

Let not your heart be troubled (Quality: very good)

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- [0 : 00] In dependence upon the Lord, we will turn to the Gospel according to John, the 14th chapter, the first three verses.
- The Gospel according to John, chapter 14, verses 1, 2, and 3. Let not your heart be troubled.
- Ye believe in God. Believe also in me. 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. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.
- Today seems a very, very strange day for me, possibly for you as well.
- [1 : 32] Strange for me in that, up until last evening, I had anticipated being a hearer today. And I'm not, although in one sense I am.
- I desire to be a hearer, although I'm in this solemn position. It's a strange day for our pastor, I'm sure.
- And we wish him the Lord's blessing. It must be a strange day for my friend, Mrs. Field. And I feel cross with myself for having omitted to pray for her just now, because we have known her for well over 50 years.
- Remember her dear husband. And I trust there may be a word for her from the scriptures this evening.
- Strange also is this day to me, because of the line which the ministry appears to be taking. Because, as most of you may remember, we tried to speak a little while this morning from Ephesians chapter 2, verse 1.
- [2 : 55] And showed, I hope, a connection with the end of the previous chapter. We made the remark that until the middle of the 13th century, there were no such things as chapters and verses, or even punctuation in the manuscripts of Holy Scripture.
- And indeed, that the dividing into chapters was carried out by a Roman Catholic cardinal, and have in fact never been changed since then, since 1250.
- And that needs, I think, to be borne in mind in a reading of the Word of God. We're so accustomed to reading a chapter, and then stopping.
- But we ought to read on, and seek the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit, in following a particular theme through to its conclusion.
- Of course, in all these exercises, we desperately need the Holy Spirit to be our teacher, our counselor, our guide, because without him, and without that, all will prove entirely abortive, surely.
- [4 : 23] It is also strange to me that Ephesians 2 and John 14 were special parts of the Word of God for my dear grandmother, a member at Hope Chapel, black boys, who was taken home 50 years next month.
- She loved those two chapters. I think she was not setting up one part of God's Word above another, but the Lord had made those two chapters very precious to her.

She often spoke of them both, I well remember. And then again, what line is being pursued, it seems, in the word today?

Why this? If there was a connection, and I'm sure there is, between the end of Ephesians 1 and the beginning of Ephesians 2, we have the same exactly here.

The person we have referred to drew a line, as it were, at the end of this verse.

[5 : 34] Is it 38? I can't see very clearly. I think it is. And started afresh at chapter 14, verse 1.

But, that we may overlook. We may sometimes, if not always, forget, that there are chapters, except to be for purposes of reference.

And of course, to have chapters and verses is necessary for that. But, I used to read chapter 14 here, as though it commenced an entirely different theme, from that treated of in chapter 1.

But, not so. For this reason, did I commence the reading this evening from chapter 13, verse 36, where the Lord Jesus is speaking to Peter, and Peter to him.

Peter, always it seems, or nearly always, impetuous, and bold, says that he will follow Christ, to put it briefly, to the death.

[6 : 47] He will lay down his life for the sake of Christ. He would not deny his Lord and Master. He wouldn't. The Lord Jesus said he would.

And Peter was argumentative. He said, in effect, I will not. And so, the Lord says, but, Peter, verily, verily, I say unto thee, that before the cock crow thrice, thou shalt deny me, thou shalt deny me.

Thou shalt deny me thrice. And that is where this chapter concluded. But let us overlook the chapter.

Because we, it will read like this. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.

Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, Peter, believe also in me, though you deny me.

[8 : 11] Still believe in me. And are we to assume that Peter was not to be troubled in any way through denying his Lord three times and on the third occasion accompanying that denial with oaths and curses, was he not to be troubled?

He was right, he should be very much troubled. And we know he was. But not until the Lord looked upon him and caused him to go out and weep bitterly.

The Lord was forewarning and forepreparing Peter for his subsequent denial of him.

I'm sure of that. And telling him at the same time that, though he professed not to know his own dear Saviour whom he knew so well.

Yet for all that, he believed in God. He believed in the Father. He believed in God. believe also in me as God, as your God, as your Saviour.

[9 : 32] The time, of course, did come when Peter's heart, though broken, when he went out weeping bitterly, that his heart ceased to trouble him.

His fears were dissipated. The Lord appeared as his comforter. The comforter of a poor, guilty, broken-hearted sinner.

A verse of a hymn comes to my mind. Jesus heals the broken-hearted. Oh, how sweet that sound to me.

