

Untroubled Hearts

John 14:1-3



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FOCAL Read In Unison John 14:1-3 KJV Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also¹.

The Great Shepherd of our souls - the Lord Jesus Christ - never wants His Sheep to be troubled. I listen with amazement to so many pastors who seem to *delight* in saying troublesome things to their flocks. Certainly the minister of the Gospel should preach the truth, and certainly the minister of the Gospel should say the *hard things*. When I was a boy my momma slapped my hand when she caught me playing with matches, and my daddy paddled me when he caught me sticking things in the wall outlets. Praise God they did this! If you love people, you will want to draw them away from doing anything that will be harmful to themselves. You cannot tell me that a parent truly loves a child when that parent allows that child to roam the streets and the malls all hours of the night.

Love requires a hard stance. Jesus spoke the *hard words*, but He never delighted in troubling the flock.

Oh, that we would learn from this great truth!

I heard a preacher once say:

¹ all texts in this sermon are from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted

1. When The Heart Is Troubled, Your FAITH Is Misdirected

"I had a DRUG problem when I was a kid growing up on the farm when I was young: I was DRUG to church on Sunday. I was DRUG to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather. I was DRUG by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults. I was also DRUG to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me. I was DRUG to the kitchen sink if I uttered a profane four-letter! word. I was DRUG out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flowerbeds and cockle burs out of dad's fields. I was DRUG to the homes of family, friends, and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one, to mow the yard, repair the clothesline or chop some fire wood, and if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have DRUG me back to the woodshed. Those DRUGS are still in my veins; and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack or heroin, and if today's children had this kind of DRUG problem, America would be a better place today."

The Lord often said hard things, but not out of the delight of troubling your hearts. The Lord's intent for us is that we

FOCAL John 14:1 KJV **Let not your heart be troubled ...**

When we have *troubled* hearts, then there is a breakdown in *where* we have placed our faith. In our immediate context we see that Peter had placed his faith in Peter, not in Jesus. We see this first when Jesus went to wash Peter's feet, and that dear man said:

John 13:8 ... **Thou shalt never wash my feet.**

....

Jesus has no sooner corrected Peter on this bit of arrogance before he turns around and tells the Lord:

John 13:36-37 ... **Lord, whither goest thou?** Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. (37) Peter said unto him, **Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.**

Peter's intent was good, but good intent is of little matter in the Christian faith. Peter *would be the man* at this time and stand up for His Master. **I will lay down my life for you, Lord. I am strong enough to do this!** God does not call the sheep to be strong enough. The Shepherd replied to Peter:

John 13:38 Jesus answered him, **Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily,**

I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

How poetic! Peter, who often crowed like a rooster, would have his failure marked with a crowing rooster. How many times have I stood before my Lord and said, "Not so, Lord, I will lay down my life for Thee", only to find that I have no power in myself. And Beloved, neither do you!

It is not our place to put our faith in ourselves or in our abilities. What we have, what we possess, we have from the Great Shepherd.

The Great Shepherd is *in charge of the troubled heart*. He Himself was troubled:

John 13:21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

John 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Illustrate But that is as it should be. The Shepherd can be troubled, the Shepherd *should* be troubled. That is His job, not our job. It is He Who leads to pasture, it is He Who maketh me to lie down in green pastures. It is Jesus Who leadeth me beside the still waters, and restoreth my soul. I do not trust in my own hand! How

foolish a man I would be if I needed to remove a corrupt organ, a bad appendix, and decided to do this myself. How mad, utterly mad it would be to take the scalpel and make the cut on my own torso! As mad as I would be to operate on myself, how much more insane is it to try and get to God's House with the coin of my own righteousness? It is Jesus Who leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.² So many times in my own life Peter has reared up and I have said, "I'll never deny Thee, dear Lord", only to find the forces of Satan and self overwhelm me. If I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever, then I can only do this by trusting and abiding in the Great Shepherd. Jesus said:

FOCAL John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Here is our solution to the troubled heart. If you believe in God, then believe in Jesus, for He, too, is God! Do not believe in yourself. Do not think that you are strong enough. You, like I, are not the Creator, we are *the created*. We belong to Him. As the Scripture says:

Psalms 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he [is] God: [it is] he [that] hath made us, and not we ourselves; [we are] his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

We belong to God, or we belong to chaos. We trust in the Shepherd, or we live confused and unstable

lives.

