



John 14:1-14

Easter 5, May 3, 2026
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"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." ⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ 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'? ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. ¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

Perhaps you know that second verse better as, ***"In My Father's house are many mansions."*** That's likely how many of you learned it, either from the King James Version or the New King James Version of the Bible. A mansion in the sky, just for me! Life might be difficult *here*, I may not have much *here*, but someday I'll get my own mansion in heaven! That's how it *sounds*, but that's *not* what Jesus says.

The King James Version of the Bible was published in 1611, and at that time, the word "mansion" meant the same thing as the Greek word it translates here—"a dwelling place, a room." Of course, words change and meanings change. And 400 years later, the word "mansion" no longer means a room or a simple dwelling place, but rather a palatial estate. But that's not what Jesus promises us.

And that's a minor example of why sometimes Bible translations need to change. Because words change. Meanings change. Language changes. *Everything* changes. We live in a world that is *constantly* changing. Now, we don't always like that. We like things to be predictable, to go as planned, to follow *our* schedule that *we* have written down in *our* planners. And if our routines are momentarily disrupted, we like to return to the regularly scheduled programming as soon as possible.

And so, it is frustrating, terrifying really, that just the ring of a phone, or the buzz of a text message, or the chime of an email can change absolutely everything. That is terrifying. We don't know what tomorrow will bring. Tomorrow I might be longing, with tears in my eyes, to be back where I am today, right now, for just a little while longer. And that is *terrifying*.

The disciples, as Jesus was speaking with them, they were also facing great change, terrifying change. And they were troubled. They were troubled because it was Maundy Thursday, they were in Jerusalem, and they knew changes were coming because Jesus had told them. And they had lots of questions. And Jesus doesn't answer their questions in the way they would like, or in the ways they were hoping He would when they asked them. Instead, He simply tells them to ***"Believe in me."***

And when we're troubled by change or even by the threat of change, we also need to turn to Jesus. To believe in Jesus. And so, our theme today is:

Changes? Turn and Face the Son

In an upper room, on the night He was betrayed, just before the Lamb of God poured out His blood on the cross, Jesus was reclining in a room full of disciples who were terrified about what was going to happen tomorrow. They just did not know. And they were afraid of the possibilities. Jesus was going to leave, and for the first time, the disciples would *not* be able to go with Him. Just before this chapter, Jesus had dropped a bomb: ***"Where I am going you cannot come."*** (John 13:33) Well, why not? They've been following for three years. They've been everywhere else with Jesus! Had things changed? Had something gone wrong? What was going to happen tomorrow?!

They didn't know the answer. But Jesus did. He was going to return to the Father, but in order to get there, He had to go to the cross. And there, He would make a sacrifice for those disciples, and *to that place*, the disciples could not go because He was going for them.

And so, to these disciples—uncertain, terrified about tomorrow, afraid of the looming changes—Jesus speaks those familiar words of comfort from our text. ***"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 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."*** Now, that's wonderful. . . but how is that comforting to the disciples there on Maundy Thursday?

Undoubtedly, these words are comforting to *us*. They've been repeated time and again in hospital rooms, at bedsides, during funerals—by me, maybe by you—because it is a reminder of our eternal home in the presence of God that we have waiting for us, even in the midst of that temporary place where we live in which death is always so near. *We* hear these words, and *we* are comforted, particularly at the time of death, or in the hour of the death of a loved one.

But we have to remember that Jesus did not speak these words to people who were at the point of death. He spoke these words intending to comfort people who did not know what was going to happen tomorrow, or the day after that, or the day after that, and they were terrified. He gives these words of comfort to a group of people that are going to keep on living, and they're going to have to keep on living with the changes that are coming.

So, is this all Jesus can offer them? Is Jesus promising here only a place at the *end*? A place in the heavenly mansion at the end of the road somewhere? *Even if* that's all He is offering, that's *still* great news. But if that's all, well, how does that help those disciples? Basically, Jesus would be saying, "Yeah, I know life stinks, but don't worry because someday you're going to die, and then I'll take you to heaven and then everything will be okay! Put up with it until I take you out of this miserable place."

But that is not all Jesus has to offer. Jesus' comfort is not merely some distant, future hope. It *is* that, but it is also *much* more. Jesus tells them about tomorrow, about *His* way that He is going, about His destination at the cross and then, ultimately, with the Father. And, yes, after reaching His destination, He would prepare a dwelling place for them, where *they* would live with the Father also.

But *Jesus'* dwelling place is *not just* far off somewhere in heaven. Later, in this same chapter, Jesus speaks again with these same disciples and says, ***“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.”*** (John 14:23) You see, it's not that we go somewhere else—off to heaven—to be comforted. It's that Jesus *and* the Father come here to us today, into our world, into our lives. God makes His dwelling place with us. Jesus tells His disciples that their hearts should not be troubled because Father and Son will be there with them.

