

## *Jesus' Gift To Us*

John 14

February 26, 2023

Horatio Spafford was a successful lawyer and real estate investor who lost a fortune in the Chicago fire. About the same time, his beloved 4 year old son died of scarlet fever. He thought that a vacation would do his family some good, so he sent his wife and 4 daughters to England, planning to join them after he finished up some business. While crossing the Atlantic, however, that ship was involved in a terrible collision and sunk. Although his wife survived, more than 200 people lost their lives, including all of their precious daughters. Spafford immediately boarded a ship for England to join his wife and mourn together. As he sailed, the captain informed him of the spot where his daughters had perished. And under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, Horatio Spafford wrote the words that we will sing in our closing hymn today, It is well with my soul. How could a man who suffered such loss have such peace? To find out, open your Bibles to John 14.

Two weeks ago we began a journey toward the crucifixion and ultimately the resurrection. We started our expedition at Bethany on Palm Sunday as Jesus mounted up to ride His donkey's colt into the Passover-filled Jerusalem. By so doing, He announced His Messiahship and proclaimed Himself as Israel's rightful King. We mentioned last week that on Monday He cleared the Temple and on Tuesday He taught about things to come. We also spent some time last week in the Upper Room around the Lord's Table on Holy Thursday watching Him wash feet with the apron of a servant. We looked at some of the rest of John 13 during Wednesday evening Bible Study where Jesus revealed, at least to John, that Judas would betray Him and how Jesus warned Peter that he would deny Him 3 times that very night.

We return to the Upper Room today to listen in on more Jesus' final teachings there. If you are able, please stand as we read from John 14: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

What a great passage of Scripture to provide peace and comfort especially when a loved one has passed or when we are facing our own death. We've discussed these precious promises just recently in our sermon series on heaven so we won't spend much

time on them except to again point out Jesus' effort to calm and comfort His disciples ahead of time. There's no reason to get upset and all distraught, for Jesus Himself is preparing a **wonderful** place for us and He will take us there when the time is right. Notice that Judas has already left the room so those who oppose, resist, or reject Jesus are not included under this umbrella of peace and comfort in John 14, unless and until they decide to get under it by accepting Jesus. Our ability not to be troubled only comes from our trust in God.

Which is what His next phrase emphasizes. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus. There are no other roads to heaven, no other name given among men whereby we **must** be saved. There is salvation in no one else and nothing else. Jesus here slams the door tightly shut on universalism that we also discussed recently. No Jesus, no peace, no life, no truth, no way. But to know Jesus is to know all of these.

We've also discussed what it means that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life so I'll resist the urge to preach on these great themes. But Jesus' next interaction with Philip affirms and sheds a bit of light on the Trinity. Say Trinity. Philip bluntly asked Jesus to show them the Heavenly Father. Nothing much. Just this one little thing. To which Jesus replies, in vs 9 "Don't you know me, Philip? Even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me **has seen** the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

Anyone who says Jesus never claimed to be God has never read the Bible! Earlier He told them, "I and the Father and one," and here again He says the same thing a little differently. "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father!" They were eating supper with the Eternal God and the One who had made their feet, just washed them! And they didn't even know it! They had been listening to the Father teach and preach the last three years and didn't recognize His voice. In the Upper Room that night, Jesus makes it about as clear as it gets. The Three are One and the One is Three. And they would still fall asleep and desert Him within hours.

But this conversation becomes a Segway into some great promises! Look at vs 12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even **greater** things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do **whatever** you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 You may ask me for **anything** in my name, and I will do it." How's that for promises? Charles Spurgeon said this about the word anything "Whether large or small, all my needs are covered by that word anything!" What-ever we ask? No. Whatever we

ask **in Jesus' Name**-consistent with His character and His will. So that you will be glorified? No, so that the Son will bring glory to the Father. But if it passes those tests, then anything. Wow! Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. You will do even greater things than Jesus did. The early disciples did some incredible things and even today, God is still doing incredible things through His disciples! God's not dead and He's not done! He's alive and well! And will be forevermore!

Vs 15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command." Say obey. This is the first of 4 times Jesus will say this. Obedience is the true test of love. You can say you love Jesus all day long, but if you're disobeying Him, you don't really love Him. That's what Jesus Himself says down in verse 24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching." It's as plain and simple as that. If you love Him, obey Him. If you're disobeying Him, you don't love Him. Period. End of discussion. Does Jesus care about what we do, or just about what we believe? I'd say He cares very much about what we do! If we truly believe in Him, we'll love Him, and if we truly love Him, we will obey Him.

Thursday of Holy Week is often called Maundy Thursday. It comes from the Latin word *mandatum* from which our word *mandate* comes, which is a command or order. It refers to Jesus' command to share Holy Communion in remembrance of Him. But that's not all Jesus commanded that night. If you truly love Him, you'll obey His teachings, He said, which means you have to hear and understand His teachings, which involves a lifetime effort of prayer, worship, study, and sharing with other believers in His church.

Which finally gets us to verse 16. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." That night in the Upper Room as His final minutes tick away, Jesus reveals to His Disciples not only that He is leaving, but that when He goes, He will send His Holy Spirit. Say Spirit.

The very first title Jesus gives His Spirit is Counselor. The Greek word is *Paraklete*. Not parakeet. He's already given those in Creation. The word *Paraklete* means one called near to help. Like we might yell out, "Come help me!" That's why the NKJV uses the word, Helper. The Amplified Bible adds Advocate, Strengthener, Standby, and Intercessor. One English word cannot capture it all. Praise God for our Strengthener, Amen? Our standby! Our helper! The normal use of this Greek word when John wrote this was as a legal assistant, one who helped someone in legal trouble. Similar to a lawyer who argues on your behalf, a legal advocate. I'm thankful for the richness and depth of this title for the Holy Spirit because it helps us to understand

the broad scope of His work in our lives! One translation calls Him the consolers. The KJV says the Comforter. The Holy Spirit does all of that! He comforts, consoles, helps, strengthens, intercedes, advocates, and is standing by to help believers at all times.

