

“The Gospel of John: Rapture Reassurance”

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Scripture

John 14:1-6

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2“In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.”

3“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

4“And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?’”

6“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

Last Week

Recap of John 13:

Jesus has set the culture for the group

He’s dismissed the betrayer to go do his evil

He is going to give them the over-arching directional statement, the mantra, the ethos they should follow

The disciples learned that THEY would be the one to pick up the Lord’s mission on the Earth

We must love one another as Jesus loved us if we are to be known as His children

This Week

Jesus has eleven young men who are downcast and despairing

How can He pick up their spirits?

By reassuring them that they He will provide for them when it counts

We should also be reassured

Do Not Worry

He sees the downcast group in front of Him

There is no joy after He tells them He is leaving

John 14:1

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.”

“Troubled” -> it’s that same Greek word *tarasso* that described Jesus in John 13 -> considering the cross

It means to be “Agitated” -> “stirred up inside, emotionally”

Jesus uses the word “heart” -> Bible never notes the heart “organ” - just the centre of emotions and desires

“Don’t be overcome emotionally,” Jesus says

“Don’t worry about the future”

Instead, “believe in God, believe also in Me”

Why should they do that?

Because Jesus holds their future in His hands

“Because He lives” -> I can face tomorrow...all fear is gone...because I know He holds the future...”

John 11:25-26 (before raising Lazarus from the dead)

“I am the resurrection and the life; **he who believes in Me will live even if he dies**, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.”

Whatever befalls you on earth, you can have a future with Jesus

Believe in Jesus and live forever

Why shouldn’t the disciples worry?

I Will Prepare For You

John 14:2

“**In My Father's house are many dwelling places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you.**”

The KJV has “mansions”

The Greek word for “dwelling places” is *mon-ay* -> **a place of permanent residence** -> to remain there

Jesus tells them there is a purpose in His departure

He goes to prepare a place for them

It’s not a temporary place

This Greek word is used twice in the Bible -> both times attributed to Jesus in John 14

John 14:23

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and **make Our abode with him.**”

That permanent abiding with us comes with the Holy Spirit -> **He sets us permanent residence inside believers**

Jesus tells the remaining eleven they have a permanent place with Jesus

Jesus adds, “if it were not so, I would have told you” -> He wants them to know the truth **and to be secure in it**

But He doesn't stop there

He tells them that He will come back for them someday

I Will Return For You

John 14:3

"If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself**, that where I am, there you may be also."

Jesus promises to come again and to personally receive them to Himself

When will this happen?

Some think that He means individually, when a believer dies, he or she will be personally collected by Jesus

Others believe He is speaking that believers will be collected as a group

We call that the Rapture

When Jesus rose in His Ascension

Many of His own looked on at Him departing the earth...wondering -> **"when will we see Him again?"**

He was sure to have someone there to answer that question:

Acts 1:9-11

"He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, **two men in white clothing stood beside them.**

11They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.**"

He ascended and He will descend again to collect His own someday

- If we die here before He comes, we will see Him in Heaven
- If we are still alive when He returns, we will see Him come to collect us

This is the same as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**. Then **we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

Therefore comfort one another with these words."

But there's a good question to ask -> "Why will He receive us to Himself?"

This is simply beautiful

So that, "where I am, there you may be also"

How about that? -> **Jesus says that He wants us to be with Him!**

Have you ever thought to yourself, "I'm such a burden to God... I'm such a poor example of a Christian"?

Jesus wants YOU to be with Him!

The disciples had felt this before:

Mark 3:13-14 (When Jesus called the Twelve in the beginning)

“He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. **And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him** and that He could send them out to preach”

Mark’s account is Peter’s viewpoint -> He called them “so that they would be with Him”

God wants you to be with Him!

But Thomas is still a little unsure about the journey

I Am The Way

John 14:4-5

“**And you know the way where I am going.**” Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, **how do we know the way?’”**

I remember when I first went to Georgia from Michigan

I was asking a lady for directions at a gas station, trying to find the road downtown to the college campus

She told me, “You can’t get there from here!”

What do you mean I can’t get there from here?

How many people do you know who simply do not know the way to Heaven?

They might think they know the way -> “just be a good person and God will accept you”

It is the deceit of self-evaluation

“God’s standard is a little higher than your own standard of evaluation”

Many will fail God’s standard

Jesus taught about the way to Heaven:

Matthew 7:13-14

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. **For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.**”

Few find the narrow way

Some will make an argument to get into Heaven, though

Some will give the Lord their spiritual resume:

Matthew 7:21-23

“**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.**”

Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you'"

You must have a personal relationship with Jesus to enter Heaven

You must be open to knowing Him -> **have a deep desire to know Him**

Paul said it this way:

Philippians 3:7-11

"Whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, [OH] that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."

Jesus revealed Himself to Paul

Paul was amazed that he could actually know the Lord, personally

How about you? Are you that way? Do you have a deep desire to know Jesus?

If you do, and the disciples obviously did -> Jesus reveals Himself

He responds to Thomas (and, indirectly, to the remaining eleven disciples):

John 14:6

"Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."**

There is an exclusivity in Jesus's words: **He is the ONLY way to the Father**

"Jesus is the Answer for the world today, above Him there's no other -> Jesus is the Way!

He is the Truth -> **He is the ONLY Truth you need**

When He comes back, as we see in Revelation 19, written on His thy are the words "faithful and true"

If He says it, you can believe it

He is the ONLY Life -> He has the words of eternal life

John 6:66-69 (after some difficult teaching to the Jews)

"As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So, Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" Simon Peter answered Him, **'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.'** We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

It is true -> to whom else can we go?

He is the only path to Heaven -> you need a personal relationship to get there

Jesus offers a personal relationship:

Revelation 3:19-21

“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore, **be zealous and repent**. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; **if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me**. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

To dine with Him or to “sup with Him” -> intimate relationship -> a personal relationship with the Lord

If you want to see Heaven, you'd better develop a personal relationship with Jesus

How do you do that?

- 1) Recognize He is the Lord of all -> and repent -> change your mind from thinking you control your destiny
- 2) Realize that He is the ONLY Savior you need -> and repent -> you cannot save yourself or work your way into Heaven -> no matter how good you are, you're not good enough on your own merit
- 3) Ask Him to come into your life -> to send the Holy Spirit into your life to transform you -> to repent
- 4) Cultivate that deep desire to know Him, through prayer, through the study of His word -> to repent

Matthew 4:17

“From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**’”

Is it your time to repent?

The kingdom of heaven is at hand!

Prayer

Benediction