

*14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. 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, so that where I am, there you may be also.*

*4 And you know the way to the place 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 know me, you will know 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 we will be satisfied." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? 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; 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; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.*

*12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.*

A number of weeks ago, a duck came to our yard. She found the mulch among our shrubs to her liking, dug a small hole, and began laying eggs. The first night we saw four eggs, the next day she laid one more, another on the day following, by the time she was done eleven eggs were in the nest.

At first she was timid; our cat's being outside scared her away. When I stooped to pick some daffodils near her nest she flew off. But day by day her courage grew until she sat calmly on the nest while we entered and exited our front door, only six feet away from where she sat nesting. She must have had a showdown with the cat - he gives the nest wide berth now.

I hope the next few days will bring some ducklings breaking out of their confining shells. But I have my doubts. Some weeks ago the cat must have chased her off the nest before she built her courage. For all night the eleven eggs were left exposed, uncovered. The temperature dropped below freezing that night. All her efforts may be for nothing.

Maybe she had no choice. Maybe a dog came near, she had to flee or there would have been no one to sit on the eggs. Or maybe she just forgot her responsibilities for a night. Maybe everything will be fine and I'm concerned for no reason.

However it turns out she will forget. At least we think so. Ducks have no regrets. But people do.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled,” said Jesus. “Believe in God, believe also in me.”

Jesus' answer is not forgetting.

Not pretending, not running.

We bring our fears, our regrets, the irresponsibility that has harmed another - the moments when we did what we never should have - the decisions that did not work out the way we hoped - the marriages that we failed or that failed us.

We bring the ways we disappointed those who loved us - our not taking the time to say thanks - too busy, too lazy to help. We bring our helplessness when disease struck - all the pain that possessed us because we were powerless to save.

We bring the words we never said, the words we never should have said, the words that we wish never had been said to us, we bring them all.

We hand all of these over to Jesus and he says, "Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God believe also in me.”

The air was still echoing with the words he had spoken a moment before. “Peter, very truly I tell you, before the cock crows you will have denied me three times.”

Peter, Jesus closest friend would completely fail him - claim he never knew him - wear to God that he had nothing to do with Jesus.

And Jesus' very next words to Peter were: "Let not your hearts be troubled, Believe in God, believe also in me.”

Jesus sees all that we bring to him, all that we regret and that shames us and that makes us tremble in fear. And he calmly says, “Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God believe also in me.”

But what can Jesus do? Will he bring life out of eggs that were frozen? Will he reverse the past for us - protect us from pain in the future? No, he promises none of this.

Instead he speaks these words: “In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. 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, so that where I am you may be also.”

We will be with Jesus. The shame will not matter, the regrets will not matter, there will be no fear. Nothing will be hidden, everything will be known, and yet we will have perfect peace in Jesus.

“Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me.”

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” says Jesus.

Already between us and our Lord nothing is hidden. Denying him as Peter did may lie ahead; still our Lord calls us to faith in him. You and I may not be able to handle today or tomorrow or the residue that yesterday has left, but Jesus can. Believe in him.

Let him be your way, your truth, your life. Where he is he wants you to be also, today, tomorrow, forever.

In this life we never know whether the eggs will hatch. And if they do we never know what cat or dog may come along to turn joy into sorrow. But you know and believe and trust in Jesus, where he is you will be also.