

## The Father's House: A Heart Set on Eternal Things (John 14.2-3)

### I. OVERVIEW: LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

- A. Jesus exhorted his followers to not let their hearts be troubled (John 14.1). The means that he gave to them for seeking to live with a steady heart in the midst of the troubles of this life was to *believe in God and believe in him*.

<sup>1</sup>Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14.1)

- B. In these three chapters (John 14-16), Jesus outlines beautiful truths that are intended to stabilize the hearts of his followers in the face of circumstances and situations that seek to weigh us down with troubled hearts.

- C. We are to engage our hearts in the face of being troubled (weighed down with anxiety, grief, bitterness, anger, rage, shame, etc.) by rehearsing the truth of God revealed in his word with a spirit of thanksgiving.

<sup>6</sup>do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4.6-7)

- D. Jesus relates the truths of John 14-16 to standing firm, without offense. A troubled heart is often the seedbed for offense; and offense is the seedbed for deception and stumbling.

<sup>1</sup>I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away (*stumbling, NASB*). (John 16.1)

- E. Jesus did not leave us to ourselves in the face of such dynamics of the heart. He gives us storehouses of truth that we are to seek to lay hold of in the midst of our troubles. He promises to release peace as we engage the truths he has revealed to us.

<sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (John 14.27)

<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind (Rom 12.1-2)

### II. THE FATHER'S HOUSE

- A. The first truth that Jesus gives to his disciples after exhorting them to believe is the beautiful truth that they will live with him forever in his Father's house.

- B. The starting point for engaging our troubled hearts in this age is the proclamation that he will return to them in order to take them to his Father's house. The Father's house is a term for the dwelling place of God (heaven).

- C. It is a remarkable reality that Jesus *begins* with an eternal perspective. His counsel to us in the face of the trials of this world, the hardships of life, and the temptations we face to be weighed down with sorrow and despair is to remind us that he has an eternal home for his people.

- D. Many believers do not spend time thinking on, meditating on, or thanking God for the reality of an eternal dwelling with him. This is because many of us do not rightly conceive of heaven and have wrong ideas of what it will be like.

- E. Throughout the Scripture, God has promised that he will *remake* the earth as a place for his people to dwell with him. This means that there will continue to be aspects of bearing God’s image (communion with him and dominion in the world) as we live in resurrected bodies forever.

<sup>17</sup>For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. (Isa 65.17)

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.” (Rev 21.1-3)

- F. God promises that we will dwell with him for all eternity in unbroken communion. The reality of the Father’s house is meant to demonstrate that we have a place in the family of God. We are adopted children because of the work of Jesus. Now, as his children, we are the heirs of all things in Christ.
- G. We must spend time meditating and bringing the idea of our eternal dwelling with God into conversation with him. One of the greatest sources of hope in this world (with the ability to stabilize our hearts in the midst of difficulty) is the reality of our eternal place with God.

<sup>1</sup>If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (Col 3.1-2)

- H. Many people seek to only provide hope by looking at changing circumstances or experiencing the temporal blessings of God in this life. However, the message of the Scripture is that God has prepared a place for us to experience eternal satisfaction, joy, and communion with him. Many believers throughout history have not seen major breakthrough of God’s provision, presence, or power in their own lives — yet, lived with an eternal perspective that God has prepared a city where he will dwell with them forever.

<sup>16</sup>So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup>as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Cor 4.16-18)

<sup>13</sup>These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup>For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland... <sup>16</sup>as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. (Heb 11.13-16)

- I. Our eternal citizenship is to be a source of great peace and rejoicing for us as we navigate the brokenness, hardship, difficulty, and pain of this life.

<sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Phil 3.20-21)

### III. I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE

- A. Jesus assured his disciples that there was “plenty of room” for those who are called to the family of God. This is meant to demonstrate that God has abundant and ample provision for all who will come to him by faith.
- B. Jesus then tells his disciples that it is because of the eternal dwelling that he must go to prepare a place for them in the Father’s house. This speaks of going to the cross to secure salvation for all who have faith in him.
- C. When Jesus says that he goes to prepare a place, he is not saying that he is going to build out a place for his people (the house is the Father’s, and he already possesses it). Rather, Jesus is saying that he must go in order to prepare *the way* for his people to gain access into the Father’s house.

