

**A Place for You & Me
(When We All Get to Heaven)
John 14:1-6**

Most people don't know that 1/3 of John, 7 out of 21 chapters, take place in one night and the next day:

- 13 – the Last Supper
- 14-16 – Discussions at the Table
- 17 – The Garden of Gethsemane
- 18 – Betrayal and Arrest
- 19 – Pilate and the Crucifixion

Our text this morning occurs just after Jesus tells the disciples about his betrayal and foretells Peter's denial. It's understandable that their hearts are troubled. Jesus encourages them with a promise that calms their fears and transcends time.

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² 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? ³ 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. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

First: The Trouble with this World. 1a - *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

Troubled = to agitate, disturb, strike with fear or dread

John 16:33b - *In the world you will have tribulation. Jesus is just echoing*

Job 14:1-2 - *Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble. ² He comes out like a flower and withers; he flees like a shadow and continues not.*

You don't need the Job or Jesus to tell you that trouble is in the world. What you need them to tell you is that trouble is the norm and peace is the exception.

All our translations have 66 books, but depending on the translation, there are approximately 1,189 chapters, 31,103 verses and 807,361 words in the Bible. Throughout, about 40 different authors say the same thing – we live in a fallen world.

This mentality combats the world's hope for peace without sorrow. You can't crucify the Prince of peace, bury and hope to be rid of him and expect peace to describe the world.

But there is hope...

John 16:33 - *In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

Or as Jesus says it at the end of verse 1 - *"Believe in God; believe also in me."*

This faith in Christ, trust in Jesus, is the source of peace and comfort.

I have held each grandchild after their births and whispered several things to them, one of them being. *"This is not a safe world, but that's okay. God is. And that makes all the difference."*

*I've tried in vain a thousand ways
My fears to quell, my hopes to raise:
But what I need, the Bible says
Is ever only Jesus.*

*My soul is night, my heart is steel—
I cannot see, I cannot feel;
For light, for life I must appeal
In simple faith to Jesus.*

*In times like these, it can be hard
to lift the cross and follow the Lord
But He is with me day by day,
This never-failing Jesus.*

*He died, He lives, He reigns, He pleads,
There's love in all His words and deeds;
There's all a guilty sinner needs
Forever more in Jesus.*

*Though some should sneer, and some should blame,
I'll go with all my guilt and shame;
I'll go to Him because His name,
Above all names, is Jesus.*

Verses 1 and 2, J Proctor, verses 3 and 4 Roger J Mayor (born 1951)

Second: The Promise of Heaven. 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?^[b] 3 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. 4 And you know the way to where I am going."

1. It's the Father's house

Jesus paints this picture of Heaven as a home with his Father as our Father.

Few portraits are as heartfelt, meaningful, or transformative.

ILL - Isn't it funny that young people spend so much time trying to get away from home only to go and make one of their own, relishing the traditions of their former home and then coming back home as often as possible.

There truly is "*no place like home.*"

2. It's a Forever house - *Mansions = meno = stay/remain*

3. It's Jesus's house. 3

Verses 2b-4 form one of the most repetitive forms of intimacy found anywhere in the Bible. – "*I..you – I...you – I...you – I...you – I...you – you...I – you...I.*" (seven sets)

When John, in the Revelation, attempts to describe Heaven, he chooses the most valuable and wonderful things he knows to illustrate its worth and beauty – walls of jasper, gates of pearl, streets of gold, every foundation a different jewel.

When Jesus describes Heaven, he does so in the terms of 'me and you.'

- 1 – *Believe in me*
- 2 – *I have told you.
I go to prepare a place for you*
- 3 – *I go to prepare a place for you.
I will come again and take you to myself.
Where I am you will be.*
- 4 – *You know the way to where I am going.*

You know, that since Genesis 1:1, this has been God's great, redeeming goal and it is realized in Heaven.

4. It's a Prepared house

prepare = *"the Oriental custom of sending on before kings make their journeys, persons to level the roads and make them passable"*

What does this mean? It means that Christ has gone before us to make the journey possible.

Hebrews 6:19-20a - *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf,*

Psalm 23:4 - *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;*

a) The reason for fearlessness – death is a "shadow" of itself, without substance

1 Corinthians 15:51-55 – *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*

b) The key to fearlessness – "you are with me"

ON Sunday morning, January 9, 1876, the *Fort Scott Daily Monitor* of Fort Scott Kansas, printed this poem:

*In a very humble cot,
In a rather quiet spot,
In the suds and in the soap,
Washed a woman full of hope;
Working, singing, all alone;
In a sort of undertone.
"With the Savior for a friend,
He will keep me to the end."*

*Not in sorrow nor in glee
Working all day long was she,
As her children three or four,
Played around her on the floor;
But in monotonous the song
She was humming all day long;
"With the Savior for a friend,
He will keep me to the end."*

*It's a song I do not sing,
For I scarce believe a thing
Of the stories that are told
Of the miracles of old;
But I know that her belief
Is the anecdote for grief,
And that Christ will be her friend
Who will keep her to the end.*

