The Hope of the Resurrection

Resurrection Sunday, 2025

"Let not your heart be troubled; you 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."
John 14:1–4

To some, this may seem to be an unusual passage for celebrating the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. However, these words that were spoken to the disciples in the Upper Room on the night in which Christ was betrayed, and then crucified the next day, are filled with wonder, comfort, courage, and blessing.

A Resurrection of Comfort (v. 1)

First of all, the Lord Jesus here gives us **a balm for troubled hearts.** *"Let not your heart be troubled."* The *"your"* is plural, while *"heart"* is singular. This was addressed to the disciples as a group, but to each as individuals. If we remove the barrier of our artificial chapter division, this was spoken immediately after Jesus warned Peter of his coming denials (John 13:37–38). We can well understand why Peter's heart would have been troubled, and the verb here speaks of "grief, consternation—an overpowering dread." But why include the other disciples? The answer is found in Matthew 26:35, *"so said all the disciples."* They all vowed to stand by their Lord; and His warning to Peter, the leader of the band and the one considered the strongest, would have shattered their self-confidence.

Do you ever grieve over the unfaithful and self-serving acts of the past? Are you often haunted by the times you could have stood firm and faithful, yet failed? Imagine for a moment that you are Peter, and you have just been told by your precious Shepherd that you are about to commit the greatest sin in your entire life? Now, consider that that same Lord, who knows all that is in the hearts of men, follows up that revealing with these words of comfort, *"Let not your heart be troubled."*

The command, for such it is in the original, is then followed up by the means, *"You believe in God, believe also in Me."* This is also a command. The difference is that the first command, to "not be troubled" is passive, because our fear and shame are a reaction to what has or may happen. The command to *"believe"* is active; it is the decisive antidote to the fear. And what is the spiritual fulcrum that makes that faith conquer that fear? It is that Jesus' coming brutal scourging and crucifixion will be followed by His glorious and victorious resurrection! Jesus is telling Peter, and us, that even our greatest failures are conquered by His cross, and we need to look beyond them, to His, and our resurrection. While the cross of Christ gives us hope, it is the resurrection that seals our comfort and assurance. The cross says of our sin debt, *"It is finished!"* But the resurrection says, *"Arise, let us go from here"* (John 14:31). Time is fleeting, and there is work to do!

A Resurrection of Purpose (vv. 2, 4)

Next, Jesus speaks of **His going and its purpose.** *"In My Father's house are many mansions ... I go to prepare a place for you."* In the immediate context of victory over sin and shame comes both a reminder, and a promise. The father's house, as the prodigal learned, is the place of abundant supply. There, even the lowliest slave has *"bread enough and to spare"* (Luke 15:17). The Father's house speaks not only of some future residence, but also of a present place of security and supply. David understood this, *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* (Psalm 23:6). For the believer who chooses faith over fear, God's dwelling place is here and now, as well as a future heavenly hope, and in this present dwelling place there is work to be done.

When Jesus says, *"I am going to prepare a place for you,"* He indicates both the means and the purpose of His going. The way of His going will be the cruel cross of the coming day. But the way is essential to a purpose, *"to prepare a place for you."* In order to fulfill the ultimate purpose, He had to endure the way. The agonies of the crucifixion were the path that led to the resurrection and the work beyond, of preparing an eternal home for His beloved flock of believers. While our Lord is working for us in the heavenly realm, we are to be faithfully serving Him in the Father's house below.

In verse 4, Jesus says, *"And where I go you know, and the way you know."* From the very beginning of His ministry (John 2:19–21) to the very end (John 12:7, 23, 32), He had told the disciples of the "way" of His going (Matt. 17:22–23). It would be the dark night of His crucifixion, and the glorious morning of His resurrection.

A Resurrection of Hope (v. 3)

Finally, we have **the promise of His return for us.** *"And if I go ... I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* It is not often recognized that this is the first mention of the Rapture of the Church in the New Testament. He does not say, *"I will come to you,"* but *"I will receive you to Myself."* As firm as His certainty of resurrection is the assurance of His return for His Bride, the Church. Remember what the angels said at the ascension? *"This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven"* (Acts 1:11).

The manner of His coming will parallel the manner of His ascension, not at the Second Coming to Earth (Rev. 19:11–16), but at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13–18). Paul's words, *"caught up together ... to meet the Lord in the air,"* match the promise of Jesus, *"I will come again and receive you to Myself"* (John 14:3).

As surely as the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is cause to overcome fear by means of faith, and as clearly as His present work of preparing our heavenly home coincides with our present service to Him, so both He and we look forward with eager anticipation to that glorious day of reunion, *"that where I am you may be also ... and thus we shall always be with the Lord"* (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:17).

For all those whose present failures or trials bring fear, sorrow, and shame—remember, He knew it all in advance, and He joyfully paid our debt in full (Heb. 12:2). To you on this Resurrection Day, He is saying *"Let not your heart be troubled ... believe in Me."*

To all who grow weary in the fight, and wonder when He will come; whose souls cry out, *"How long, O Lord?"* (Psalm 13:1), I urge you to remember that even now He is faithfully preparing your eternal home. No doubt, each and every one of our homes there will be perfect, for He is a good carpenter. He will build each one knowing our likes and preferences, and when we see them, we will know just how intimately He has known us. But what if we are the ones to furnish them? And what if the furnishing is the work that we are doing for Him here and now? While He labors for us, let each of us, according to our ability, give attention to our work for Him (Matt. 25:15; Mark 13:34).

And to one and all who believe in Him, may this Resurrection Sunday be a reminder that just as *"God raised* [Him] *up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it,"* even so for us it is true that, *"If we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection'* (Rom. 6:5).

If you find yourself at this present time hard-pressed, troubled, or weary, my prayer is that you will lift up your eyes, beyond the clouds of doubt and fear, and be *"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"* (Titus 2:13).

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God.... Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."
1 John 3:1a–2

HE IS RISEN!

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