

The Place Prepared for Us

Anchors in the Darkness: Words of Hope in Our Troubles / John 14:1-11 / April 26, 2026

Introduction:

Where do you turn when your heart is troubled? Maybe you distract yourself with entertainment, occupy your time with hobbies, or turn to some vice to relieve your pain. Perry's selected passage in John 14, for today's anchor in the darkness, gives a vastly different source of hope for our troubled hearts. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." Consider what these verses communicate. First, God's nature is one of mercy and comfort. Second, God comforts His people in every trouble. And third, God comforts us so we can comfort others with the comfort we receive. When Perry shared this Scripture, it was evident Jesus' promise in John 14 comforts his heart. My hope this morning is to capture the comfort he has received from God to give to you. Let's start with the central command. Look at verse 1, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me." Three imperatives consume this verse: (1) Don't let your hearts be troubled, (2) Believe in God, and (3) believe in Jesus. These commands follow Jesus informing the disciples of His imminent crucifixion and departure from them. Can you imagine their troubled hearts? They left everything to follow Jesus. They've experienced His teaching and seen His power over the forces of evil. They hoped He would save them from Rome's oppression. And now He's saying He will leave them. This rightfully left their hearts anxious, worried, and deeply troubled. And Jesus says to them, "let not your hearts be troubled." This goes deeper when understanding Jesus' own state. In John 12:27, Jesus says, "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour." And in John 13:21, we read, "After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.'" It is while Jesus is troubled over the agony which lied before Him that He gives these words of comfort and instruction. What will help keep their hearts from being troubled? An abiding trust in God and Him. Notice how the command to believe is repeated in verse 11, "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." Twice again, Jesus calls for belief in the Father and Him, calling for the works they have seen to help them believe. Move down to verse 27. Jesus says, "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." The repetition of the commands to "Let not your hearts be troubled" and "believe" in John 14 reveal that trusting in the promises Jesus gives is the comfort our troubled hearts need. Promises that have comforted Perry and he desires would comfort you. Our focus will be on the promises in verses 2-10, but we will dip our toes into the rest of chapter 14 to see its relation to them. First let's ask, what is the primary promise Jesus wants us to trust?

Jesus Will One Day Bring Us Fully into God's Presence

Notice how Jesus grounds His commands in promises. Look at verses 2-4, "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Perry unpacked the imagery here in a sermon from 2020, describing how The people of Jesus Day lived in what we might call a compound. An insula is the Greek word for it. It was a Jewish extended family unit. And it was kind of like rooms built around kind of a common courtyard. In this courtyard there would be a cooking place, where the family could have a community. But there was a place on the outside of this insula, where individual family units had their homes. And when a couple would be betrothed, no wedding date would be set yet because the father and the groom had to go to their insula and build on another room. Then, when the time was right, the groom would come to get the bride and parade her back to the room especially made for them. Hear Jesus' words again, "In my Father's house are many rooms."

Jesus was leaving them for a purpose, to prepare a place for all His disciples to one day return and bring them into the Father's insula. Perry lit up when speaking about this. Why? Because it transforms our understanding of eternity. See, we may primarily think of streets of gold, mansions, and reuniting with family when envisioning eternity. But the primary joy to be experienced is direct proximity to the Father, dwelling in His house forever. Note what Jesus says about this place, "I will take you to myself." Perry said it well, "Heaven is more about dwelling in the presence of the Lord than it is about walking on golden streets like some kind of a heavenly Disneyland... Heaven is not so much about living in God's place as it is about living in God's presence. The who of our heavenly home is much more important than the what it looks like part." Family, does your comfort and hope come primarily from knowing you will one day be fully in God's presence? Or in other benefits? If it is not, dwell on the promises of Revelation 21:3-7, "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. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.' And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.' And he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.'" The comfort our troubled hearts need is to grasp the blessings of the fullness of God's eternal presence. This brings me to a second question. What is the correlating promise we should trust in?

