

THE AWESOME GLORY OF CHRIST **(In His Comfort to His Disciples)** **John 14:1-6**

In the Sundays leading up to Easter we are preaching a series of messages entitled The Awesome Glory of Christ. Paul writes in 2 Cor. 4:6 that we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Heb. 1:3 tells us that Jesus is the brightness of God's glory. Jesus says in John 14:9, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father". So anytime we speak of the glory of Christ we are also speaking about the glory of God. They are one and the same. We mentioned last week that God revealed the glory of Christ upon the earth from the night that He was born. But His glory was seen as much as ever in the last 24 hours of His life. Last week we saw His glory revealed in His love for His disciples, as He took upon Himself the role of a servant and washed their feet. And today we are going to see His glory revealed in His comfort to His disciples. So turn in your Bibles, please, to John 14, and let's read about that comfort together (John 14: 1-6).

It was a troubling night for the disciples. Jesus had just told them during the Passover Supper that He was going to die, but also that He would rise again (Mat. 26:32). And a brief survey beginning in Matt. 16 shows that Jesus had predicted His death and resurrection four times before that. But the disciples never heard the resurrection part. They could not get past the part that He was going to die. And not only that, Jesus had told them that they were all going to forsake Him (Matt. 26:31). And He had told Simon Peter that he would deny Jesus three times.

So the disciples were discouraged and troubled and Jesus knew it. And you remember from last week that Jesus loved His disciples. He loved them to the end, He loved them to the utmost, He loved them perfectly. And He was carrying a heavy burden for them, that they would not lose heart (2 Cor. 4:16). And in John 14 He begins to encourage them with His last time of teaching that He would have with them.

Now, look what Jesus says to His disciples in v. 1. "Let not your hearts be troubled". He repeats exactly the same words in v. 27. And the Greek language is very specific here. It is a command, and it is a present tense command, meaning that it is to be obeyed continuously, moment by moment. And the force of the verb is this, "Stop letting your hearts be troubled". The disciples were already troubled, and Jesus tells them to stop. Beloved, this tells us something. It is human nature to worry, isn't it? But for the Christian worry is a choice. The disciples had chosen to worry and Jesus said to them, "Stop it!" And Jesus is saying to you and me today, "In troubled times, don't be troubled." You see, beloved, one of the greatest signs of genuine faith is peace in troubled times. For when trouble comes if the Prince of Peace reigns in our hearts, then peace reigns in our hearts!

Do you know what the philosophy of life is for some people? Let me quote Charlie Brown, one of the great philosophers of our day. Charlie Brown said, "That's the secret to life...replace one worry with another.." Well, what was meant to bring a smile in a comic strip is in fact the sad truth for many, many people. This is how the words of a recent hymn describe these worriers: "On they go with private pain, living fear to fear". Do you know anyone who lives from one fear to the next? Is that the way you live? Bible teacher Haddon W. Robinson said, "What worries you masters you". The godly WWII prisoner of war Corrie Ten Boom said, "Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength". Well, aside from Charlie Brown, these observations about worry are true.

But let me tell you the worst thing about worry. If you a believer in Jesus Christ worry dishonors God. You see, God says that if He is your refuge then no evil shall come near you and no plague shall come near your house (Ps. 91:10). God has promised to meet every need of His children by Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:19). God has told us in Phil. 4:6, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God". Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). And worry is the confession that you do not believe any of those promises. Either you do not believe that God is powerful enough to meet your needs or that He does not care enough to meet your needs. And worry brings pain to God's heart and shame to His name plus sorrow to your own soul. And the night before Jesus died the disciples were filled with worry, and Jesus comes to them and says, "Stop worrying!"

Beloved, the Bible is not a book of psychiatry, it is a book about God. It is not a history book nor is it a science book. But when the Bible speaks concerning psychiatry, history, or science, everything it says is absolutely true. And in the Bible Jesus gives the best advice for mental health that has ever been given, the best advice to cure the curse of worry. It is infinitely better than any secular psychiatrist or psychologist could ever give, and it is just four short words. If you are a worrier, Jesus says, "Believe also in Me" (v.1). Friend, I don't care who you are, that is the cure for every worry you could ever have. Believe in Jesus. And I will take that a step further. The success or failure of your present life and your life beyond the grave hinges on one thing alone – **whether or not you believe in Jesus.**

Now, if you would believe in Jesus you must understand that this means two things. First of all it means **knowing** what Jesus said. Jesus has given us many promises that will bring peace to our hearts, but if we don't know them they are as useless to us as a million dollar inheritance that nobody ever bothered to tell us was ours. And it sat in a bank somewhere for years when we could have had that new car or new house or dream vacation we never could afford. And there are countless Christians who live in a quagmire of worry and defeat because they've never discovered Jesus' blessed promises to them from His precious Word.

