

Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT

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MISSIONARY

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...with We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State

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A MESSAGE OF COMFORT

"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 you may be also" (John 14:1-3).

There is no break between this and the preceding chapter. Christ and His disciples are still in the supper chamber, and probably still reclining at the table. Judas has gone to contact our Lord's enemies and lead them to Him that they may seize Him. So this chapter is the discourse following the supper. At the conclusion He says, "Arise, let us go hence."

This discourse is a continued manifestation of Christ's love for His disciples.



Location: 3.3 miles out Bryan Station Road. Right on Briar Hill Road.

- Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
- Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
- Evening Service 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Air-Conditioned Nursery Provided

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"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." He knew He was in the shadow of the cross; on the eve of the most terrible and shameful suffering ever to come to anybody; and yet He was more concerned for the comfort of His people than He was for His own safety and ease. His concern for them overshadows His own sorrows as He faces the cross. He sympathizes with them, but they cannot sympathize with Him. He tread the winepress of the wrath of God alone (Isaiah 63:3). He by Himself purged our sins. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand

of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3). He had no help in redeeming us from our sins. Jesus paid it all.

In pondering this message of comfort, let us make some observations as to the disciples' need of comfort, and then observe something of His method of comfort.

1. The Need of Comfort. The disciples were despondent. Strange things had come upon them. They had been following Jesus for more than three years, and had come to look to Him and lean upon Him for everything. They were following Him somewhat in the dark. They sincerely believed Him to be the Messiah or Christ, but still thought of Him as a sort of political or earthly king, who would soon restore the kingdom to Israel. They had the Jewish complex with all the Jewish hopes--the hopes of a conquered and downtrodden people. His triumphant entry into Jerusalem must have raised their hopes to a high pitch. But since then His conduct had been puzzling and distressing. They had heard him give expression to soul trouble. He had predicted that one of them would deny Him and another would betray Him into the hands of enemies. He had said, "Yet a little while I am with you." All this was enough to fill them with anxiety and foreboding. They dearly loved Him and the thought of His dying and leaving them was unbearable. They must have wondered what would become of them when He was gone. Will He leave them to their foes? What will they do when He is gone? The Lord knew their sorrows and He did something about it. He spends His last minutes in this message of comfort. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled." Their heartache was His chief concern for the moment. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Faith is necessary to peace of heart. If they will believe Him and leave it all up to Him, everything will come out all right. "Faith is the victory." Let the believer see that his present and eternal interests are in the hands of Christ and he will have peace--peace in a troubled world. We can well afford to leave all our troubles with Him, as the poet said:

"Yes, leave it with him;
The lilies all do,
And they grow--
They grow in the rain,
And they grow in the dew--
Yes, they grow:
They grow in the darkness, all hid in the night--
They grow in the sunshine, revealed by the light--
Still, they grow.

"Yes, leave it with him,
'Tis more dear to his heart,
You will know,
Than the lilies that bloom,
Or the flowers that start
'Neath the snow:
Whatever you need, if you seek it in prayer,
You can leave it with him--for you are in his care.
You, you know."

2. Christ's Method of Comfort. What a Comforter our Lord was and is! People of all classes instinctively turned to Him in sorrow. And He never disappointed them. He was harsh toward the proud and self-sufficient, but tender towards the helpless. His ministers are often at a loss as to what to say to sorrowing saints. But His perfections shine out here as they do everywhere. He understands. He is sympathetic when others are cold and cruel.

(A) He tells them that He is still to be trusted. Trust me as you trust God. He here lays claim to Deity. In Jesus Christ, God comes to where we are in all our needs.

(B) He tells them He is going in their interest. He is going to make ready a place for them. They had no certain dwelling place on earth, but He would prepare them one in heaven. "In my Father's house are many mansions." Heaven will be a big place. There will be plenty of room there...no empty houses. No housing problem in the Father's house. No shortage of materials for the buildings there. But who can visualize heaven, or who can describe its buildings? It is enough for us to know that our Lord is the architect and builder, and that the "place prepared" will be measured by his love and power.

(C) He tells them that He would return for them. "I will come again." Is this an allusion to His second coming or to His coming for us in death? I do not know. If we die before He comes we will go to be with Him. If we are here when He comes, we will be caught up to meet Him, and forever be with Him. It doesn't matter much. But for our comfort we need to trust Him for all the future. I am sure all His dear people will be satisfied with all His plans for us. He would not die for us and then leave us in the lurch.

Thomas interrupts by confessing ignorance about the place and how to get there. Christ replies that all these problems are met in Him. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Christ spans the distance between God and the sinner. Man would fain manufacture a ladder of his own by his own works and resolutions and reformations, and climb up to God. The truth that saves is not a proposition but a person. Those who have Christ have life; those who are without Christ, whatever else they may have, do not have life, but are exposed to the wrath of God. Life is not in a church, or an ordinance, or a preacher, or self, but in Jesus Christ.

Philip interrupts and is given a gentle rebuke. "Lord shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Our Lord goes on to emphasize that He and the Father are one in essence--only different persons.

(D) He tells them that His miraculous power would continue to be exercised through them as a medium, and that even greater things (verse 12). They would not be left without a job. They would find plenty to do, and would meet with success. "The works that I do shall he do also." This promise was limited to the disciples to whom he spake, and was fulfilled according to Mark 16:17-20. The greater things must refer to the preaching of a risen Saviour, the proclaiming of

the Gospel to every creature, and the salvation of human souls. These things were far greater than miracles. It is a far greater thing to preach the Gospel than to heal the body.

(E) He comforts them with the promise of answered prayers. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (verse 13). His departure would not separate them from His power and blessings.

(F) He tells them about another Comforter (verse 16), the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is now with them in the person of Christ, but when Christ is gone, He will be in them. This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, the day that marked the arrival of the Holy Spirit as an independent Person to indwell the people of God. He tells them that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can only indwell those who are spiritually prepared for Him.

(G) Our Lord closes this wonderful message by bequeathing to His disciples His peace (verse 27). "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." The word "peace" has three significations: First, there is peace with God, which means justification or salvation. Second, there is the peace of God, which means tranquility of mind, or freedom from the distractions of earth. This was the peace He had in mind. They would be disturbed for a while, but peace would come. Third, "peace on earth," which must wait for the return of Christ!