Knowing Jesus Now is both The Way to the Fullness of God's Presence and a Taste of that Reward

Follow the details in the ensuing conversation between Jesus and His disciples. Look at verse 4-7, "And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." The focus falls on the way to the place Jesus is preparing for us. Jesus says they know the way, but Thomas says they can't know the way when they don't even know where Jesus was going. And Jesus' response, not only confirms the way, but shows they will experience a taste of it now. Let's work through this. Jesus as the truth and the life are supporting statements to Him as the way. D. A. Carson puts it this way, "Jesus is the way to God, precisely because he is the truth of God and the life of God" (D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, p. 491). The way to the Father's presence and insula, is only through Jesus. Verse 7 explains why. Knowing Jesus is knowing God, and Jesus later says true life is knowing God. Notice Philip's interjection in verses 8-11, "Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.'" Philip expresses the fundamental longing of the human heart, to see God in His splendor and glory. Moses once asked God for the same thing. Jesus responds, "Don't you get it yet, I am one with the Father. If you have seen me, you have seen Him. The things I do are the Father at work. Believe that we are one, if for no other reason than the works you have seen." Church, make no mistake, Jesus is emphatically saying the only way to know the Father of mercies and God of all comfort is through Him. Satan's greatest deception is convincing people that they don't need faith in Jesus. We see this all around us. Many today claim that people of other religions, like Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism, are fine so long as they faithfully follow their own beliefs, though they reject Christ. Some suggest God's love will just win in the end, whether you trust in Christ now or not, and it doesn't matter if you really believe Jesus is God or that He atoned for your sins, just follow His ways and you will be fine. All of that is the deception of the enemy.

We have to know the promise of the fullness of God's presence only belongs to those who trust in Jesus. Romans 5:8-10 says, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." Our access to God comes only by Christ justifying us through His shed blood and saving us through His resurrected life. So, before we go any further, hear His commands again from verses 1 and 11, "Believe in God; believe also in me... Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me." Now, look at the end of verse 7 again, and pay attention to the phrasing, "From now on you do know him and have seen him." Because Jesus is the truth and life of God and was making the way to God's presence through His death and resurrection, He says the disciples will experience the Father's presence through Him from now on. Family, Jesus is not just holding out the hope of enjoying God's presence when He returns, as great as that is, He is holding out the hope of tastes of that reward now. The rest of this chapter shows how that is experienced through the gift of the Spirit. We won't go too deep this morning but look at verses 18-23. Jesus says, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered him, 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.'" When does He say their sight begins? In the day He lives. At His resurrection. And how will He manifest Himself to those who love and keep His Word? By Him and the Father making a home with them. "Home" is the same word for "rooms" in verse 2. Do you see what Jesus is saying? We experience our future reality of residing in the Father's insula now, through the indwelling presence of the Spirit. Tastes of that reward to comfort us in our troubles by reminding us of its blessings.

Conclusion:

So, as the worship team comes for our time of reflection and response, let me end with a final question. What do I believe Perry desires for you to know through this passage?

God's Comforting Presence is With You Now and Will Only Get Sweeter

Jesus told His disciples not to be troubled that He was leaving because His leaving secured the remarkable blessings of God's presence now and forevermore. And that same truth speaks to our troubled hearts today. Bruce Milne makes an interesting comment, "Troubled hearts", he says, "expresses the mind-state of multitudes in the modern world. Paradoxically many of these troubled folk live within western society, which is in most respects sheltered from the starker deprivations, such as the chronic lack of food, shelter and health care which plague the millions in the third world. Plenty, however, does not equal peace of mind." (Bruce Milne, *The Message of John*, p. 209). Church, the way to help our troubled hearts will never be in the things of this world. As Milne says, "Plenty does not equal peace of mind." When we turn to things for comfort, including people, we will never find lasting comfort. The balm will always wash away. But, when we anchor our hope in the darkness to knowing Christ more fully, we find a peace and comfort that never fades. If your heart is troubled today, or you find it troubled in the future, turn to the promise and command of verse 27 where Jesus says, "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." As the song says, "What truth can calm the troubled soul? God is good, God is good. Where is His grace and goodness known? In our great Redeemer's blood. Who holds our faith when fears arise? Who stands above the stormy trial? Who sends the waves that bring us nigh unto the shore, the rock of Christ?" Would you pray with me as we prepare to respond?