

John Ch 14:1-6

“Dealing With Disturbed Disciples”

Have you ever had one of those days whereby it seems like things are just cruising along great and then out of nowhere it seems like your whole world comes crashing down? I mean it's like seconds ago things were going great and now (in a moments time) my whole world has been turned upside down! You're just going about your job, you get a call to step into your boss' office, and out of nowhere, “We have to let you go.” Perhaps the phone rings in the midst of an otherwise fine, fun, family evening and on the other end is the news that a friend, or a family member has passed away, and it's like the life just gets sucked right out of you.

Well, as ch 14 comes into focus for us it happens right in the midst of the roof crashing down around Jesus' disciples. I mean, I'm thankful for ch and vs references, but in some cases the people that picked the places to divide them did an incredibly poor job, and I think that this particular ch break is one of them. Jesus is less than 24hrs away from the cross, and so He's just bringing the hammer down for these guys as to the way things coming down. They've had a wonderful meal, Jesus has washed their feet, He's been teaching them about servanthood, and though He's *alluded* to it, it almost seems to come out of nowhere. He's speaking to them of how when someone receives the one He sends in reality they're receiving Him, and if they receive Him, they receive the Father who sent Him. and This all good, then Jesus pauses, and the room is swallowed up in silence, and it begins to become apparent that something is troubling Him. and I don't know if perhaps He looks at His disciples 1 by 1, or if perhaps in a moment of consternation He glances down and away from them, but He says, “Most assuredly I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” and In almost a rapid fire of successive prophecies He begins to speak of how *Judas* will defect, how *He* is going to depart, and how *Peter* will deny Him, and 2 of those 3 things will happen before the sun comes up, and as He's speaking it's already dark. Well, as you might imagine this makes for some disturbed disciples, or to understand another way, they're all freaking out, and they can't even believe what they're hearing. I mean things are going fine right? and So ch 14 deals primarily with the way Jesus tries to reestablish order in the disciples hearts and counterbalance for them this disturbing data.

He diffuses the dire straits of these His disturbed disciples in at least 5 ways. #1 By reminding them of the eternal perspective, #2 The positive promise of His return, #3 The power of prayer, #4 The presence of the Holy Spirit who dwells *with* them and will be *in* them. and #5 His personal peace that He promises to impart to them.

But if you recall from last week I mentioned to you that the beginning of vs 1 of Ch 14 is still with in the context of what's happening there in vs 36-38 of ch 13. and So that we might follow the flow we want to pick it up there. and That we might be aware of how this conversation comes about, look at what Jesus says in vs 33 (read), now look at vs 36.

Vs36-38

Now you remember how we mentioned that it seems like vs 34 and 35 didn't really even get to Peter, he's still stunned over vs 33 and all he heard was that Jesus was going away, and that he couldn't come with Him. and Then this conversation ensued whereby the Lord made it clear to Peter that not only was he not going to be able to lay down his life for Him, but that he would deny that he even knew the Lord 3 times by morning. and So things have developed in such a way as to reveal one of the most trusted in the group (Judas) is defecting, and the group leader (Peter) will be denying the Lord, and all this is to take place in a matter of hours from this point.

Now we do well to take a couple of moments here and distinguish the difference between Judas, and Peter. When Peter said that he would lay down his life for the Lord, he meant it, his spirit was willing, but the problem is that his flesh was weak. He was trusting in his own heart, his own strength, and what does the bible say? *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."* 1 Cor 10:12 and Again, *"He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered."* Prov 28:26 Peter would've done well to believe the word of the Lord when He said, "Where I'm going you can't come." But instead he took confidence in the follow through ability of his flesh rather than simply submitting the Lord's word which he will come to sorely regret, as do we all when we boast in our own ability, or take confidence in our flesh rather than just trusting the word of God.

"I'm strong enough, I can with stand that type of temptation and be a witness in that situation." Peter's heart deceived him, and therein lies a lesson for us all, don't place confidence in the position of your heart unless it lines up with the word of God. "How could something that seems so right, be so wrong?" Because the word of God calls it sin. "I know in my heart that once we're married I'll be able to convert him, and he'll become a believer." Or, "I'm dating that person, but it's really an opportunity to witness to them, to share Jesus."