Once beneath my sin he smarted, groaned, and bled to set me free. and all that applies to Peter.

If that applies to you, it applied to Peter, the truth of it. Broken-hearted Peter, heart-troubled Peter, why he was still a believer in God, and the Lord was kind enough to tell him so.

[10 : 46] And that intelligence conveyed by his saviour to him would be such as to bind up his broken-hearted heart. That his heart should cease to be troubled.

Let not your heart be troubled. Oh, says a troubled-hearted one, how can I prevent this? How can I stop my heart from being troubled?

This is my malady or a large part of it. my sin presses so heavily upon my own heart. I'm guilty, I'm sinful, in myself lost and ruined.

It would seem proper and correct to be troubled, and wrong if we were not troubled on such a score. Yes, certainly. But still the saviour says, let not your heart be troubled.

Think of God's word to his servant, the prophet Isaiah, where the Lord exhorts him and gives him the charge to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem.

[12 : 10] In this way, by telling her that her warfare is accomplished, that her sin, her iniquity, is pardoned.

I think that is the place where in the margin you might find this. Speak to the heart. No, this is what the saviour is doing. He's speaking to the troubled heart as the comforter of his otherwise comfortless people.

Is your heart troubled tonight? I would be very surprised if it is not. If it is not, then there is cause to raise suspicion.

But if you should proceed and say, my saviour has come to comfort my heart, then there's no grounds for suspicion. There's grounds for thanksgiving and for praise unto our heavenly friend and comforter, who alone can address himself effectively and personally to the heart of a troubled one.

Certainly, the devil has access to our hearts. But, the Lord himself, who is above men and devils, has more access to our hearts.

[13 : 41] He can reach where Satan cannot. what a mercy that is. So, is your heart troubled tonight?

In one sense, mine is. I'm always troubled about my poor ministry, about my coldness of affection to the Lord Jesus, my darkness, my ignorance over such things as those, I always seem to be burdened and troubled.

I question whether I know anything about prayer, whether I have but one small grain of living faith, or whether I have made a terrible mistake, whether I have not the anointing, the quickening of the Holy Spirit.

These are things that trouble my poor heart. My heart at times seems to be as though it's going to give way and collapse.

But suppose it does. I say, suppose it does. It's all lost. Not if this word of their Saviour means anything.

[15 : 04] What is that? Why this? I know I've mentioned this once at least before, possibly in a prayer meeting address I can't now remember, but it's this, which more than once last year, twice in fact in 1989, meant so much to me, namely, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

After all, shall we really, effectually, sincerely, earnestly call upon the name of the Lord until all is lost?

Because, as the poet has said, few, if any, come to Jesus till reduced to self- despair.

When does a poor sinner reach that point of self- despair? When, feelingly, all is lost. But let the dear Saviour, the friend of sinners, draw near, and all is restored.

All is restored. All fears are gone. All loss is made up. And the Lord, in a wonderful manner, is able to restore the years which the locusts may have eaten, or have eaten.

[16 : 42] So there's a connection here, I'm sure, between Peter and his forthcoming denial of his Saviour, a denial which he was adamant in denying, but which, alas, did come to pass, and what we have here, let not your heart be troubled.

Ye believe in God. Ye believe in God. Friends, that's the way to be relieved of their troubles.

Believe in God. all says one, could I only believe? That's your burden, that's your trial, you can't believe, you want to, you long to.

Friends, you wouldn't feel like that if you were an unbeliever, let me assure you of that point, straight away. Unbelievers don't feel like that.

Unbelievers do not know such language. believers do. Ye believe in God. The Lord help you, the Lord help me, to be believers in God.

[18 : 06] And, not to be believers in God as a Unitarian might profess to be, denying Christ in believing in God, let us not be Unitarians in believing, let us believe in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, three co-equal, co-divine persons in the ever-blessed, ever-glorious Trinity in unity.

We believe in God, believe also in me. to any extent that the Lord helped Peter to believe in Christ, I say for all that, he was still to deny him.

When the Lord says a certain thing will happen, it's bound to happen. When he says that a man shall say a certain thing, he's bound to say it.

And if that should not be so, the scriptures would be that much unfulfilled. But the word of God cannot but be fulfilled. The word of God cannot be broken.

So Peter must deny Christ. But the fact that he must and the fact that he did does not relieve him of all the guilt and sin that attached to that denial.

