

Lighthouse Bible Church

March 9th, 2014

John 14: 1 – 6 *Scripture Reading: Matthew 24: 36 - 44*

‘The Assurance of Heaven through Christ’

Stand – Read – Pray

We who are born again believers and followers of Christ have a hope that takes us through any and all of the most difficult and discouraging circumstances that life can throw at us. Because we realize that there is more to life than just this life; there is the hope and a promise of eternal life because we have our hope and promise in the return of Christ and Him taking us to heaven someday.

We are, as **Titus 2: 13** says, **Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.**

We look for Him to someday do what **1st Thessalonians 4: 16 - 17** says **for the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

He wants us to be with Him in heaven forever. That is one of His great desires according to **John 17: 24** where Jesus says **Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me.**

Well, where is Christ today and where is His glory displayed? He is in Paradise, He is in heaven. Isn't that what He said to the thief on the cross in **Luke 23: 43:** **assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise,** in heaven.

And you see, that is the promise, the hope that we have and it is a **living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in Heaven for us** 1st Peter 1: 3 – 4 says.

And so Jesus wants to affirm to His disciples this hope of His return and eternal life in heaven as He speaks to them in the upper room to ease their troubled hearts. And He wants to affirm his promises with us today who may be going through difficult times and have troubled hearts as well.

You see, the disciples hearts were troubled. Troubled about what would happen to Jesus and what would happen to them. Jesus told them earlier in Chapter 12 that He was soon going to die and that really didn't square with what they believed about the coming Messiah. They were troubled about that.

In the upper room, according to John Chapter 13 and Luke Chapter 22, Jesus had to rebuke His disciples for arguing about who would be the greatest in the kingdom and did so by getting up and washing their feet and telling them they were not all clean. They were troubled about that.

They were also troubled because Jesus told them that one of them eating with Him at the table would betray Him and because they knew their own sinful heart could do that, they were troubled.

They were troubled because Jesus said He would soon be leaving them and they could not follow right then. He also told them that Peter, one of the leading disciples, would deny Him 3 times.

So all of these things were very troubling to them and Jesus knew this. He knew that they were thinking 'I have left all to follow you and now you are leaving us'.

And think about this; Jesus is the one who knows that He will be falsely arrested, mocked and beaten and abused and spit upon and have His beard pulled out and punched in the face and whipped repeatedly and then crucified and killed. And yet He is thinking more about His disciples concerns and trying to calm their troubled heart than He is about His own situation. Isn't that like Jesus? So He starts out in Verse 1.

Verse One: let nor your heart be troubled...

Jesus is about to give them several reasons why they do not have to have troubled hearts and they are the same reasons why we don't have to be troubled in heart today either. This is so practical and provides so much hope and anticipation for us today and something we can cling to in times of difficulties and discouragement and trouble and questions about what the future holds.

Sometimes the reason why we become troubled in our hearts, much like the disciples, is because we begin to focus on our problems and circumstances rather than focusing on trusting Christ and His promises in the midst of those problems and circumstances.

Jesus says 'I am going to give you several reasons why you don't have to have troubled hearts. The first one is at the end of Verse one **you believe in God, believe also in Me.** Jesus says you must believe in God and believe in Me.

You see, that is where any hope for any troubled heart must begin, with a belief and a trust in God and Christ that we can cast our cares upon Him because He cares for us. It is not a saving belief, they already experienced that Jesus said in John 13: 10, this is a trust and hope in Jesus because when they believe and trust in God, they are believing and trusting in Christ, because He is God. That word **believe** is in the present tense and means an ongoing belief.

And in this case, Jesus is saying listen ‘you have an ongoing belief in a God whom you have never seen before but the reality of His existence is just as sure to you; well, I am going to be leaving you soon and I want you to have that same ongoing belief in Me, even though you will see me no longer, you need to trust in Me completely.