We give our lives totally to Him, or we will live our *afterlives* totally apart from Him. Human power has only the ability to fail. Divine Power has the ability to save, and will save, if you will only believe in Him.

If you have not trusted in Jesus Christ and have not asked Him to be your Savior, then your hearts *should* be troubled. If Peter could not stand under the gaze of the Pharisees when they came to take the Master, how can you expect to stand under the gaze of Almighty God in that day of Judgment? Hell is a place *designed for the Devil and his angels*. Jesus said that those who reject salvation by faith in Him shall be told at that Great White Throne Judgment:

Matthew 25:41 [God shall] say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

The terror of this is that hellfire *isn't even designed for humans*. It is a place **prepared for the devil and his angels**, a place that none of you should be!

Hell is a place where you who spent a lifetime away from God can spend an eternity away from God. If you lived this whole life rejecting Him and refusing Him, then He shall reject thee from His Heaven.

But this need not be. If you have turned to Him, if you have **Believed on God and also believed on God the Son**, then you are entered into that Family of God. Because you have obeyed the Scripture, and have

Romans 10:9-11 ... confess[ed] with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe[d] in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

What a joy that is, to know that your salvation is sure!

Illustrate In West Tennessee we often have terrible storms, great hailstones, strong winds, and tornadoes. When we see the storm clouds gathering and hear the crack of the thunder our hearts quicken. If we have them, we often scurry to storm shelters to hide until the tempest is passed. A strong shelter gives peace to the heart during the storm. After the storm has passed we often walk through the woods and enjoy the pleasant smells of the rain soaked soil. **C.H. Spurgeon³** said:

"It is pleasant to pass over a country after a storm has spent itself; to smell the freshness of the herbs after the rain has passed away, and to note the drops while they glisten like purest diamonds in the

³ Morning and Evening, "The Wrath To Come"

sunlight. That is the position of a Christian. He is going through a land where the storm has spent itself upon His Saviour's head, and if there be a few drops of sorrow falling, they distill from clouds of mercy, and Jesus cheers him by the assurance that they are not for his destruction."

We who have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord *believe on Him just as surely as we believe on God*. We believe we stand before God cleansed, not because of our own righteousness, but we who believe will ...

Philippians 3:9 ... be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Our faith is in Christ Jesus, not in ourselves. This is why we *are not troubled* by thoughts of death, for we

Galatians 5:5 ... through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

What does the Christian cling to for salvation? Not on ourselves, not on our own abilities - which are less than nothing - but on Jesus Christ. Heed that old song:

**My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,**

**But wholly trust in Jesus' Name.
When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.**

**On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.**

2. When The Heart Is Troubled, Your FOCUS Is Wrong

Jesus went on to say:

FOCAL John 14:1-2 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) **In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.**

The Christian will *never* be judged at that **Great White Throne** Judgment. If you have believed on Jesus Christ for salvation, then *you have already been judged*.

