." Usually that's said with a SHELL-SHOCKED tone – the person has been broadsided by a **totally unexpected** problem. It may be a **major** MEDICAL ISSUE – a crumbling marriage – a problem tearing the family apart, etc.

Have YOU ever felt that way – AT A LOSS – BLOWN AWAY? You find it **a lot** in the Psalms. Psalm **46** pictures it this way – ***"though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging."***

That's the way the disciples felt here. It was **Maundy Thursday** evening. ONE BOMBSHELL after another has been dropped on them. Judas would betray Jesus. Peter would deny Him. But what REALLY HURT was **this talk** of Jesus leaving them. They were STUNNED – confused – AFRAID. They needed comfort and needed it BIG TIME. So Jesus spoke these beautiful words, ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled."***

Isn't that just perfect? ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled."*** There really was no need for them to be ALL WORKED UP and **worried**. There was no need for their ***"hearts to be troubled"*** because 1)of Jesus' promise of **heaven** and 2)**because** of who Jesus is.

I. Because of Jesus' promise of heaven.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled." The Greek word uses the picture of a sea or lake ALL STIRRED UP **by a storm** – waves billowing and crashing back and forth – **one after** another. GET the picture? That's the way the **disciples' hearts** were acting – ALL TOSSED about. Literally Jesus tells them, "STOP LETTING your hearts be troubled." Stop – **because** there was NO NEED for it.

Remember, this was **Maundy Thursday** evening in that upper room in Jerusalem. Jesus had been gently preparing the disciples for the COMING DAYS – for His betrayal and **arrest** – the trials and **crucifixion** – AND His glorious resurrection and **ascension** into heaven. A couple verses before this Jesus had again told them, ***"I will be with you only a little longer. Where I am going you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."***

After spending the **last three years** with Jesus it now seemed **as if** their **whole world** was COLLAPSING all around them. When that happens you can FEEL SO HELPLESS and **afraid**. You can start wondering **if maybe God** has LOST CONTROL. When our lives are CRASHING DOWN we are so clearly reminded that we're NOT IN CONTROL – we don't have ALL THE ANSWERS – we can't make everything TURN OUT OK. That can be so scary. We don't understand WHAT'S happening or WHY it's happening. We may wonder if GOD EVEN KNOWS what He's doing. Like the disciples our ***"hearts get troubled"*** – TOSSED ABOUT **like the sea**. You bet we know that feeling!

But what the disciples saw AS SO TROUBLING was really a BIG BLESSING. Jesus leaving them was NOT A LOSS but a **gain**. Jesus explains **what's happening** TO SETTLE them down. Jesus does so with SUCH BEAUTIFUL COMFORT.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me." Literally Jesus tells them, "KEEP ON trusting in God; **keep on** trusting in Me." Their faith was SHAKY but now was not the time to GIVE UP on God. **Just because** WE don't understand some things **doesn't mean** GOD doesn't know what He's doing. **Just because** WE'RE not in control **doesn't mean** GOD has lost control. **Just because** things aren't going the WAY WE WANT **doesn't mean** it's time to give up on God. ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled. (Keep) trusting in God; (keep) trusting also in Me."***

Jesus bolsters their faith – and **ours**! – with His promise of heaven. ***"In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with Me, so that you may also be where I am."*** Jesus' words speak of LOVE – COMFORT – SECURITY – SAFETY. They speak of heaven as **not simply** a POSSIBILITY or GOOD CHANCE but a blessed – guaranteed FACT.

That promise of heaven is what Jesus' whole life and **mission** were all about. God had every right to BAN us **forever** from heaven. Heaven is FOR PERFECT people. David wrote in Psalm 24, ***"Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol"*** (who always puts God FIRST in **everything**). ***"CLEAN hands – PURE hearts"*** – let's not kid ourselves! Your life – my life is NOWHERE NEAR that holy! Instead of expecting God to WELCOME US with **open arms** we should in all honesty hear Him say, ***"Depart from Me, you who are cursed!"*** OUR SIN and guilt are what should really ***"trouble our hearts."***

"I go and prepare a place for you." In our place Jesus had ALREADY LIVED the holy, perfect life we owed God. Now it was time for Jesus to PERSONALLY PAY for the sins of the whole world. God didn't brush off our sins with a **"no big deal."** God took them ALL OFF of us - put them all on His own sinless Son – and punished Jesus **in our place**. Jesus dies WE LIVE. Jesus is ***"forsaken"*** WE are forgiven.