[19 : 38] He was still guilty for doing so. But, as we hope, the Lord might show us a little, Christ's going to prepare a place for Peter and all his redeemed people is so closely bound up with Peter's going to deny him.

Peter must deny in order that Christ shall go to prepare a place for him. Isn't that marvellous? Isn't that wonderful?

I feel it is. Let us proceed. 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.

Now in this verse, and that which follows, verse 3, there is, I feel, very clearly, an allusion to a marriage ceremony.

That of the eastern sort, not here in the west, the eastern marriage ceremony. What is that?

[20 : 57] Well, very often marriages were arranged. arranged. The parents of the son or daughter would arrange that a marriage would take place with one that they chose, whether husband or wife, an arranged marriage.

The ceremony would take place, and then the bridegroom would leave his bride.

He would say to her, I'm going to prepare the home. I'm going to prepare the place for you. When I've done that, he would say, I'll come back, and I will receive you unto myself, but where I am, there he may be also.

Now, I dare say that that is still done largely in the East today, because in certain parts of the East things do not change from century to century, or even a thousand years in some respects.

No change at all. In other things, yes, but I would think not in that. So here we have, I feel, the Lord Jesus Christ as the bridegroom of his chosen bride, preparing a place for her.

[22 : 33] And how wonderful that this should include Peter. More wonderful, no doubt, that it should include you and me.

Why me? Why me? Why should all this loving preparation be undertaken on behalf of one no less than the Son of God himself in our nature?

Why should that be? Why such love, such loving preparation, such heavenly inheritance, such glory for sinners like ourselves?

the only answer is that which we gave this morning behind the Holy Spirit quickening dead sinners, namely everlasting unbounded love.

In my Father's house, of course the Savior is referring to heaven, to glory, and he says there are many mansions in my Father's house, many mansions.

[23 : 52] Of course we are so inclined being finite and earthly, to think in earthly terms, to use earthly expressions. We think of a literal building, don't we?

It's hard for us not to do that. Our minds need to be enlightened, to be spiritualized, to have a spiritual vision of heavenly mansions.

A building eternal, glorious, spiritual, divine, yet nonetheless real, note that, nonetheless real, and made by the divine architect and builder himself, ere God.

Says he, for example, every house is made by some man. Granted, yes. But he that made all things is God.

We read of the heavenly home as being eternal in the heavens, whose builder, whose maker is God.

[25 : 13] So, the Lord convinced us of this, that one, this is not our home, that all things created, this chapel, everything created, is going to be reduced to dust, like we are, sooner or later.

so, that would not be the end for the church of Christ. That's not the end. We're thankful it isn't the end, because, in that connection, as we read, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are, of all men, most miserable.

So, our hopes are placed above. And, or how we need the Holy Spirit to draw our affections from here below, to that heavenly dwelling, the dwelling of the blessed, where the spirits of just men made perfect are eternally in the immediate presence of their God and Savior, who laid down his life for us.

the words that follow were once made very precious to me, in a time of great trial, concerning the very nature and being of God, and especially God's beloved Son.

These are the words, if it were not so, I would have told you. now these words we are so inclined to pass over, to overlook, to think them of little importance.

[27 : 03] Possibly we do that because the first part of this little sentence is somewhat negative, but the second part is very, very positive. let us briefly look at them.

If it were not so, if this word regarding my father's house were but a fallacy, if it were but imagination, I would have plainly told you, I would have said, that's not true, you mustn't believe that.

but the saviour says, this is true, there is glory, there is heaven for heaven born sinners, blood redeemed sinners, if it were not so, if it were otherwise, if this were an untrue statement, I would not have deceived you into believing that it was true, I would have told you if it were not so.

And I think I shall never forget the circumstances in which the Lord spoke just those words, if it were not so, I would have told you to relieve my troubled heart over something that was very vital.

If it were not so, I would have told you. I go. Now that applies, I mean I go, that applies to Peter.

- [28 : 38] He went, he went into the place of judgment, he went into that place where the servants of the high priest were, who had kindled a fire because it must have been a little cold, and he went and warmed his hands like they were doing, mingling with them, pretending to be one like unto themselves, not a follower of Christ.

Now, first, Peter goes, and secondly, Christ goes. Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, goes.

He went to his own place. We read here in one of the evangelists, the gospels, that Judas went out, and it was night.

But, Peter didn't go out like that. The Lord wouldn't let him. He would never allow that. He was a child of God after all, and in spite of all, his terrible behavior, and his sinful denial of his Lord and Master, saying, I don't know him.