The Bible tells us:

John 3:18 He that believeth on [Jesus] is not condemned: but he that believeth not is

condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

You are - if you have believed on Jesus Christ - **never going to be condemned**. Jesus Christ has already taken the penalty of sin - a penalty you *certainly deserved* and put it on Himself. Our Great Shepherd:

1 Peter 2:24-25 ... **His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness:** by whose stripes ye were healed. (25) For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Jesus is so certain that you are going to be in Heaven with Him one day that He has **gone to prepare a place for you**. There is a **mansion** in Heaven with your name on it, compliments of Jesus Christ our Lord. May I say this? **Focus on that mansion**. Listen to these words carefully:

As a Christian you *did absolutely nothing to earn or deserve that mansion*. The mansion is provided. Jesus has **gone to prepare a place for you**, and you *cannot* put one nail in the walls of that Heavenly building. The building is prepared. However,

What you do as a Christian contributes to the future decoration of the walls of your mansion. You cannot build the mansion, but what you do *does* adorn the

walls.

We who are believers should *focus* on Heaven, on that future place we will have with Jesus. We should *focus* on the fact that *we are called to live unto righteousness*. We just read that verse:

1 Peter 2:24-25 ... His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that **we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness:** by whose stripes ye were healed. (25) For **ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.**

The Christian is called to live for Jesus, to *follow the Shepherd*.

We who are in Jesus should *live for Jesus* because ..

a) It just makes good sense. I have *never* gotten in trouble doing what Jesus told me to do. I can walk on water if the Master bid me "Come", for

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Living *in Christ and for Christ* is *power living*. Hang on to all the heroes you will - I'd rather have Jesus! The

sheep will never go wrong when his focus is on the Shepherd. Let the Shepherd do the worrying - it's His job after all! Better that I focus on *being what He wants me to be*, than striving to do it my own way. Follow the Scripture, and ...

Philippians 4:5-6^{HCSB} Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. (6) Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Has Jesus ever told one lie? Then focus on Him, on the Great Shepherd, and on that Mansion He has promised you. Remember too,

b) We must live for Jesus because *we will be judged for reward or for loss*. The Bible is very clear:

1 Corinthians 3:11-15^{HCSB} because no one can lay any other foundation than what has been laid--that is, Jesus Christ. (12) If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw, (13) each one's work will become obvious, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire; the fire will test the quality of each one's work. (14) If anyone's work that he

has built survives, he will receive a reward. (15) If anyone's work is burned up, it will be lost, but he will be saved; yet it will be like an escape through fire.

When God saved you, He called you into His Flock. You are called into partnership with the Great Shepherd.

Just as an earthly shepherd uses the wool of his sheep, the Great Shepherd expects you to work *with Him in this present age*. One day every work that you have done as a believer will be judged by the *fire of God*.

If your works have honored the Savior, then those works will be rewarded. Though you do nothing to build that Mansion in yonder glory, whether you honored Christ or not in this life may well decorate the walls of that mansion!

Illustrate Several years ago I preached a message on "Heavenly Crowns", and at the end of that message I had an old sourpuss of a man come up to me. With a scrunched up face, tell me "I don't want a crown when I get to Heaven - I don't do anything for crowns!" I was a young preacher and I bit my tongue, but I'll bite it no more. What I should have told him - and what I tell you today is - if you have this attitude you'll not get a crown in glory. Oh, you will get into Heaven. Jesus is preparing a place for you. If you are *ungracious and bitter, self righteous and careless, lazy in your spirituality or apathetic*, then look forward to Heaven and forget all

about crowns.

But Beloved, if you are like me, then you want to earn a crown for Jesus. It will be my greatest joy if I can lay even the smallest of crowns at my Master's feet! Look Believer, focus on that coming Mansion. Focus on the coming Judgment of Reward. Wouldn't you like to give Jesus something in return for that which He has given you? Then focus *on that Mansion*, focus on *the future Glory*, focus on *Jesus Christ Whom you love*, and you will not have time to focus on worry!

Look at what Jesus Christ promised:

FOCAL John 14:2-3 ... I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And **if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

In the ancient world marriages were not done as they are done today. When the Bridegroom came and proposed to His Bride, He always approached the Bride *through her Father*. Once the Bridegroom proposed and the proposal was accepted He then went *and prepared a place for His Bride*. The Bridegroom never determined when that prepared place was good enough. He had to keep working on that place until His Father looked it over and said, "That's good enough". Then the Bridegroom went and *received His Bride*, carrying her away to that prepared place.