But believing in Jesus means more than just knowing what Jesus said. It means **resting** in what Jesus said. It means that we cast all of our cares upon Jesus, because He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). And it means that when we cast our cares upon Jesus we leave them there. And this is the hard part for most of us. Most of us bring them to the feet of Jesus, lay them down, and when we say “Amen” we pick them right back up and tote them out.

Do you know how to come to the point of resting in what Jesus said? Well, let me say that it is a simple path, but you can know that the devil will make it hard for you to stay on it. But if you stay on it, it will work! Resting in what Jesus said means that you **live** in His Word. As David said in Psalm 1, your delight is in the law of the Lord and you meditate upon it day and night. Oh, beloved, the Word of God is not good advice. It is not merely **inspirational** and **motivational**. The Word of God is **supernatural**! There is almighty power in God’s Word. And as you meditate upon God’s Word, as you saturate your mind with the precious promises of God, the Holy Spirit Who gave those promises will burn their truths into your soul and the weeds of doubt and fear will go up in smoke. The psalmist wrote, “Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble” (Ps. 119:165).

Someone said years ago that the way to keep from coming apart is to have a Bible that’s always coming apart. And the key word is “always”. So live in the Word. Live in what Jesus said. Not what Oprah said, or what Joel said, or what Dr. Phil said. Young people, don’t live in what Justin said, or what Justin sings. And as you live day by day in what Jesus said you will begin to rest in what Jesus said, and in the midst of trouble your heart won’t be troubled.

Well, in our text Jesus gives His disciples three words which, if they would simply rest in them, would bring peace to their troubled hearts. And I want us to examine each of them for a few moments. The first word that Jesus gives to His disciples is, “**I am going to Heaven to prepare your home**”. The moment before Jesus died He cried, “It is finished!” And when He drew His last breath, every sin of every sinner was paid in full, and if you’ve trusted Christ the door of Heaven was opened to you the second that you placed your faith in Him, and the hounds of hell were jerked off your trail never to pick up your scent again. But something else happened when Jesus cried “It is finished”. Jesus began working on another project, and 2000 years later the work is still going on. And that is His preparation of your home in Heaven.

Many of you have read or heard of the new book that’s recently come out about Heaven entitled, Heaven is for Real. It is the testimony of a four year old who died and went to Heaven and then came back again. And some of you have heard the testimony of Eben Alexander, a neurosurgeon who had the same experience and who is now telling his story all over the country. Beloved, I want you to know that Heaven is for real! But we don’t have to have the testimony of a four year old or a

neurosurgeon to believe it, because Jesus said that Heaven was for real. And I want to talk to you for a few minutes about Heaven.

Jesus said that Heaven is a literal place. It is the place where God dwells. Jesus prayed, “Our Father, Who art in **Heaven**, hallowed be Thy name”. In the end times it appears that at least part of heaven will be the New Jerusalem, with walls of jasper, gates of pearl, and streets of gold (Rev. 21: 18, 21). So it is a place of unfathomable riches. But friends, it’s not the jasper and silver and gold that makes Heaven Heaven. Why, some of the richest people on earth, who have more silver and gold than they even know, are the most miserable people on earth. The riches of Heaven simply remind us that the universe and all that it contains belongs to God. But one reason that Heaven will be so precious is the things that are not there.

Revelation 21:27 says that nothing will be in Heaven that defiles. There will be **no sin and no sinners** in Heaven. It will be a perfect place. Nobody will ever take advantage of you in Heaven. No one will ever lie to you or slander you. No one will irritate you in the slightest way. Every person in Heaven will always be kind and friendly. Can you imagine a place where everyone likes you and you like everyone? But you not only like them, but you love them and are thrilled to be around them. Can you imagine a place where everybody is your best friend? That’s how it will be in Heaven. John also tells us in Rev. 21 that there will be no temple in Heaven, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are Heaven’s temple and we won’t need a place of worship – we will be in their presence forever. And there will also be no sun in Heaven, for the glory of Jesus, Who is the light of the world, will be the literal light of Heaven (Rev. 21:23). How awesome will that be!

You remember the story of Jesus taking Peter, James, John, and Andrew up on a high mountain, and all of sudden Jesus was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun and His clothes were as white as light. And the experience was so glorious that Peter blurted out, “Lord, let’s just camp out up here for awhile”. But Jesus said no. Beloved, Jesus’ countenance will be shining just like that in Heaven. But up there we won’t have to go back down the mountain. We’ll get to bask in that glory forever and ever. And that’s the best part of Heaven, just being in the sweet presence of our Savior and Lord forever and ever. And that would make Heaven Heaven if there were nothing else up there at all.