He said, I know not the man. I don't know him. He's a stranger. I've had no dealings with him. I don't know him.

- [30 : 09] No solemn. So, Peter went. And, Christ says, likewise, I go.

I go to prepare a place for you, Peter. I go to prepare a place for you, poor, needy sinner, poor, troubled hearted one, poor, guilty one, poor, lost one.

I go to prepare a place for you. But, if I go and prepare a place for you, why?

I will come again. I won't leave you standing there, unattended, unaccompanied, unblessed, unhappy, unsaved.

To be on the outside, I will come again and receive you unto myself. But where I am, there ye may be also.

- [31 : 17] God's love. And I cannot but turn to what I regard as the Lord's prayer, that is John 17. Personally, I feel that the prayer we have in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 is really the disciples' prayer.

Here I feel is the Lord's prayer. Now in verse 6 we read this, I have manifested thy name, says Christ in prayer to his Father, I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.

Thine they were, chosen by the Father, thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, me, to redeem, to be his chosen bride.

So, here's something arranged by God the Father. I won't use the term like I did just now, I will say a covenant engagement, an eternal bond of everlasting love is that which we have here.

Thou gavest them me, thine they were, thou gavest them me, thou gavest me to them.

- [32 : 47] Have you ever seen it like that? Usually we read this in this way, thine they were, and thou gavest them to me. We haven't got the word to, we've got simply thou gavest them me.

God gives his dear people his dear son. Now that completes the union. That is the cementing power and bond that brings Christ and sinners into a union of love, mutual love, and divine spiritual affection which is never going to change, is never going to end.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me, and thou gavest them me.

In other words, me for you. Me for you. if I go and prepare a place for you.

Now isn't heaven always prepared? Is there something to be extended to it or added? We mustn't think like that.

- [34 : 14] We must reason as follows, I feel. This preparation means the death, the sufferings, the sacrifice, the blood shedding of Christ.

That's the preparation. As though the Savior would say, I'm going to Calvary to lay down my life by way of preparation for you.

To sacrifice myself for you. Without which sacrifice there's no prepared place for you. And you will not be prepared for that place without the voluntary sacrifice of myself.

We're not to think in terms of preparing a building, a mansion, a compartment. No, friends, but the preparation is altogether spiritual.

And the central feature thereof is without doubt the sufferings of Christ. the sufferings of Christ are a preparation.

[35 : 25] A preparation, a gift to pacify the wrath of God and to establish peace once and for all between God, the offended party, and we wretched sinners, the offending and offensive party.

that's a preparation. I feel sure I go to prepare a place for you. And his going took him to where?

To stand in front of Pilate and to be delivered to Pilate by his own people, the Jews.

The Pilate knew who they were who had delivered Christ to him to be condemned, his own people, the Jews. So he goes to stand before Pilate, that wicked Roman official, who endeavoured, it seems, to signify his washing of his hands by literally washing his hands before all the people, indicating that he would have nothing to do with that just man, which advice, as you know, his wife had given him.

Have thou nothing to do, said she, with that just man, for I have suffered many things concerning him in a dream this day. So he washed his hands, literally.

[37 : 04] But, in the end, under pressure, he gave way, as you know, to the clamors of the people and granted them their request, namely to have Barabbas, a robber, and to have done with Christ, far from being a robber and a thief or a murderer.

He allowed himself to be murdered when he was taken by wicked hands and crucified to prepare a place for you.

Without the sufferings of Christ, there's no preparation whatever for us. None whatever. So let us look then upon the sufferings of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ, the voluntary laying down of the life of Christ as one glorious scheme of preparation to bring sinners and God into a union of love and peace and joy which union will never, never be broken.

The time is gone. We have but said one or two things. I leave you to judge whether I have preached or not.

If you say I haven't, I think I must agree with you. If you say I don't like your preaching, I would say, friend, I don't either.

[38 : 46] We won't fall out over that. But may the word, the word of God abide with us. And if your heart is troubled on any point whatever, remember that one ready, one available, one waiting to bless you with comfort, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, there is.

He waits to be gracious. Yes, he hides himself sometimes, but the Lord waiteth to be gracious. He waits, I'm sure, to hear and to answer prayer.

So let not your heart be troubled. You do believe in God, after all, says the Saviour, believe also in me as your Saviour, your Redeemer, and your Friend.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.