But the bible says, *"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'"* 1 Cor 15:33 and Again, *"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God."* 2 Cor 6:14-16 But so often we think that we know better than the Word of God, or, that may be true for others but we're somehow exempt, and that type of attitude and frame of mind will serve as a snare to your life every time. How much better to humble yourself and submit to God's Word and just avoid those situations or temptations altogether.

Peter is going to learn that the hard way, but the Lord would have us to learn from his mistake rather than have to repeat it ourselves. It's true that we learn from our mistakes, but so often if we'll just obey the Word of God we'll learn not to make those mistakes in the 1st place. So then what is that distinguishes Peter from Judas, they both denied the Lord. It always comes back to one thing doesn't it? The heart, deep in Peter's heart there was a love *for* Jesus, a desire to stand *with* Jesus, and be a support *to* Jesus. But in the heart of Judas was none of those things, he didn't *love* Jesus, wasn't committed *to* Jesus, nor did he desire to make his stand *with* Jesus. Peter was willing, Judas wasn't, Peter's heart deceived him, Judas' didn't, Peter planned to stand with Jesus, Judas had purposed to stand *against* him.

So the difference between Peter and Judas is the difference between night and day, and in the end Judas would *regret* his decision, but Peter would *repent*. and There's a big difference between *regretting* and *repenting*, a lot of people come to regret their decisions, and they're sorry for what they've done, or at least sorry that they were caught doing what they did. But regret in and of itself doesn't constitute repentance, I might feel guilty over something I've done, but that doesn't mean I won't do it again if given the chance. The bible says, "*For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*" 2 Cor 7:10 In other words if your sorrowing over something produces repentance in your life, don't regret that, rejoice in it, that sorrow served to grow you in godliness. But the worldly sorrow won't bring about a change in your life; you just persist on the pathway of death. and That's the difference between Judas and Peter, Peter experienced a *godly* sorrow because He loved the Lord, so he repented, but Judas' sorrow was worldly regret, which in the end led to his death, he committed suicide.

But Jesus is here and He's telling His disciples how the leader of their group, brave Peter is going to tuck tail and run, and so they're disturbed, they're troubled, Peter's troubled, and so Jesus continues on here in vs 1 of Ch 14 and says,

Vs1

You know I love how the Lord was never about Himself but that He was always about others, and we touched on this a couple of weeks ago. He's the one that's about to die, about to absorb in Himself the penalty for the sins of the world yet what's He doing? He's comforting His friends, encouraging those around Him, and what's He do here? As they're all out of sorts and disturbed about the situation at hand the 1st thing He does is recalibrate their focus, He gets their eyes off the situation at hand and back on God where they need to be, this phrase here, "You believe in God, believe also in Me" is an imperative, it's a command. "Hey, believe in God, believe also in Me." Don't focus on the situation, maintain your trust in God, and your belief in Me, Isaiah tells us, "*You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*" Isa 26:3

Situations begin to trouble us when we're focused on the problem, but when our mind is stayed on the Lord we have peace because we realize that He's in control, He's bigger than our problems, is there anything too hard for God? No, Paul said it like this, "*Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*" Col 3:2 Get your eyes off the situations and circumstances of this world, and place them on the Father, trust in Jesus Christ You see, 1st comes the command, "Let not your heart be troubled," then comes the key, "Believe in God, trust in Jesus." What's the key to curing the troubled heart, maintaining focus have faith in God, believe in Jesus Christ

Of course this statement that Jesus makes here regarding believing in Him as well as God couldn't be more clear regarding His deity. Remember when Paul said regarding, "... *Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,*" Phil 2:5-6 and so it would be blasphemous if Jesus was anything less *than* God to call upon His disciples to believe in Him *as* God.

