**​LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED**

At the very peak of His earthly popularity when He fed the 5000 a dinner, Jesus turned down an offer from the Jewish masses to become their king (John 6:15). They did not know Him, nor the spiritual nature of His kingdom. He began to explain that the Kingdom of Heaven is not the Kingdom of Earth (John 18:36 “*my Kingdom is not of this world*”). To enter this new Kingdom required a new birth (John 3:3-5). It also required eating His body and drinking His blood, a figurative expression of becoming total, 100%, all-in disciples that would bear their cross daily to follow Him (John 6:22-59).

They complained “*This is a hard saying, who can understand it*?” (John 6:60). Jesus didn’t back down or lower the bar to embrace them, but instead doubled down on His demands that they must take all of Him or none of Him. There was no middle ground. Neutrality was not an option. Do you know what they did?

“*From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more*” (John 6:66). Can you think of any sadder words in the Bible? There stood Immanuel – “*God with us*” – offering them bread and water that would never again leave them hungry or thirsty, and they simply turn their backs on Him and walk away! Incredible.

Do you know what Jesus did next? As the crowd was leaving He turned to His twelve apostles (who were no doubt in shocked disbelief) and asked them a point blank question: “*Do you also want to go away*?” (John 6:67)

Peter, the group’s ever-present spokesman, answered for them: “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also, we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*.” (John 6:68).

Good answer!

Because of that answer they were now committed to staying with Him until the bitter end. From that moment on Jesus began repeatedly forecasting His coming death. His national popularity quickly dropped off the table, looking similar to the recent stock market plunge. With the Jewish leaders openly plotting His death, and His losing favor with the populace, and His non-stop predictions of His arrest and crucifixion, these apostles began to grow afraid. This brings us to the final week and His gathering them together for a pep talk. It is one we need too in these days of crisis. Gather around and listen in as He tells them what they need to hear.

“*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 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. 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*.” (John 14:1-3)

Then He repeats this just moments later:

“*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.  You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I*.” (John 14:27-28)

They needed desperately to hear that message of hope. I think we do too. Don’t you?

Picture Jesus standing next to you in a moment of crisis (like now). When the world is in an hysterical panic and it seems everything in life is coming unraveled, there stands Jesus by your side, with a smile on His face and a calming voice that says, “*Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*.”

The very One who just days before was calmly sleeping in a boat being tossed in a sea storm. When the terrified disciples shouted “*Master, don’t you care that we are perishing*?! – He slowly awakes, stands up, appraises the situation, raises His hand, and likely in a whisper says to the storm, “*Peace, be still*.” (Mark 4:39). From raging winds to soft breezes, from violent waves to a gentle sea of glass, from panic-stricken sailors to prostrate worshipers, the situation turned from chaos to calm.

It was this same Jesus who now looks them in the eye and speaks to their heart: “*Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*.” Why? This world is not our home. He is going to heaven to prepare a place for us, then is returning to take us H-O-M-E.

**Application:**

In these days of trouble and anxiety let us decide whether we will be a Mary or Martha. Remember that story? Martha is busily fretting about getting dinner on the table. Mary is glued to the feet of Jesus to hear every word He has to say. When Martha complains, Jesus replies: “*Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part which will not be taken away from her*.” (Luke 10:41-42).

Is your heart troubled? Is it afraid? Then today choose that good part which will not be taken away from you. Bow your head and pray. Then lift your voice and sing:

 “This world is not my home I’m just a passin’ through.
 My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.
 The angels beckon me from heaven’s open door,
 And I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.”

 Until tomorrow… I love you.

Rick