

JOHN 14:6
(OT: Ps 62:1-12; NT: Jn 14:1-6)

PRELIMINARY

- “Let not your hearts be troubled.”¹
 - That’s the first verse of our passage.
 - Tells us much about the heart of X:
 - His heart for **our hearts** this morning.
 - His heart for **your heart**.
- In the real world – the world we live in...
 - Roughly 10,473 reasons why our hearts would be troubled.
 - Health, parenting, jobs, finances, relationships, mental health, cultural issues, the economy, election year.
- Jesus says there is an antidote to trouble:
 - We can live in this troubled world, and we can live in the troubles of our lives, without troubled hearts.
 - The key – the antidote – is to see him as **the way, and the truth, and the life**.

Transition: Before we dive in, let’s bow our heads and **pray** together.

CONTEXT

- Various ways we could break this sentence down: way, truth, life.²
 - Note that each word appears in **first chapter** of John’s gospel.
 - **V23:** The *way* of the Lord is prepared by John the Baptist.
 - **V14:** We’re told Jesus is full of grace and *truth*.
 - **V3:** We’re told that in him was *life*.
 - Note that each word corresponds to **first three encounters** Jesus has with people in John’s gospel:
 - Jesus shows **Nathanael** that he is the only *way* to heaven.
 - He shows the teacher **Nicodemus** that he is the *truth*.
 - He shows the **Samaritan Woman** that drinking of him will bring *life*.
 - Note that each word corresponds to his offices:
 - As the *way*: Jesus is the **Priest** who mediates between heaven and earth.
 - As the *truth*: Jesus is the **Prophet** who reveals the will of God.
 - As the *life*: Jesus is the **King** who conquers death.
- But today, want us to understand these words – and enjoy them – in immediate context:
 - Part of Jesus’s **farewell address**.
 - Development of his opening statement in **V1: Let not your hearts be troubled**.
 - And as a direct answer to Thomas’s question in **V5**.

Transition:

- If all that went over your head, don’t worry about it.
- Let’s enjoy our way through this passage and see how this I AM statement takes us to the heart of X.

CONTENT

[Farewell Discourse]

- Passage in section of John's gospel called **Farewell Discourse** → Called that bc Jesus is saying goodbye to his disciples.
 - It's night of his betrayal → In few hours, friend will betray him with kiss.
 - Very next day will be much worse: Flogged/mockd/denied/tried/crucified.
- It's Crucifixion Eve...
 - Make sense if Jesus were distracted, needed time alone to prepare, or needs disciples to encourage *him* for all he's about to endure.
 - But instead, his heart is where?
 - Not thinking about himself...
 - Thinking about those he loves.
 - **V1: Let not your hearts be troubled.**
 - Disciples now know what's about to unfold.
 - Jesus doesn't want them to be afraid...
- Isn't his heart beautiful?
 - Sometimes it helps to put our troubles in perspective:
 - Resist the temptation to let them consume our whole world.
 - Count our blessings and practice gratitude.
 - But Jesus never minimizes our pain.
 - He sees you wherever you are this morning.
 - He knows your troubles → And he cares.

Transition:

- Given what's about to happen, how are disciples not to let their hearts be troubled?
- In the next few verses, Jesus tells them.

[Development of Opening Statement]

- **VV1b-2:** 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?
 - I'm leaving, but only so I can prepare a place for you.
 - Do all that needs to be done so you can go to heaven.
 - **VV3-4:** 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] You know the way to where I am going.
 - Do you think I'll forget you?!?!?
 - No, I'm coming back for you.
- So, between my death and my return, remember these things/believe these things.***
- You have a glorious future ahead of you:
 - I will secure it for you, and I will return to get you...
 - And we will be together.
 - When faced with trouble in this life, remember the hope of heaven.

Transition: It's a stirring word. But apparently Thomas isn't having it.

[Thomas's Question]

- **V5:** Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"
 - Can we celebrate Thomas for a minute?
 - Same guy who refused to believe Jesus had risen from the dead.
 - Jesus had to show up in person and give him guided tour of his wounds.
 - **Thomas believed in Jesus, but he also had trouble believing in Jesus.**
 - I don't know about you, but that makes sense to me.
 - If pay attention to what Bible says, find all sorts of things make you think.
 - Don't feel bad for having questions/doubts.
 - Instead, do what Thomas did: Bring your questions/doubts to Jesus.
 - This is one of the keys to resilient faith...
 - Our church is great place to talk about your questions.
 - **And look:** If Thomas hadn't shared doubt, we wouldn't have our famous verse.
 - We'd be one I AM saying short...
 - Bc it's in response to Thomas's question that Jesus says...
- **V6:** I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
 - **D. A. Carson** comments: "*The second half of the verse shows that the entire verse must be taken as an answer to Thomas's question.*"³
 - Thomas said: We don't know the destination and we don't know the way.
 - Jesus replies: The destination is the heavenly Father, and I am the way.
 - In other words, way/truth/life is not 3-point sentence referring to 3 different ideas.
 - Instead, it's a single answer to one question.
 - **Carson** puts it this way: "*Jesus is the way to God, precisely because he is the truth of God and the life of God.*"⁴

Transition: Consider a handful of applications with me.

CONSEQUENCE

1. No shying away from the fact that this is a very *exclusive* claim.

- Jesus doesn't say he is *a* way, *a* truth, *a* life → Says: **I am the way, and the truth, and the life...** Jesus doesn't say there are many ways to God → Says: **No one comes to the Father except through me.**
- Bible says there's only one way to heaven:
 - No other religion can get you in...
 - Being a good person can't get you in...
 - **Acts 4:12:** There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven... by which we must be saved.
- In our world, this is not popular teaching.
 - Told each of us can speak "my truth" → Even if our truths contradict.
 - Bible – and human reason – say that's not right.
 - Of course, we respect other people's beliefs/defend their right to disagree.
 - But can't fall into unintelligible quagmire where we can all be right even if one of us is saying black is white.
- Remember being on a panel at a consulting firm in DC...