Vs2-3

Now in the broad picture He's speaking to all His disciples, but contextually this is still spilling out of the conversation with Peter, and you only prepare a place for someone if you're confident of their arrival. and So The 1st thing He does is get their focus placed where it needs to be, and then He begins to bolster that up, or reinforce their point of view with the eternal perspective. You may be troubled now but a proper perspective of Heaven will turn our despair into delight, and our fear into faith. Paul said it like this, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*" Rom 8:18 and Again, "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*" 2 Cor 4:17-18

But before we get too far removed I wanted you to see the fact that Jesus said to Peter, "I know that you're going to fail me, but I'm still going to prepare a place for you." and As I was saying, you don't prepare a place for someone unless you're confident of their arrival. and So what an incredible encouragement for Peter, "You're going to blow it big, but you'll still be with Me in Heaven one day." and It's an encouragement for us as well, how often we blow life in what we consider to be a big way, and we can feel like that's it, how can the Lord restore *us* how could He ever entrust anything to us again? But that's one of the lessons we glean here, Jesus knew all about Peter's failure, yet He still promised him a place, and that he would follow after the Lord and be with the Lord one day.

So the Lord is gracious, and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in love, and where sin abounds grace abounds much more and as I've said before if we're willing to repent, He's willing to restore.

Now He says here, “In My Father’s house are many mansions” and the reference here to the Father’s house obviously being Heaven, Heaven is where the Father dwells. and He says that there are “Many Mansions” there, now this is where the idea that we’re all going to get some type of palatial estate when we get to Heaven comes from. and I’m not going to tell you that I understand the fullness of what this statement entails, but I have my doubts regarding the intent of Jesus being a southern colonial kind of a house there overlooking the lake with the back 9 just a stones throw away. #1 In Heaven we won’t need sleep so I suppose the mansion wouldn’t need any bedrooms, #2 I don’t know that we’re going to be frying this and that up in a pan at dinner time so I would doubt that we need a kitchen, however whatever we do eat would be absorbed into the body totally because there would be no waste so it wouldn’t need a bathroom.

So I’m just not altogether convinced that that was the intended meaning here behind this word translated mansions. Literally it means, “Dwelling places” or “Abiding places.” The bible now and again refers to these bodies we live in as “tents” and we all know that tents aren’t permanent structures, they’re just temporary abiding places meant to hold over for a short period of time until you move into something permanent. and So just to say it out right, I’m of the persuasion that what Jesus is speaking of here is the new body that we’ll each receive when we get to Heaven, when we move out of these old tents into our permanent structure.

We read in 2 Cor 5 “*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.*” 2 Cor 5:1-5 So I’m of the persuasion that this is the very thing Jesus is in reference to here when He speaks of those habitations, those abiding places that await us. “Are you saying that you have a body kind of waiting there in Heaven to be doled out to you like a suit off the rack when you get there?” Well, exactly how the transaction and the transition is going to take place I don’t know, but the bible is clear that we have a building from God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, and the reference there is to our new glorified bodies that we’ll one day receive.

But we notice the details here Jesus says, “If it weren’t so I would have told you” now how would He know what was or wasn’t in Heaven? Because in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God, He was in the beginning with God and all things were made through Him and with out Him nothing was made that was made. and The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, for the law came through Moses, but grace and truth came through...Jesus Christ This is another statement of His eternal nature, He knows what’s in Heaven because He came forth out of eternity past *from* Heaven.

I was watching Larry King the other night and he had Bill Maher on as a guest, and generally speaking Bill Maher just makes me mad because he thinks he's got such a down to earth view of everything (which is his problem, he's earthy, as opposed to heavenly minded). But he was speaking about religion a little bit and he said something to the effect of, "I don't take any mans word about what happens when you die. All kinds of people pretend to know all kinds of things that happen when you die, but the fact is no man knows what happens when you die."

He went on to speak of how everyone is a little scared of death, and is there a Heaven and am I on the V.I.P. list when I get there, but no man knows. and I thought, you know good for you Bill, you're right on that point, you do well to take no *man's* word about the after life. Now that rules out Muhammad, Buddha, Confucius, and all the rest, but lets suppose you could hear from someone who had come from out of eternity past, someone who'd tasted death and was dead for 3 days and lived again, someone who was more than a man, but God wrapped in human flesh. Would you believe what *He* had to say? Because that's exactly who Jesus is, God come in the flesh, and He knows the reality of Heaven, He knows the reality of hell, and it's apparently bad enough that He was willing to leave eternal bliss, glory and honor, and the countless praises of the angelic hosts, to come down to this earth, be despised and rejected by man, beaten, brutalized and nailed to a cross in order to spare you from going there. When Jesus speaks on eternal matters, He speaks with authority, from personal experience because all things were made through Him and with out Him nothing was made that was made, and He says here, if it weren't so I would've told you.

