

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

John 14:1-6

INTRODUCTION

- A. There have been, without any doubt, times in all of our lives that our world was turning upside down.
 - 1. There have been times that we've gone without sleep, that the days dragged on and on, and that we did not know how we would continue.
 - 2. Our passage for this evening has been a favorite of individuals facing trouble.
- B. It's a favorite of individuals facing trouble because it's spoken by a Savior who is facing trouble and it's spoken to disciples who are facing trouble. Tonight, we want to see what lessons we can learn from this favorite text.

HEAVENLY HEARTS, v. 1

- A. Jesus tells his disciples how to have heavenly hearts: "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me."
- B. The first clause of this verse indicates that the disciples did not have heavenly hearts, but their hearts were quite heavy.
 - 1. You know why the disciples' hearts were heavy: Jesus is about to be killed, and all the Messianic hopes they had were dashed.
 - 2. There is a clear connection between this passage and what precedes it.
 - a. In 13:36-38, Jesus had predicted Peter's denial.
 - b. That must have scared the disciples in their innermost being. If Peter, the strong one, were about to fall, what would happen to the rest of them? How would the rest of them fare if Peter were going to deny Jesus?
 - 3. This is not the first time we read of heavy hearts in the Gospel of John.
 - a. Jesus' heart was often heavy.
 - 1) "When Jesus saw her [Mary] weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled" (Jn. 11:33).
 - 2) When Jesus was facing his death, his heart was troubled: "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour" (Jn. 11:27).
 - 3) When Jesus began to speak of Judas' betrayal, he was troubled: "When Jesus had thus spoken, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me'" (Jn. 13:21).
 - b. Thus, Jesus, knowing what a heavy heart is like, exhorted his disciples not to have troubled hearts.
- C. How could these disciples keep from having heavy hearts? "Believe in God, believe also in me."
 - 1. There is some difficulty in how the second half of this passage ought to be translated.
 - a. The RSV has "believe in God, believe also in me," while the KJV has "ye believe in God."
 - b. The difference is between an imperative, a command (as in the RSV), and in an indicative, a statement (as in the KJV). The problem is that the Greek verb can be translated into English either way.
 - c. It seems best to me to take this as a command as the RSV has it. Jesus had just given a command, thus it seems to me best to see this as an imperative, as well.
 - 2. Here's what Jesus is saying: "Don't let all the things about to happen trouble your hearts: put your trust in God and put your trust in me."
 - a. The disciples' whole way of looking at the Messiah was about to change, and Jesus is

- saying, "Don't think that God has moved off his throne. Keep your trust in him, even though it seems the world is upside down."
- b. Is that not solid advice for us, as well? Even when it seems the world is upside down, even when we don't understand what's transpiring, can't we put our trust and our hope in our God?

HEAVENLY HOME, vv. 2-3

- A. "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?"
 - 1. In the Father's house are many rooms.
 - a. The Father's house would be the place where God dwelled.
 - 1) Because God chose to put his name in the temple, the temple was referred to as God's house (Jn. 2:16).
 - 2) Obviously the Father's house would here be heaven, the place he dwells in all his fullness.
 - b. In the Father's house are many rooms.
 - 1) I know the KJV and some other translations have "mansions" here.
 - a) Everyone of us could probably recite this passage by heart, and everyone of us – me included – would recite it with "mansions."
 - b) Yet, that is a mistranslation; the Latin several centuries ago put mansions here, and Tyndale, the King James and other followed suit.
 - c) The Greek term literally means "abiding place."
 - 2) There are many abiding places, rooms, in God's house; there's room in God's house for anyone who wants to go there.
 - 2. Jesus was going to prepare a place for the disciples.
 - a. In what way did Jesus need to prepare heaven for the disciples? Was there something wrong with heaven that required Jesus to get it ready for us to inhabit it?
 - b. It seems best to me that Jesus was going to prepare heaven through his upcoming death and resurrection. Without Jesus' death and resurrection, you and I would never go to heaven. Thus, he died and was raised in order that we might be able to go there.
- B. "When 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," v. 3.
 - 1. Jesus told the disciples that after he had died and been raised he would come again for the disciples.
 - a. One of the basic truths of the New Testament is that Jesus is coming again.
 - 1) The angels standing beside the apostles at Jesus' ascension told the apostles: "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).
 - 2) "The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command" (1 Thess. 4:16).
 - b. We dare not be lulled into thinking that this world will always continue as it is, for Jesus is coming again.
 - 2. But the truth, as Jesus here presents it, is not only that Jesus is coming again, but that Jesus is coming for his disciples.
 - a. When Jesus comes again, he's going to come for us; he's not going to forget about us.
 - b. Jesus is coming back for us so that we can be where he is.
 - 1) Is not that one of the most beautiful thoughts about heaven — that we shall be with God?
 - a) "The dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall 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" (1 Thess. 4:16-17).
 - b) "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall

- be his people, and God himself will be with them" (Rev. 21 :3).
- 2) Are you going to get to be in heaven with God?

HEAVENLY HIGHWAY, vv. 4-6

- A. Jesus told the disciples, "You know the way where I am going," v. 4. Jesus had just told the disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them. Since Jesus would be doing the preparing, it would only make sense that they should understand where he was going.
- B. The disciples weren't quite sure where Jesus was going, how he was going to prepare this place, or anything else.
1. So Thomas asked, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" v. 5.
 2. Thomas' question really makes me think that the disciples thought Jesus was going to a physical place. "Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know how to get there?"
 3. Throughout John's Gospel, Thomas is constantly portrayed as the disciple who opened his mouth just a little too soon.
 - a. When Jesus was going to Bethany after Lazarus died, Thomas said to the other disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (Jn. 11:16). But, when Jesus really facing death Thomas was nowhere to be seen.
 - b. Famously when the disciples reported to Thomas that they had seen the Lord after his death, Thomas said he would not believe it until he saw Jesus with his own eyes.
 4. Here, Thomas is portrayed in that same light- as a disciples who just doesn't quite get it — and he tells Jesus, "Lord, we just don't know what's going on."
- C. Jesus responded to Thomas, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me," v. 6.
1. The way Jesus phrased his response to Thomas really makes me think that Jesus intends to portray himself here primarily as the way.
 - a. Jesus twice emphasizes that he is the way to the Father. He says, "I am the way." Then he says, "No one comes to the Father, but by me."
 - b. Jesus' being the truth and the life serve to underscore the manner in which he is the way; he is the way because he is the truth and the life.
 2. Jesus is the way to God; it is he who provides what we need in order to go to the Father.
 3. Jesus is the truth; he came and taught us what we need to do to be able to go to the Father.
 4. Jesus is the life; through his resurrection we're able to have eternal life and enjoy that eternal life with the Father.
 5. Jesus told Thomas that he was the only way to the Father — "no one comes to the Father, but by me."
 - a. There are some who would have us believe there are many roads to heaven — it doesn't matter if you follow one that is Christian, pagan, or whatever, we're all going to end up in the same place.
 - b. I have heard Christians espouse such a belief but Jesus says he's the only way to the Father. If we do not go to the Father through Jesus, we will not be going to the Father.