But all these things are only the beginning of blessings because of what’s not in Heaven. Listen to Rev. 21:4 (read). Beloved, we humans are a suffering race!! We are of few days and full of trouble, according to Job. We suffer just because we live in a body of corrupting flesh. We suffer because of our sin. We suffer because of others’ sins. We suffer because of Satanic attack. But Jesus is preparing a place for us right now where all of these tormentors will torment us no more!

Paul says in Rom. 8:23 that we who have the Spirit groan within ourselves, eagerly awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body, which is the deliverance of our body from all of its ills (Rienecker). Child of God, can’t you identify with that this

morning? Don't you long for the day when your body doesn't hurt anymore? And even more, don't you long for the day when God is not mocked and sin is not flaunted anymore? Don't you long for the day when pre-born babies are not murdered in the womb? Don't you long for the day when God's pattern for sexuality is not turned on its head, and those who still believe that homosexuality is a sin are not called bigots and fools? Don't you long for the day when narcissism and hedonism is not the order of the day, with people living as if there is no God? Well, one day your groanings will all be over, because there will be none of these things to plague you in Heaven. For Heaven will be a perfect place, and we will live there forever and ever and evermore. Think about it like this. Jesus was a carpenter, right? And never did He make a piece of furniture that was not perfect, right? And He has been building your dwelling place in Heaven for 2000 years. Does that not tell you something of how awesome Heaven will be?

But Jesus said something else to His disciples on that sin infested night before His death to encourage them. He said to them, **"I'm going to Heaven to prepare your home"**, but He also said, **"I'm coming again to take you there"**. Look at v. 3. Now, beloved, let me tell you quickly what Jesus is not talking about here. He is not talking about coming to take the souls of dying saints up to Heaven at the moment of their passing. And He is not talking about His coming to indwell believers through the Holy Spirit beginning at Pentecost. These old theories that have been around for years are nothing but the devil's attempt to subvert the clear teaching of scripture. When Jesus said, "I will come again", He is talking about His bodily coming at the end of the age.

Listen to Paul's words in 1 Thess. 4:13-18. In v. 15 Paul talks about those who are alive and remain "until the coming of the Lord". There is no doubt that this is a personal, bodily coming of Jesus, and it takes place at the resurrection and the rapture of all the saints of the church age. One day, all of sudden, all of the dead in Christ will rise to meet Christ in the air. And then in a nanosecond later all of the living saints will be given a brand new incorruptible body and will follow them, and we will be with Him forever more. And notice that last verse again. "Comfort one another with these words". Paul was just reminding the Thessalonians of what Jesus said. "Let not your hearts be troubled.....I'm going to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I'm coming again to take you there".

So is the going pretty tough these days? Are you living under your circumstances, are they beating you down like the mean old drunkard beats his wife and children? Then as the writer of Hebrews said, look to the joy up ahead! (Heb. 12:2). Remember that Jesus is preparing a place for you right now where all of your heartache and pain will be wiped away forever by God Himself, a place called Heaven. And one day just as sure as you are sitting here right now, Jesus will come again and take you away to your perfect, eternal home.

We have looked at two words of encouragement that Jesus has given His disciples the night before His death. He said, **“I’m going to Heaven to prepare your home”**, and He also said, **“I’m coming again to take you there”**. But He speaks one more word to them that we must not miss, and that is, **“There’s no way to Heaven but through Me”**. Look again at v. 6. Friends, we live in a world that says it is ludicrous to believe there is only one way to Heaven. The world says that there are many paths to God, and you just find the one that works best for you. Buddhism seems right to millions, as does Islam, and Mormonism. We had visitors by our house just two or three weeks ago who were supposedly witnesses for Jehovah, trying to tell us that there is another way to eternal life other than Jesus. And by the way, their plan of salvation only gets them to the new earth, not the New Jerusalem.

But friends, do not be deceived!! Jesus says, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.....but by Me”. Peter says in Acts 4, “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved”. I heard of a skeptic who once came up to a Bible teacher after a meeting and questioned him on the exclusiveness of the Christian faith. How could Christians claim that their faith was better than anyone else’s? And the teacher replied something like this, “I’ll tell you what. You tell me about any other religious leader who has risen from the dead, and then we’ll sit down and talk. But until you do, don’t bother me”.

Young people, stand firm among your friends in your belief that Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven. Adults, forever proclaim to your children and grandchildren that there is no other way to God except through Jesus Christ. And may we never forget that every way to God is no way at all. Proverbs 14:12, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end is the way of death”.

Today Jesus has a message for every single one of us. If you belong to Him He is saying, **“I’m going to Heaven to prepare your home”**, and He also says, **“I’m coming again to take you there”**. So be encouraged today in your trials. Be encouraged in your striving to walk the walk of the godly. One day you will be rewarded and live with Him forever more. To some of you Jesus is saying, **“There’s no way to Heaven but through Me”**.