Jesus Christ is coming again for His Bride, the Church.

We do not know when He is coming, but He can come at any time. When He comes to get us those left behind will remain in a terrible place and go through a Tribulation such as this world has never seen. I hope to be here when Jesus Christ returns for His Bride. Yet even if I am not here, I have this sure promise:

FOCAL John 14:2-3 ... I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And **if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

When will Jesus come for me? I don't know, but I focus on Him. He can come tonight before we finish this service. The Evangelist Billy Sunday⁴ said:

"The second coming of Christ is the emphatic doctrine of the New Testament. It is mentioned and referred to more than 350 times, and yet the majority of Church members never heard a sermon on the subject; that is the reason they think so little of looking into the matter themselves.

The Church makes much of Baptism, but in all of

⁴ Billy Sunday (1862-1935), was a professional baseball player from 1883 to 1891 for Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia teams. He was converted through the street preaching of Harry Monroe of the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. He left a \$5,000 a year salary as a baseball player for a \$75 a month for the previously evangelistic YMCA. From 1893 to 1895 was associated with J. Wilbur Chapman. He was an evangelist from 1893 to 1935. It is estimated that over 300,000 people walked the "sawdust trail" to receive Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. (Adapted from "The Wycliffe Biographical Dictionary of the Church," page 387, Elgin S. Moyer, 1982, ©Moody Press, Chicago, IL)

Paul's epistles Baptism is only mentioned or referred to thirteen times, while the return of the Lord is mentioned fifty times. This certainly shows which he considered the most important. McCheyne, the great Scotch preacher, once said to some of his friends: "Do you think Christ will come back tonight?" One after another they said: "I think not." Then he solemnly repeated: "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:42-44). With such admonitions as this, what right have we to be unconcerned about it and say, as many preachers do, "It is nothing to me; I take no interest in the subject, whatever." Who would care to travel on a train where the engineer would never read his orders? Who would ride on a ship where the captain never looked at the compass? You may call it rubbish, but the disciples called it the "blessed hope."

"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say" If Jesus had said: "I will not return for 2,000 years," nobody would have begun to look for Him before the time was near, but He expects his followers to be always looking for His return. Just as Simeon and Anna watched and waited for His coming, so we should be watching and waiting for His return."

Be certain of this, Jesus is coming again. He may come and Rapture us this very day - or He may come and receive any one of us individually by taking our souls to glory. We do not know when He is coming. The best way to **let not your heart be troubled** is to live for

Jesus because Jesus lives in you. To *prove your faith* by the life you lead. Live for Him, trusting Him, honoring Him, focusing on Him.

Have you tasted the bitter waters of *Marah*? Then rejoice, for the bitterness is only temporary. Jesus is coming again at any time to *receive you to Himself*.

Has the Master not said:

John 16:21-22 ^{HCSB} **When a woman is in labor she has pain because her time has come. But when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the suffering because of the joy that a person has been born into the world. (22) So you also have sorrow now. But I will see you again. Your hearts will rejoice, and no one will rob you of your joy.**

The Master comes - dwell on that. The Master watches us, even now, for He has said:

Hebrews 13:5 ... **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**

Focus on Jesus, dear Saved Soul. Allow the Jesus Who dwells within you to live through you. Are you ready to live forever with Jesus? If He came back in the next moment, returning to receive you to Himself, would you

be ready?

Illustrate You see, Heaven is a place where the *prepared heart* meets the *Preparer of the Heart*. It is a place where *impossible people* meet the God Who *makes all things possible*. It is a place where those *who are foolish* meet the *One Who is Wise*. Heaven is a place where the *sheep* meet the *Shepherd*, and the *Bride* meets it's *Bridegroom*. Are you ready? Is your heart prepared? I pray that you are, dear friends, for He comes quickly.