Moses said a similar thing to Joshua in **Deuteronomy 31: 6**: when he said **be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid ... for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.**

The disciples trusted in God to care for them and protect them without ever seeing His caring and protective hand. They had complete faith in the invisible God and now Jesus is saying ‘have that same faith in Me when I am no longer visible. The first reason is that they can trust in Jesus as they do God because He is God.

That certainly applies to us today because as **Hebrews 11: 1** says **faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things NOT seen.** Remember what Jesus said to doubting Thomas in **John 20: 29**: **Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.** That is you and me.

Read **John 14: 18** Jesus says **I will not leave you as orphans** because He is sending His Holy Spirit to indwell them. Then the writer of Hebrews says in **Hebrews 13: 5** **I will never leave you or forsake you** and He is quoting what God said of His people through Moses in **Deuteronomy 31: 6 – 8** In **1st Peter 1: 7 – 8** it says **Jesus Christ, whom having not seen your love though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.** Then He says in Verses two and part of 3.

Verses 2 – 3a: **In My Father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you...**

So Jesus says the second reason you don't have to have a troubled heart is because I am going back to My Father in heaven and **preparing a place for you** to come to and a place to enjoy some day, forever. The promise to His disciples, and to us, is that He is going to heaven to make it ready for us to be there someday with Him forever.

So He says that in **My Father's house**, which is another term for heaven, **are many mansions**. Other versions may say 'many rooms' or 'many dwelling places'. The idea is that of an imagery of a Jewish man's house in biblical times.
Explain

We get a little glimpse into what the dwelling place will be like in the Father's house as we look at **Revelation 21: 1 – 4** Read + then end with **21: 8**. You can read the rest of Revelation 21 & 22 and see what that dwelling place will be like, it is incredible.

You say, 'is there going to be enough room for everyone who has ever been born again'. You bet. Just the city itself, the new Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God, is built like a cube. It is approximately 1500 miles in length and width and height. Just the base of it is 2 million square miles; and then we have a new heaven and new earth to explore for all eternity.

So then Jesus gives a third reason why they don't have to have troubled hearts and that is found at the end of Verse 3.

Verse Three and 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.

That is another one of the great hopes and promises given to the disciples and to us today. You see, we live in the hope of Christ's return and the immanency of that return. It can be at any time, and looking at the world around us and comparing that with the scriptures, it doesn't seem that far away.

There are two times when Jesus **will come again**. This one, which is probably a reference to the rapture, is where He will come and take His own to heaven and not come to the earth. This event is described also in **1st Thessalonians 4: 14 – 18** *Read*. It is described in **1st Corinthians 15: 50 – 54** *Read*

We look forward to that event with great anticipation. **Philippians 3: 20 – 21** says **for our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also EAGERLY wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**. Do you eagerly await or would you be ashamed at His coming because you've never trusted Him as your Savior?

That is why Paul wrote to Titus in **Titus 2: 13** that we should be **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**.

Jesus, 7 years later, will **come back again**, a 2nd time, but this time He will actually come back to this earth. Remember **Acts 1: 9 – 11** **this same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will come back in like manner as you have seen Him go**. Jesus Himself even told us what signs to be watching for when He comes back. Remember what was read in **Matthew 24: 36 – 44**

He said earlier in **Matthew 24: 4 – 16** that:

Many deceivers and false prophets would come in His name & deceive many

There would be wars and rumors of wars as nation rises against nation

There would be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in various places

The love of many will grow cold and people will hate one another and betray one another

When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet... *Read this week about priest/garments ready, just need place*

Matthew 24: 29 – 31 says that Jesus will return with His angels and gather His elect from all over the world, while **Matthew 25: 41** says that the rest will be cast into everlasting fire

We even know where Jesus is going to arrive when He comes back. **Zechariah Chapter 14: 4** tells us that at the end of the tribulation period, which coincides with Matthew and Revelation, that He will come back to the Mt. of Olives. **and in that day His feet will stand on the mount of Olives which faces Jerusalem on the east and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two.**

Zechariah 14: 12 even says what will happen to all the unbelievers when Christ comes back and strikes them with the sword of His mouth as **Revelation 19: 11 – 16** says He will do. **and this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem. Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.**

Someone has calculated that there are about 333 prophecies concerning Jesus and His first and second coming. Of those 333 only about 1/3 of them have been fulfilled in His first coming and they were all fulfilled perfectly.