And that unity of Father and Son working together, their oneness together, that's really the dominant theme of this whole section. It sounds at the start of our text like Jesus is making a distinction: ***“Believe in God; believe also in me.”*** When you read it in English, like we must, it sounds like Jesus is setting Himself apart from God. To our ears, it would sound better if Jesus said, *“Believe in God. (And by the way, when you believe in God, you're also believing in me, because I'm God.)”* Well, in the Greek, the way this sentence is constructed, that's *actually* what Jesus is saying. Not to mention, that's also the obvious conclusion of the rest of His discourse.

With the changes that were coming over the next twenty-four hours, it would be difficult to continue believing that Jesus was the Son of God. Because why would God allow His Son to die on a cross? How *could* God die on a cross? Those changes that would come would seem to confirm their worst possible fears—that the enemies were right about Jesus, that Jesus was a fraud. In fact, it seems like the disciples, or at least Philip, were already not thinking of Jesus quite as God: ***“Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”*** He's thinking of Jesus as the backup QB. As a fill-in for the real star.

And so, Jesus makes it abundantly clear, to Philip, and to the rest—He is God. He and His Father are one together. ***“If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. . . Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. . . I am in the Father and the Father is in me.”*** Jesus is no second-class citizen in the Godhead. He is one with the Father. And the disciples needed to remember that.

Their fears would turn into reality, and they would be violently confronted with changes that would leave them in tears; but Jesus wanted them to remember His Words. ***“Believe in Me.”*** He was God. He was one with the Father. And the work He was doing was the work the Father was doing. It would be *God* at work over the next day, when the powers of hell *seemed* to be prevailing. But Satan would not win. Jesus would rise, He would go to the Father, and while He was there, He would prepare a place for His disciples, for every disciple, so that His friends could be where He would be.

And when *we* are facing changes that cause us to fear or to doubt, we need the same reminder. Believe in Jesus. Turn to Jesus. Trust in Jesus. You know the thoughts that He has toward you. You've seen His blood that flowed out of the heart that was beating for you. And if you've seen Jesus' heart, you've seen the Father's heart. If you've seen Jesus at work, you've seen the Father at work. Jesus is preparing a place for you, to take you to Himself, and the Father approves, the Father also is working to make that the reality.

And if you are undergoing changes in your life, fearful changes, you do not need to figure out *why* these things are happening, or *how* God can work through them. You won't be any more successful at that than the disciples were, locked away in an upper room in constant fear over the changes that had just disrupted their world. Instead, Jesus simply says to you, ***“Believe in God; believe also in me.”***

Still, it is difficult to deal with life's changes. One way that people deal with life—one thing I've read time and again—is that you have to look at life as a journey. And I guess I can understand the appeal of that. On a journey, there's always progress, right? We're moving from one place to the next. Things might come into my life, people might come into my life, and then those things or those people might go *out* of my life, but *I* am still moving forward. I'm still journeying on to my happy destination. But do you see any problem in thinking that way?

It's all about me, isn't it? On a journey, everything changes except *me*. I may find myself somewhere, in a job or in a relationship, and if it makes me happy, then great! I can work with that. But if not, well, then I just move on in my journey. I quit and find a new job. Maybe I find a *new* spouse, one that's suitable for me on that point in my journey! I do what's right for me, because it's my journey after all.

Looking at life as a journey, really makes me the center of everything. And because *I'm* the one on the journey, no one else can tell *me* how to live. No one else has a say in *my* life, they haven't walked a mile in *my* shoes. It's *my* journey, *my* way. It's *my* life. I'm living *my* truth.

Now, that *might* be how many people look at life and cope with life and try to make sense of the changes of life, but that's not the way Jesus would have you look at things. That's not the solution Jesus has for you. Instead, Jesus invites you to **Turn and Face the Son**. Jesus calls your attention to Himself. He says to you, ***"Believe in God; believe also in me. . . I am the way, and the truth, and the life."***

He is the *way*, your way to heaven, and He became that way by going to the cross the next day. He is the *truth* because knowing Him is the necessary insight into *what is really going on around here*: that the Father loves us, that He operates the universe for our good, and any changes in our lives are the changes He permits so that we may go to Him. And He is the *life*, because believing in Jesus is life that is true and eternal and unchanging.

And if we understand that, if we believe that, well then, everything else we can give up, as long as we have Christ. And we do have Him. For He is the one who comes to us and makes His dwelling with us today, tomorrow, and every day. ***"Let not your hearts be troubled."*** Amen.

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7) Amen.