*Just a trifle lonesome she,
Just as poor as poor could be;
But her spirits always rose
Like the bubbles in the clothes,
And, though widowed and alone,
Cheered her with the monotone,
Of a Savior for a friend
Who would keep her to the end.*

*I have seen her rub and scrub,
On the washboard in the tub,
While the baby, sopped in suds,
Rolled and tumbled in the duds;
Or was paddling in the pools,
With old scissors stuck in spools;
She still humming of her Friend
Who would keep her to the end.*

*Human hopes and human creeds
Have their root in human needs:
And I would not wish to strip
From that washerwoman's lip
Any song that she can sing,
Any hope that song can bring;
For the woman has a friend
Who will keep her to the end.*

The Washerwoman's Song by Eugene Ware (1841-1911)

Third: An All-Important Question. 5

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

The disciples are just like us. They, and we, believe that Jesus is God, but acclimating to that reality takes a lifetime.

*Thomas here shows more modesty than Peter,
who thought he could follow Christ...*

- Matthew Henry

We are all glad that Thomas asked this question because it sets up one of the most memorable and important statements in all the Bible.

Fourth: The Way to Heaven. 6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Think about all the metaphors Jesus has used for himself in this book – Seven ‘I am’s’ -

1. "I am the bread of life." (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51).
2. "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12).
3. "I am the door of the sheep." (John 10:7,9).
4. "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:25).
5. "I am the good shepherd." (John 10:11, 14).
6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6).
7. "I am the true vine." (John 15:1, 5).

And seven signs to back them up –

1. Changing water into wine (Jn 2:1-11);
2. Healing the royal official's son (Jn 4:46-54);
3. Healing the paralyzed man (Jn 5:1-15);
4. Feeding the 5,000 (Jn 6:5-14);
5. Walking on water (Jn 6:16-21);
6. Healing the man born blind (Jn 9:1-7); and
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11:1-45).

1. *Way = hodos* = a travelled road / a route, mode or means

2. *Truth = alethia* = fact, reality

3. *Life = zoe = vitality / animation*

I would like to say that one of these is for the Father, one for the Son and one for the Holy Spirit. That would be crazy cool. But all of them are for Jesus. He is all and each of them.

This repetition is meant to insure we know that (6b) *"no one comes to the Father except through me."*

Fifth: The Comfort of it All

What qualifies Jesus to be our Savior, now and eternally?

T - Isaiah 53:1-10 - *Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected^[b] by men, a man of sorrows^[c] and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces^[f] he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? ⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief...*

No wonder he is a **"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"** (Isaiah 9:6).

- *"In all their affliction He was afflicted"* (Isaiah 63:9).
- This enables him to *"...to bring good news to the afflicted; ...to bind up the brokenhearted, ...[and] to comfort all who mourn"* (Isaiah 61:1-2).
- He indeed knows *"how to sustain the weary one with a word"* (Isaiah 50:4).

Jesus can do all of this because he has been afflicted, brokenhearted, mournful, and weary. He is no distant, indifferent, or inexperienced counselor.

ILL: One of the major emphases of our congregation is Jesus. Churches may say they emphasize the person and work of Jesus, but Heritage really does. In biblical theology, which is the

template for our church's preaching, teaching and practice, Jesus is the only Hero of the Bible, its subject and constant theme; all texts point to Him. A text like John 14 emphasizes this reality.

To help you better know, love, and follow Christ, our elders have obtained copies of a book entitled, *Gentle and Lowly*, an expose on "*The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*" and want to give you a copy of the book this morning. We hope that you will read, enjoy, and discuss the book with your family, CG, and friends. But most of all, that it will show you the heart of Jesus for you.

There should be enough copies for every individual, each couple and/or family. If you are watching by the Livestream and want a copy, call, or e-mail Debbie and we will get one to you.

Conclusion:

John 14 is *"the best and most comforting sermon that the Lord Christ delivered on earth, a treasure and a jewel not to be purchased with the world's goods."*

- Martin Luther

(Today is Reformation Day)

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In 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? ³And 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. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going."⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Community Groups:

- 1 – Read the text, John 14:1-6
- 2 – What was troubling the hearts of the disciples?
- 3 – Think about the 20th & 21st centuries? What were the troubles?
- 3 – What is troubling your heart?
- 4 - Why might Jesus paint Heaven's portrait as a home?
- 5 – What does Jesus tell us about Heaven in verses 2-4?
- 6 – What description means the most to you?
- 7 – What does it mean that Christ has gone before us to Heaven?
- 8 – Why is death a 'shadow?'
- 9 – Would you have asked Jesus a similar question as Thomas?
- 10 – If you could ask Jesus one question, what would it be?
- 11 – Explain John 14:6 in your own words
- 12 – What qualifies Jesus to be the best counselor, God, Father, Prince?
- 13 – In this text, what speaks most to you?