But it doesn't stop there. Jesus is ALSO TALKING about His **glorious** resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven. THAT TOO is part of God's plan to save us sinners. Jesus shares with us His victory over death and the grave. Jesus makes His heavenly home OUR ETERNAL home.

When we get all worked up and **worried** about things GO BACK to Jesus' promise. Jesus doesn't promise us an EASY life here on earth but He does promise us ETERNAL life in heaven. As Christians – TRUSTING in Jesus – we have double comfort here. **When we die** our soul goes immediately to be with Jesus in heaven. AND when Jesus comes again in glory on the Last Day He will raise our dead bodies back to life. Then BODY AND SOUL we will live forever with Jesus in our ***"Father's house."*** THAT PROMISE sure comforts our ***"troubled hearts!"***

"You know the way to the place where I am going." THEY KNEW **all this** but they had lost sight of it. Troubles and **tears** – pains and **problems** – will DO THAT to us. They can make us FORGET what we've **learned** and **believe**. We need to be REMINDED and refocused back on **Jesus** and **His promises**. Then our hearts start settling down. We have our problems – but it's OK – we also have OUR JESUS.

Jesus was having a HARD TIME **getting through** to the disciples. SO PATIENTLY and **lovingly** Jesus works to comfort them. There was NO NEED for their ***"hearts to be troubled"*** –

II. Because of who Jesus is.

Befuddled Thomas asks, ***"Lord, we don't know where You are going so how can we know the way?"*** You know how Jesus answered him. ***"I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me."***

Note well what Jesus says here! Jesus didn't say, "I'll SHOW you the **way** and TELL you the **truth** and GIVE you **life**." ***"I AM the way and the truth and the life."***

The ***"way"*** to God is not simply a PATH WE TAKE but a PERSON – Jesus Himself. Only Jesus' blood – ***"the blood of (God's) Son cleanses us from all sin."*** Only when we are CLOTHED BY FAITH with Jesus' perfect life do we stand acceptable and presentable in God's sight.

The ***"truth"*** about God and salvation is not simply some HISTORICAL FACTS but a PERSON – Jesus Himself. Jesus is the truth – the VERY REALITY of God's love and mercy and faithfulness. ONLY in Jesus do we have the truth about God. ONLY in Jesus do we know the ONLY TRUE God.

The ***"life"*** is not simply a FORCE **within** us but a PERSON – Jesus Himself. Nobody gives Jesus life but JESUS GIVES us life. Jesus **gives us** physical life and time here on earth. Jesus **gives us** spiritual life – REUNITES us with our heavenly Father. Jesus **gives us** eternal life with God in heaven.

ONLY JESUS is this and can do this for **us** or **anybody else**. Jesus it the ONLY SAVIOR for all people. A person can be very devout and **sincere** and deeply religious – LIKE those **prophets of Baal** in the OT reading - but if he DOESN'T TRUST in Jesus he's **not going** to heaven. ONLY those who **trust in Jesus** have forgiveness and eternal life in heaven. ***"NO ONE comes to the Father except through ME."*** HOW BLESSED we are to know and believe in Jesus! HOW IMPORTANT it is for us to do all we can to SHARE Jesus with our family – friends – the world!

But Jesus still isn't done comforting our ***"troubled hearts."*** Philip wanted Jesus to ***"show (them) the Father."*** That would REALLY SETTLE them down. But Philip and the rest have already seen the Father – IN JESUS! Jesus tells Philip, ***"Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. I am in the Father and the Father is in Me."***

Jesus reminds us that He is TRUE GOD with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus takes us WITHIN the Holy Trinity and tells us things we CAN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND right now. To see and know Jesus is to ALSO SEE and **know the Father** because they ARE BOTH the **one God**. Don't try to FIGURE that out! Just REJOICE and take comfort in the **fact** that the Jesus who here comforts our ***"troubled hearts"*** is NOT JUST a **great guy** but the ETERNAL SON of God Himself. THAT JESUS says, ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me."***

I love those words, ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled."*** God grant that when we HAVE THOSE DAYS when our ***"hearts are troubled"*** we remember and TAKE TO HEART these comforting words of Jesus, ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust (keep trusting) in God; (keep) trusting also in Me."*** Amen.

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