Jesus also calls Him the Spirit of Truth. Say Truth. Praise God he leads us into all truth! Away from all error and false teaching. He helps us discern between right and wrong, truth and error, good and bad. How badly we need that today! In a postmodern world when evil is called good and good, evil, when sin is embraced and celebrated, when false teaching and heresy are rampant, praise God we have the Spirit of Truth! He's God's multi-tool and He's the Gift that keeps on giving 2000 years later!

Vs 17: "The world cannot accept Him, but you know Him for He lives within you!" And on Pentecost, the rushing mighty wind came on that house in Jerusalem, which many believe was this same Upper Room where the Disciples had gathered, and the Spirit of Truth, the Advocate, Counselor, Helper, and Consoler entered them all! And today He enters all who trust in Him. He is not just given to super apostles, or a privileged few, not just to pastors or deacons, He is given to all who accept Jesus as Savior and Lord! If you're saved, He's in you even if you're not aware of it. I'm so thankful Jesus didn't leave orphans behind! He left the Divine Parent, the Holy Spirit to care for us. We're not aimless hopeless and vulnerable. We are His! Praise God for the Holy Spirit!

In vs 23 Jesus says, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. (there it is again!) My Father will love him, and we will come to him and **make our home with him.**" Say we. Who is the We Jesus mentions? God the Father, God the Son, through God the Holy Spirit that He just promised to send. That's who comes and takes up residence with you and in you! God with us! Immanuel! Paul expounds on this in his letter to the Corinthians and reminds us that our bodies are the Temples of God where He lives! The Eternal Everlasting God makes His home in us! Friends, if that doesn't excite you, comfort you, help you, you're beyond help! If that don't start your truck, you're pistons are froze up.

24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. (If He said it once, it's important and eternal. But when He repeats it 4 times, He doesn't want us to miss it!) These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. 25 All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." Praise God the Holy Spirit is also our Teacher! Teaching us the Scriptures and helping us understand and apply. And He's our Reminder! We need one, Amen? We forget! We forget what Jesus said, we forget who we are, what God did, what the Bible says, but the Holy Spirit is our Divine Reminder! The KJV says the Holy Spirit will "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

And this has special application to when the Disciples would go out to spread the Gospel. And then some years would pass, and they'd want to write it down for us, and then, as they wrote, the Holy Spirit reminded them of everything Jesus said! That's how John remembered what Jesus said that night. What a gift is the Spirit! And one that we don't appreciate anywhere near what we should! Some don't even realize He's at work in their lives, but He is! Helping, teaching, leading, comforting, correcting, empowering, encouraging, reminding.

And giving peace. Say peace. Vs 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives." Isaiah called the Messiah the Prince of Peace! When He was born, the Angel announced it by saying, "Peace on earth!" Throughout His ministry, Jesus was never **not** at peace. He was never rattled by high taxes, hungry mouths, or even dead friends. He was never intimidated by Roman soldiers or Jewish bullies. He was the very embodiment of peace. And now, He said He was going to leave that peace with His disciples. In the Amplified Bible, Jesus tells them, "My **[own]** peace I now give and bequeath to you." Matthew Henry said this. "When Christ left the world, He made [out] His will. His soul he bequeathed to His Father, and His body to Joseph (of Arimathea). His clothes fell to the soldiers, His mother He left to the care of John. But what should He leave to His poor disciples, who had left all for Him? Silver and gold He had none, but He left them what was far better; His peace."

The Hebrew word for peace is Shalom. Total well-being of mind, body, soul, spirit, emotions, finances, the whole ball of wax. All of life. And Jesus was and is that. The Prince of Shalom! The Greek word used here is similar and is Eirene. The name Irene comes from it, and it means rest, quietness and even prosperity. And Jesus is all of that too. And when He imparted His Holy Spirit to us that night, He gave us both His shalom peace and His Eirene peace. Eph 2:14 tells us that Jesus Himself **is** our peace, and 2 Thess 3:16 that, "... the Lord of peace...[can] give **you** peace at all times and in every way."

But let's be clear Jesus said, This is not the world's peace. The world's peace looks like DC and Minneapolis, like Hiroshima, Pearl Harbor and Ukraine. The world's peace troubles my heart. But Jesus' peace calms it. His is the peace that abides when the world rages around us. The peace that allowed Him to sleep in the boat even when the storm was at its worst. It's the peace that my mom had when she knew she lay dying. The peace that I've seen in many of your eyes as you've faced surgery or job loss or worse. It's the peace that enabled Horatio Spafford to lose all his children and then write the song that has touched millions. The world doesn't give that kind of peace. And since the world doesn't give it, the world can't take it away. It is a deep abiding peace that far surpasses all understanding that Phil 4:7 says will guard our hearts and our minds, a peace that holds the soul steady when the body and mind are tossed about.

Which is why He tells them and us at the end of vs 27 what He started out with up in verse 1, “Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” With Jesus’ peace, you don’t need to be troubled or afraid. The Amplified Bible says, “**Stop allowing** yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not **permit yourselves** to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.” Friends, if we didn’t have Christ’s peace through His Holy Spirit, we would have a lot to be afraid of. But because we do, we don’t have to be fearful, intimidated, cowardly, or unsettled. Praise God for Christ’s peace! And praise Him for His Holy Spirit through whom we have that peace! If you’ve never received His peace, accept Jesus now that you too might know the peace and joy God wants you to have.