

April 6, 2012 – Good Friday Service
“Don’t Let Your Hearts Be Troubled”
John 13:36-14:7

36 Simon Peter asked, "Lord, where are you going?"
And Jesus replied, "You can't go with me now, but you will follow me later."

37 "But why can't I come now, Lord?" he asked. "I'm ready to die for you."

38 Jesus answered, "Die for me? I tell you the truth, Peter—before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.

14 "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. **2** There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? **3** When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. **4** And you know the way to where I am going."

5 "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. **7** If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"

Peter had an intense love for Jesus. He always wanted to be with Jesus. He loved being with Him. He wanted to be wherever Jesus was. So when Jesus tells His disciples that He is going to be with them only a little longer, Peter wants to know where He is going. Peter didn't understand why Jesus was talking about His death; in fact Peter planned to protect Jesus, with his own life if necessary. He says so (v37): "But why can't I come now, Lord?" he asked. "I'm ready to die for you."

Jesus answered (v38), "(really Peter,) Die for me? I tell you the truth, Peter—before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me."

Ever been there? I have. "Lord, I will follow you anywhere. I will always be faithful to you. I would die for you."

“Oh, really, before the day is over...before the night is over...you will fail, you will sin against me.” We mean what we say, we are sincere, our desire is to obey the Lord, and do anything for Him, that was Peter’s intention too. But when the time of temptation and trial came, Peter denied even knowing Jesus and he did that not once but as Jesus predicted, 3 times “before the rooster crows tomorrow morning...”

Jesus knew that would happen to Peter, He knows that about us too, but He doesn’t stop loving us, just like He didn’t stop loving Peter. Jesus knows exactly what you will do to hurt Him. Yet He still loves you unconscionably, and will forgive you whenever you ask.

Look what Jesus says immediately after predicting Peter’s denial (14:1a): **"Don't let your hearts be troubled."**

In the Greek “your” is plural, He was speaking to all the disciples... including Peter whose denial He just predicted. All the disciples, not just Peter, were troubled about Jesus’ predictions that all of them would betray Him, deny knowing Him, and they all would abandon Him. After all, if Peter’s commitment was shaky, then every disciple should be aware of their own weakness. So to Peter and to all of us, after predicting our failure, Jesus says, “Don’t let your heart be troubled.”

Jesus doesn’t want our weaknesses and failures to trouble us. Peter claimed to have more faith than he had. We must be careful, for when we think we are standing firm, and put confidence in *our* faith instead of in Jesus we can fall and our hearts will be troubled. Jesus’ solution for troubled hearts is to trust Him.

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me."

Trust does not mean pretending we are strong; it means recognizing our weakness and need for God’s help. If we think we can follow Jesus in our own strength, we will fail, as Peter did. Yet, even when we do fail, because of the Cross there is forgiveness. When you sin don’t waste any time, repent and receive forgiveness, not because you are going to do better next time, but simply, and only because of the Cross of Christ.

Jesus goes on in 14:2 -3 and says

There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.

We always think of this verse only in terms of Jesus going to heaven to prepare a place for us. But did Jesus go to the Cross and rise from the dead only that we might be with God in heaven? No, He did it so that we can have immediate access to God the Father through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. This doesn’t deny the comfort and hope of heaven

in this passage, but heaven is not about a mansion or a room with wonderful accommodations; it is about being with God.

Jesus was letting us know that His death would provide the way for believers to live in God. By the Cross and Resurrection He would prepare this place for us.

The Greek word for “rooms” could be better translated “abodes” – dwellings. It shares the same root as the Greek word for “abide.” It means a dwelling place. The translation in both the KJV & NKJV of “mansions” is misleading. The prepared place is with Christ. Not a heavenly mansion, but Christ Himself. And we don’t have to wait to die, and we don’t have to wait for the Second Coming to live in Christ. Once Christ rose from the dead and once we put our faith in Him we have a living relationship with God. In this view, the “many rooms” would be the many members of God’s household. That’s why He says (14:2a)

There is more than enough room in my Father's home.

And so when He says ... **“I am going to prepare a place for you.”**

He is not just talking about preparing a dwelling for the future life of believers in heaven (He is talking about that, just not only about that), but also preparing the way for believers to live in God here on earth. Eternal Life begins in Christ now, not just when we get to heaven. When someone passes we have spiritual comfort because we know they are in God, and we have spiritual comfort because we are in God right now (but there place is better!).

The Cross & Resurrection of Christ put us in God and God in us. Jesus is the Way as He Himself claimed (14:6):

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

Many people get upset that Christians insist that Jesus is the Way and the only Way to the Father. But we didn’t make that up. No ancient committee met to make that decision. Jesus Himself made the claim. It really isn’t a question of tolerance, it’s a question of whether we want to accept what Jesus said. Jesus claimed to be the only way to God the Father. Many people say this way is too narrow. In reality, it is wide enough for the whole world. I say, “Thank you, Jesus for providing a sure way to get to God. Thank you Father for loving the world (which includes me) that much.

(14:7) If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"

Jesus not only says He is the way to the Father, He explains that He is the visible manifestation of the Father. To know Jesus is to know the Father. Jesus shifts from the future to the present when He says, “from now on ...” Jesus holds the way open for us

today – from now on, from this moment forward, we can begin a relationship with the Father by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.