

An Explosion of Grace

Pastor Matthew Ude

May 7, 2023

INI - SDG

John 14:1-14 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "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. ³ "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ "And where I go you know, and the way you know." ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ "Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. ¹² "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³ "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ "If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

What is worrying you? What is weighing on your heart this morning?

I woke in the middle of the night the other day thinking about everything I must get done before the end of the year. In my case that means that it must be finished this week.

Jesus came to give us peace. He is the king of Peace. This is what the angels sang on Christmas morning, "Peace on Earth."

He brought peace between us and God, the peace which comes from the forgiveness of sins. But He also brings peace on this earth.

This earthly peace comes not from a life that is free of trouble, but from a heart that trusts God even when being tossed about.

John 16:33 In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

"Let not your hearts be troubled . . . trust in me."

We have seen Jesus' power in the many miracles that He did and in His resurrection. We have heard His many promises. Especially last week when we heard how He is our Good Shepherd. Today Jesus reminds us that His power plus His promises to us means that we have nothing to worry about on this earth or in that life which is to come.

What was weighing on the disciples' hearts?

If we look back at John chapter thirteen, we find that one of the things that may have been weighing on the minds of the disciples was Jesus's prediction that one of them would betray Him and that all would desert him. Their protestations reveal that they were worried about who it would be and that it might be them.

The fear of failure can certainly cause us great anxiety. The fear that we are not enough. The fear that we won't fit in. The fear that there is not a place for us. The fear that we will fail as a spouse or as a parent. These are all things that can trouble our hearts.

We have good reason to worry that we may not be good enough. Jesus tells the story of the three men and the talents. Two of them used their talents to increase God's kingdom. One of them buried their talent in the ground.

How many of us can honestly say, "I have used my talents to bring people to church?"

Jesus warns that a tree that does not bear fruit will be cut down. How many of us can seriously say here is the fruit that I have born for God?

To those who afraid that they are not good enough Jesus says “Let not your heart be troubled. There is a place for you.”

Verse 2 tells us “In my father house are many mansions.”

The best way to understand Jesus words here is: “in the place where my Father dwells there are many places. I go to make one of these a place where you can remain.”

The room is not a place where we can stay temporarily. The Greek word is clearly a place where we can remain. I place where we can belong.

Jesus promises that despite our failure, our sin, there is a place in heaven for us. He is going to make sure that there is a place in heaven for us. We belong there not because of what we have done but because of what He has done.

Jesus is going to his death. That death is what creates a place in heaven where you do belong. Where we you will remain.

Yes, we do often fail, but that doesn't really matter because Jesus did not fail.

Jesus' power “I will prepare the place” plus Jesus' promise “for you,” with the result that you have a place in heaven.

What was weighing on the hearts of the disciples?

Sin, if they weren't worrying about their sin right at this moment, they certainly soon would be. Peter, James and John couldn't watch and pray. Peter denied the Lord. All the disciples fled instead of helping him. Jesus knew that soon sin and guilt would worry them.

Sin can certainly cause anxiety in our lives. King David talks about tossing and turning and his bed being drenched because of the guilt of his sin.

Often our response to guilt is to promise ourselves and others that we will never do it again. We swear that we will be better next time. That is just a recipe for more failure and greater anxiety.

Jesus tells us rather to flee for peace to His death. Jesus goes to prepare a place for you.

The word prepare is not meant to convey to us that it is going to take Jesus a long time to get heaven ready, but rather that Jesus is doing it for you personally.

When Abraham's servant went looking for a wife for Isaac, he confessed that God had "prepared" Rebekah as the bride for Isaac. This isn't a reference to the time it took for Isaac to get married. It is a reference to how perfectly suited Rebekah was for Isaac.

This word "prepare" is salvation language.

God prepared an ark to save Noah and his family.

God prepared Abraham and his descendants to deliver the promise of the Messiah.

God told David that he would prepare his seed and again that he would prepare his throne. Psalm 9 and Psalm 89.

"In the fullness of time God sent forth his son." At the perfectly right time in the perfectly right place God sent His Son to save us from sin.

Now Jesus will complete the work of salvation. The salvation which God prepared for the whole world. Jesus will now prepare for you personally.

David reminds us:

Psalm 23:5 NKJ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

God brings his salvation to you personally.

Jesus power "I will" plus Jesus promise "prepare," that is it will be done for you" results in salvation coming to you personally. Your sins are forgiven.

Why are the disciples worried? Why are their hearts troubled?

Certainly, one of the reasons that Jesus knows his disciples might be worried and troubled is because they will see him die.

Separation can cause anxiety and worry. Not seeing our loved ones can cause worry. Separation, or the appearance of separation from Jesus can cause worry.

Jesus reassures us:

14 "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

One we are separated from those we love, when we can't see Jesus, we have this special privilege, prayer, the opportunity to go to God.

We often assume that anyone can pray to God and He will hear. Yet the scriptures are clear that this is not true. God does not listen to sinners.

The man who was born blind in John 9 correctly told the Pharisees. God does not listen to sinners.

Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Psalm 34:15 ¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their cry.

Because we are sinners we could not come before the Lord in prayer. Except that Jesus has now given us access to prayer. Apart from Jesus none could pray to God.

Jesus power to forgive sins plus Jesus promise "whatever you ask in my name" results in this that we have the special privilege to pray to God.

How can we be free of worry and anxiety? Jesus power plus Jesus promises.

He calmed the storm. He healed the lame. He called the dead out of the ground. Add Jesus' promise. "Given and shed for you," and the result is an explosion of God's grace. A place in heaven where we belong. Salvation is prepared for us individually. The special privilege to bring all our cares and worries to God through Jesus Christ. Amen