Next He says, "I go to prepare a place for you." Now I've often heard this taught as a reference to preparing that mansion, or the abiding place that we're to inhabit, and that may be. But as I study this it seems to me that Jesus had a very specific agenda that He had to accomplish before man could be with Him where He was. So that it's not a continual preparing and making this just right or rearranging the other or whatever, but in a single solitary act He would prepare a place for us, what place (vs 3 tells us that it's the place where He is.) and So really it seems to me that the place that He had to prepare for us was Heaven itself, not only did we need to be prepared for Heaven as by the blood of Christ, but Heaven needed to be prepared for us as by the blood of Christ. As you may well know before the shed blood of Jesus there was no one in Heaven, (in regards to mankind). Those who believed in the Messiah to come would go to what the Bible refers to as Paradise, A.K.A. Abraham's Bosom, (Luke 16, Eph 4.) Even after the resurrection Matt's gospel tells us that the saints of old were seen walking the streets of Jerusalem because they couldn't precede in the ascension, there was some High Priestly prep work to be done.

What do you mean? Heb 6 says, "*This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*" Heb 6:19-20 Now follow me here, turn to Heb ch 8 (Vs1-5)

So we understand that the tabernacle of the OT was patterned after the actual instruments and objects that are in Heaven, and as you know all the OT sacrifices were a foreshadowing of the sacrifice fulfilled in Christ, and the high priest of the OT system would enter the most holy place one a year on the day of atonement. and He would take the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkle it on the Mercy Seat thereby creating “Atonement” as it were for the nation. and This whole ritual was looking forward to that which Christ would accomplish being both the sacrifice for the sin of the world, and simultaneously acting as the High priest to offer His blood for our atonement. Look at Ch 9 (Vs23-26).

So having prepared Heaven for us through the work of the cross, and having prepared us for Heaven by the work of the cross, He says that where He is, (which is Heaven) there we may be also. Before everything was prepared, and in order we couldn't be where He is, but now by His shed blood we can. and Here we have a very obvious claim *by* Christ as to the 2nd coming of Christ. This isn't really a reference to when we die and Jesus coming for us, that's sentimental and all, but it's not directly what He's referring to, but rather He's claiming a 2nd coming. This accords more with 1st Thess Ch 4:15-18 (which you can read on your own).

Vs4

Now He just told them that He's going to His Father's house, He's going to Heaven, and the way that He's going there is by way of the cross, the sacrifice of Himself is to precede His ascending into Heaven. He just told them that, and we see all this in hindsight so we're following real easy, but they're still reeling.

Vs5-6

So Thomas says, “Lord, we don't know what you're talking about, You just told us that where you were going we couldn't come. So we don't know *where* You're going, and if we don't know where You're going we sure don't know how to get there!” and It's like we mentioned a few weeks ago the only way to get to Heaven is through the cross of Jesus Christ It's like the door to heaven is there to be opened or closed by all of mankind individually before God, and the door hinges on the cross, so you open the door to the work of the cross, and you accept the work of Jesus Christ on your behalf, and you have access to the Father and an open entrance into Heaven. You close the door on the cross, and you by your own volition shut yourself out of Heaven. Jesus presents an all-inclusive exclusivity. The way to everlasting life is open to everyone, but exclusively through Him alone, no one gets to the Father but by Him. He is the way to God, to eternal life, and He's the embodiment of truth which substantiates the fact that He's the way, and He is the well-spring of life, he who has the Son has life, and he who has not the Son, has not life. (We'll pick up on these thoughts next time).

So perhaps you're here and you have not the Son, you've never given your heart to Jesus Christ Don't be deceived God loves you so much that He gave His only begotten Son so that if you would just believe in Him, place your trust in Him, you'll never perish but have everlasting life. But apart from Christ you'll perish, Jesus wants to forgive you of your sin and to make you brand new, perhaps you're troubled about your present lot in life, believe in God, trust in Jesus Christ Grab hold of the eternal perspective and let the Lord calm and quiet your heart and give you the hope (the assured expectation) of everlasting life today. "How can He do that for me?" By coming into your heart and into your life as you just open your heart to Him, and invite Him in by faith, He won't invade your space, but He'll come in if you ask Him.