- Invited a Pastor/Imam/Rabbi to field questions from employees.
- Never forget confusion in crowd at end of meeting.
 - Earnest MC was wrapping up, thanked us for sharing, and then – in tone intended to be unifying/kind – made comment to affect that all our religions taught basically same thing.
 - Everyone seemed to agree → Apart from the Pastor/Imam/Rabbi.
- Nothing angry about it, none of us were upset.
 - Another lie our culture tells us is that you must be hateful if you disagree with someone's truth.
 - But that's not right – you can disagree in love.
 - Pastor/Imam/Rabbi agreed:
 - We might all be wrong...
 - But we can't all be right!
 - Ironically, that was the one thing we agreed on!
 - There is such a thing as true/false, right/wrong, black/white.
- Xns, we need some steel in our spines to believe this.
 - World will call you a bigot (or worse) for believing some of what the Bible says.
 - With gentleness, humility, and love → Believe it anyway.
 - And then share it winsomely with others...
- We don't shy away from Christ's exclusive claims:
 - Not concerned about *my* truth; concerned about *his* truth:
 - And he says: **I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (V6).**

2. But don't miss that this exclusive claim is also *radically* inclusive...⁵

- *No one* comes to Father except through X → *But anyone* can come to Father through X.
- Jesus didn't give us directions: Do this/do that/follow these steps and you'll go to heaven.
 - In that case, some of us might find our way but most of us would not.
 - Instead, he made himself the way so no matter who we are – we can make it.
- This is why his Father's house – heaven – has **many rooms (V2)** → Bc all kinds of people will get there.
 - Most buttoned down/clean cut/pure lipped nun will join arms with most disheveled/ragamuffin/foul mouthed man → Both will be welcome through Jesus.
 - Bc we're saved by grace...

3. With Jesus – our hearts can be free from trouble.

- Like those first disciples:
 - We also live between Christ's death and his return...
 - There are 10,473 reasons why our hearts would be troubled.
- But Jesus has taken the worst this world has to offer:⁶
 - The *way* – walked the path of suffering.
 - The *truth* – experienced injustice and a cross.
 - The *life* – died for us.
- And in so doing, Jesus himself has become the antidote to our troubled hearts.
 - **Chris Wimer** once called Christ the avatar of and antidote to human suffering.⁷
 - He embodied it and in so doing conquered it.

- And now he calls us to believe → Hear these words as they are written to YOU:
 - **V2:** 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?
 - He has prepared a place for you.
 - Done everything that needed to be done so you can go to heaven.
 - **V3:** 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.
 - He hasn't forgotten you.
 - He's coming back for you.
 - **V4:** You know the way to where I am going.
 - You have a glorious future ahead of you...
 - X has secured it for you.
- When faced with trouble in this life, remember the hope of heaven → And...
Let not your hearts be troubled.

Transition: Why does this make all the difference?

THE CLOSE

- Our Dir. of Women's Ministry, Steph Schneider talks about family movie night.
 - Order pizza, snuggle up on the couch and watch a movie.
 - One of fun things about young kids is that you get to show them all classics for very first time.
- Steph noticed something interesting about how she and her kids watched Disney movies differently.
 - Pick any one you want – you know plot: Meet an unlikely hero, follow them on quest, experience challenges along way, till they fall in love/all works out in end.
 - Steph knows standard plot, but her kids don't...
 - During dark scenes they get tossed around by every wave...
 - Wide eyes, fears, and occasional tears.
 - Bc they didn't know how the story ends.
- In Jesus, we know the end of our story.
 - We still have some dark scenes, some unexpected plot twists – some troubles.
 - But we can hold them bc we know how this story ends.
 - **We will live happily ever after.**
 - Someone says: Your faith sounds like a fairytale!
 - We say, no: Fairytales sound like our faith.
 - The story we all long for is true in Jesus → **Let not your hearts be troubled.**

RESOURCES AND ENDNOTES

Resources

This list contains some of the resources that were used to prepare this sermon series. Check them out if you want to dig a little deeper.

- James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John, Volumes 2 and 3*.
- John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*.
- Iain D. Campbell, *I AM... Exploring the 'I am' sayings of John's Gospel*.
- D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*.
- Matt Chandler, *I AM*.
- Ray Cortese, *To Believe*.
- Paul Jeon, *Life Eternal: The Gospel of John*.
- Timothy Keller, *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*.
- Andreas Köstenberger, *John*.
- Logos Bible Software.
- Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*.
- Tim Mackie, *Read Scripture: Illustrated Summaries of Biblical Books*.
- R. C. Sproul, *Knowing Christ: The I AM Sayings of Jesus*.
- Christian Wiman, *Zero at the Bone: Fifty Entries Against Despair*.

Endnotes

¹ I owe this section to a sermon Bill Fullilove preached on this text, accessed [here](#) 2/7/24.

² I owe this section to Iain D. Campbell, *I AM... Exploring the 'I am' sayings of John's Gospel*, 96-100.

³ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 491.

⁴ Carson, *John*, 491.

⁵ The exclusive/inclusive dynamic is not original to me but has been used by innumerable authors and pastors.

⁶ I owe this bullet to Campbell's reflections on the ironies of the cross, found in the chapter referenced above.

⁷ Christian Wiman, *Zero at the Bone: Fifty Entries Against Despair*, 137.