D. Five ways Jesus' prepares a place for his followers:

1. At the cross, Jesus **atones for the sins** of any and all who will look to him by faith. This means that he pays the price in order for God to issue forgiveness for their sins.

<sup>7</sup>In him [Jesus] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Eph 1.7)

<sup>13</sup>God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (Col 2.13-14)

2. At the cross, Jesus **experiences the wrath of God** and sufficiently placates (appeases) it for all those who come to him.

<sup>25</sup>whom [Christ] God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness... <sup>26</sup>so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom 3.25-26)

<sup>2</sup>He [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2.2)

3. In his resurrection, Jesus is demonstrated to be the Son of God in the power of the Spirit, showing that **he now has victory over sin, death, and the grave**. Jesus now holds the keys to death and hades and will resurrect all who are his at the last day in order for them to dwell in the Father's house.

<sup>17</sup>Fear not, I am the first and the last, <sup>18</sup>and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (Rev 1.17-18)

<sup>20</sup>But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup>For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead... <sup>23</sup>But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. (1 Cor 15.20-23)

4. Through his death, resurrection, and ascension Jesus **entered into the heavenly temple and made a way** for those who believe in him to gain access to the presence of God.

<sup>11</sup>But when Christ appeared as high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) <sup>12</sup>he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. (Heb 9.11-12)

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh (Heb 10.19-20)

5. At his ascension, Jesus **casts out "the accuser" from the heavenly court** and demonstrates that there is no longer any condemning claim against those who are his.

<sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom 8.1)

<sup>15</sup>He [God] disarmed the rulers and authorities [i.e., demonic principalities and powers] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him [Jesus]. (Col 2.15)

<sup>7</sup>Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon [Satan]. And the dragon and his angels fought back, <sup>8</sup>but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup>And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world... <sup>10</sup>the accuser of our brothers... who accuses them day and night before our God... (Rev 12.7-10)

- E. When faced with overwhelming despair, bitterness, shame, etc., we engage our troubled hearts with the truths of Christ's finished work. We lay hold (by faith) of the truths that *he alone* has prepared a place for us in the Father's house for all eternity. We believe that our place is secure and stable, and that nothing can take us from him because of his power.

<sup>31</sup>What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be <sup>32</sup>against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ...<sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ...<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8.31-39)

#### IV. I WILL COME AGAIN

- A. Jesus promises his disciples that although he must go to prepare a place for them, he will one day come again and receive them to himself. He promises that when he returns, all those who are his followers will be with him where he is forever.
- B. Although John 14-16 speaks of differing ways that Jesus promises to "come" to his disciples (resurrection appearances; the sending of the Spirit), this is speaking of his Second Coming, when he will return to make all things new.
- C. The most glorious reality of heaven is that we will dwell with the Triune God forever. Jesus promises that he will receive his people to himself, and that they will experience proximity with him for all eternity.

<sup>4</sup>They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. (Rev 22.4)

- D. Jesus prayed that this reality would keep his disciples even through the pressures of their lives.

<sup>24</sup>Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. (John 17.24)

#### V. WAGING WAR WITH THE WORD OF GOD

- A. Jesus' command to believe in God and believe also in him requires that we engage our hearts with him in the places where we are tempted to be weighed down and troubled in our hearts.
- B. Rather than let ourselves get carried about by the winds and waves (or currents) of heaviness, we are invited to *participate* with God in praying his word with gratitude and humility.
- C. When Jesus was tested, he resisted temptation by *declaring* the truths of God's word. Likewise, we are given a 'weapon' in our spiritual warfare: the word of God (revelation of his person, his work, his promises, etc.).

<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil... <sup>3</sup>And the tempter came and said to him... <sup>4</sup>but he answered, "It is written..." (Matt 4.1-4)

<sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day... <sup>17</sup>the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup>praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication (Eph 6.13, 17-18)

- D. We engage our hearts in belief *by* giving thanks for the reality of these truths (Phil 4.6-7) and by humbly asking God to reveal them to our hearts in greater measure.

<sup>17</sup>that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, <sup>18</sup>having the eyes of your hearts enlightened (Eph 1.17-18)