

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.

Last words.

What does a father say to a son as he sends him off to the army? What does a mother speak to a daughter the moment before she goes down the aisle? What to say to a child as she gets on a plane for a summer with her father, or we leave him with strangers as we drop him off at camp? What does a father say as he speaks his last words to a daughter before he dies, a mother to a son as she leaves him that first day of Nursery School? What do spouses speak as they kiss their goodbye and part for the day's work? Last words.

Most of the time they go something like this: Be careful, I love you.

Last words.

Every confirmation day feels like a moment of last words for me. We have spent many hours together during the two years of instruction. Mrs. Polacok and I and your parents have planned and taught and been with you in the hope that you will believe in Jesus. I will not have the same time to spend with you so today I speak to you words that I hope will make a difference.

It was a night of last words for Jesus. He would never be with his disciples in the same way again. They had been with him for three years, they had seen bring healing wherever he went. He spoke and a raging storm was suddenly quiet; he blessed a little bread, gave thanks

and thousands were satisfied as they shared. He made gallons of water become fine wine; they had seen all of this and so much more. But this would be a night for last words.

He began by washing their feet, inviting them to also serve one another, to love one another as he had loved them. He told Peter, “Tonight you will deny me three times.”

And then he spoke these words: “Do not let your hearts be troubled, believe in God believe also in me.”

Do not let your hearts be troubled.

There are so many things that can trouble our hearts: sadness over what we have lost - fear of failing - the great weight and burden of having failed - words that another said to us in anger, or in order to make fun of us.

There are so many things that can trouble our hearts - feeling alone – different - being outside when others are inside - missing someone we love.

Jesus words are: “Do not let your hearts be troubled, believe in God believe also in me.”

Jesus words are an invitation to pour our troubles out of our hearts in prayer to God, that God might fill every corner of your heart with faith in Jesus. All those troubles we turn over to God have no power like the power of God who rules over all.

“Believe in God, believe also in me,” says Jesus.

And then he promised his disciples and us: “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 that where I am there you may be also.”

On that night when Judas would betray Jesus and Peter would deny him and Jesus would be condemned to death, Jesus helped them to see what all of this would mean. He was giving himself to prepare a place for them, a place in his Father's house, a place to be with Jesus forever. That is not what looked like was happening on the outside. It looked like disaster. But God was making all these events into a blessing.

How many times in each of our lives this is the case. Something happens: sickness, disappointment, loss, and it looks like we will be swallowed up by it all. But as we believe in Jesus through it all what was a disaster brings a blessing with it. Everything depends on believing in Jesus through it all and not giving up hope.

That is what Jesus means as he says, “I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me.”

Sometimes these words are shouted from pulpits, and they sound like a threat but Jesus spoke these words in a small room to those whom he loved. He wanted them to know that all through their lives they would be tempted to think that there were other ways like all the ways that tempt us: If I could win the lottery, if others would admire me, if I had wealth, a shiny new car, fine clothing and jewelry. If I were famous, if I got good grades, or could be popular, then I would be satisfied, at peace.

But Jesus knows that there is no peace, no lasting peace except in God, being safe in God’s presence. Jesus is the way because he is the truth; he himself is the life that your heart longs for. Everything else we consume to satisfy the hunger that is within us leaves us more hungry still, hungry for more wealth, more power, more security, more. Only Jesus satisfies.

Last words, Jesus way of saying, “Be careful, I love you.”

This day I make his words my words to you. Jesus is the way for your life, the way that will lead to the place in the house of God that Jesus has won for you.

Until we get there, he wants us together here, hearing and studying his word, being fed by his body and blood. Your hunger will be satisfied here.

And he wants us to love, each other and others also – loving as he loved: washing his disciples’ feet - giving his life on the cross.

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