You see that is the hope that we have and that is the promise from the mouth of our Lord to His disciples and us in our text here. He says **I will come again.** And He will, the question is will you be ready for it? You see, Jesus wants us to be there with Him; that is what He prayed in **John 17: 24** **Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am..**

Another way He wants to calm their troubled hearts is by what He says in Verses 4 – 6.

Verses 4 – 6: and where I go you know and the way you know. Thomas said to Him ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going and how can we know the way’? Jesus said to him ‘I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me’.

Jesus says ‘I want you to **know** where I am going and **how** to get there. He had already told them where He was going; He said that He was leaving to go to His Father’s house, back to His Father.

He says you even **know the way** to get there. At this point they must be somewhat confused, with everything else going on so Thomas says **we don’t know where you are going and how can we know the way?** So Jesus makes it very clear to them that He will be the One to take them there.

He says in Verse 6 **I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.** What our Lord in essence is saying is that there is no other way to heaven except through Christ and Christ alone. He is the **way** to heaven, He is the **truth** about heaven and He is the provider of **life** eternal in heaven. He is not going to tell us how to get to heaven, He is going to take us to heaven.

You say Dale, that is a question that I have, how is Jesus going to get us to heaven. Well, that is a good question; and there are three ways that you can get to heaven as a born again believer and all 3 of them require faith and trust in Christ alone.

(1) is at the time of your death. Right? Paul said in **2nd Corinthians 5: 8** that **to be absent from the body is to be (what) present with the Lord.** Paul said in **Philippians 1: 21 – 23** for **to me, to live is Christ and to die is (what) gain.** He says I want to stay here with you and minister to you but **I have a desire to depart and be with Christ** also. **Psalm 49: 14** **He will be our guide even to death.**

(2) would be at the rapture of the church. The taking away of all believers immediately from the earth to heaven. Paul wrote about it in **1st Thessalonians 4: 15 – 17** when he said **for this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who have died in Christ, for the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

Paul ends that by saying **therefore comfort one another with these words.** That's why Christ said that to His disciples because He wanted to provide comfort for their troubled hearts.

1st Corinthians 15: 51 – 52: says **behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.** What will we be changed into? Well,

Remember that verse I read to you in **Philippians 3: 20 - 21** said **for our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ now listen, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body ...**

For any unbelievers here today there is another way to get to heaven ...

(3) would be at His bodily physical return to earth, known as His second coming. This is where He comes to this earth and if you become a Christian after the rapture and happen to survive the tribulation, then Christ will extend your life on earth and then transform you into heaven at

Gospel here

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Introduction and Review:

Titus 2: 13, 1st Thessalonian 4: 16 – 17
John 17: 24, Luke 23: 43, 1st Peter 1: 3 – 4

Verse 1:

Deuteronomy 31: 6 – 8, Hebrews 11: 1
John 20: 29, John 14: 18, Hebrews 13: 5
1st Peter 1: 7 – 8

Verses 2 – 3a:

Revelation 21: 1 – 4, 8, *Revelation 21: 9 – 22: 5*

Verse 3b:

1st Thessalonians 4: 14 – 18, Titus 2: 13
Philippians 3: 20 – 21, 1st Corinthians 15: 50 – 54
Acts 1: 9 – 11, Matthew 24: 4 – 44, 25: 41
Zechariah 14: 4, 12, Revelation 19: 11 – 16
John 7: 24

Verses 4 – 6:

2nd Corinthians 5: 8, Philippians 1: 21 – 23
Psalm 49: 14, 1st Thessalonians 4: 15 – 17
1st Corinthians 15: 51 – 52, Philippians 3: 20 – 21

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