

I. Introduction

- A. The true Christian life is a hard life.
- B. Many false gospels want to lull you into thinking that if you follow Jesus Christ you will:
 - 1. Be liked - "I want what you have."
 - 2. Be rich - "Cast your seed of faith..."
 - 3. Be healthy - "If you will believe, you will be healed."
 - 4. Be influential - "You can move mountains in your community."
- C. The gospel that so many have heard is the gospel based upon one or more of these lines of thinking.
- D. For many, the gospel is simply another way of having a good life.
 - 1. The promise of Jesus gives them hope in death and tragedy.
 - 2. The love of God makes them feel better when things have collapsed.
 - 3. The personal experience of the Spirit is private and drug-like for many.
 - a) Thus, when you come to these folks, it becomes very hard to see the gospel of self-denial, hardship, and world-wide rejection of you personally.
 - b) And yet, regardless, this is exactly what Jesus said, lived, and experienced.
- E. We are going to begin learning today, as we turn a corner in the ministry of Christ, that although this world is our enemy, and it actively seeks to assault us, we cannot be destroyed, forsaken, or left hopeless.
- F. In fact, it is just the opposite-we will overcome them!

Acts 14:21-22

21 After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,
22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

- G. 2 Corinthians 3:1-4:5
 - 1. The glory to come is the hope that we have to endure this world.
 - 2. We will have tribulation in this world.
 - 3. But, then, we will reign in glory.
- H. This is why the Christian life is filled with hardship and trouble.
 - 1. The world is antagonistic towards Christ (Psalm 2) and us.
 - 2. Therefore, we will have trouble in this world.
 - 3. But, our trouble will be released and the glory to come will be even more glorious.

Galatians 5:5

5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.

4. Romans 8:16-25

1 Corinthians 1:4–9

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,

5 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,

7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

8 who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Titus 2:11–14

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

I. We are familiar with these promises.

1. But do we know that Paul is simply echoing what is being taught in John 14-17?

2. Did you know that the hope of overcoming the world was the final teaching of our Lord to these men in that upper room?

a) And, did you know that foundational element to it all is the return of Jesus for His church?

b) As you will see, this is not a reference to the Second Coming, but a reference to another coming that is specifically for the people who are identified, like none other in history, as “in Him.”

J. Thus, the coming of our Lord is our hope and we eagerly, eagerly, anticipate Him to split the sky at any moment!

II. v.1 “Do not/stop allow your heart to be troubled/agitated.”

A. Why did Jesus say this?

1. As we read chapters 13-17, we can see why He said this.
2. It is because of something else He said: “I go away.”
3. This statement that He was going away was simply not something the disciples understood.
 - a) As mentioned before, He had turned their world upside down.
 - b) In doing that, He made them outcasts socially, financially, and religiously.
 - c) They, I am sure, were the talk of all the gossipers, all the rumors about them walking around with Jesus for 3 years, leaving their families behind etc... I am sure was a topic of constant discussion.
 - d) Plus, they had also raised the dead, healed the sick, and cast out demons.
4. All of these things were things that they did and they were simply men like everyone else.
5. Now, Jesus states, somewhat repeatedly, that He is leaving.
 - a) Think about what they are thinking.
 - (1) He is saying that He is leaving.
 - (2) They are not thinking of this in the sense of dying and going back to the Father (16:28).
 - (3) They may have been thinking of Him leaving town, or the country.
 - b) But, to leave the planet, was news to them.
6. Ever since that day by the Jordan River in the wilderness of Judea, and then again by the Sea of Galilee, these men have been following Jesus everywhere He went.
 - a) They ate with Him, stopped and slept when He slept, they ministered where He did.
 - b) He was their life and sustenance.
7. Now, He says, “I go away and you CANNOT COME!”
8. Absurd.

B. In order to see this as the foundational element in this discourse, we need to review the discourse of John 14-17.

1. In fact, this sets the stage for the Lord’s prayer in John 17.
2. John 13:1 = Jesus knew that He was about to depart out of this world and go back to the Father.
 - a) However, the disciples did not know.
 - b) Thus, Jesus steers the conversation to that point, AND what that means for them.

3. Upon His parting, He leaves a final, and consummate command, which they apparently didn't hear.
 - a) Peter's statements in vv. 36-38 are indicative of the heart of the disciples collectively.
 - b) They are all troubled. They are all agitated about Jesus' statement that He is going somewhere they cannot come.
4. After Jesus tells them to be strong in understanding and thus belief, Thomas says, "Lord, we don't (even) know where you are going! How can we know how to get there?" (v. 14:7)
 - a) In 14:28, Jesus tells these men that He is going away again and tells them what their reaction should have been .
 - (1) However, He tells them why He has said what He has said,
 - (2) He wants them to believe in Him.
 - (3) This will be important as we move along in chapter 14.
 - b) Further, in 16:1 Jesus also tells them that He is telling them this so that when it all happens as He said it would, they would not stumble.
 - (1) That is, that they would not think that the world is falling apart and Jesus was not Who He said He was.
 - (2) This discussion of going and coming etc.. gets to an intolerable level in 16:16-18.
 - (a) The disciples are feeling their anxiety level raise.
 - (b) They are simply confused as to what is being said here.
 - c) So, on the verge of demanding clear speech and a clear answer, Jesus heads off their question.
5. In vv.16:19-22, Jesus tells them plainly what He has just told them in expanded form:
 - a) When He leaves, they will be sad.
 - b) Their sadness will be compounded by the fact that the world, since Jesus is gone, will turn on them.
 - (1) They will truly be sheep in the midst of wolves.
 - (2) However, like a woman who rejoices when a child is born and forgets the pain of delivery, so they will be also when Jesus comes.
 - c) They will rejoice to see Him, and in that day, they will forget how hard it was without Him in the world.
6. Jesus promises them: "I will see you again." (v. 22).
 - a) The inexpressible joy that will accompany that day when Jesus returns for these men is what Jesus wants to focus on.
 - b) They need to anticipate His return for them.
 - c) They need to live, minister, and die anticipating "that day."
7. So do you.

C. And, of all privileges, in that day, the disciples will no longer be limited in their access to the Father.

1. They will be able to approach Him themselves because HE LOVES THEM! (v. 16:27)

- a) Now, speaking plainly, they understand: He is going back to the Father (v.28).
 - b) However, this does not make the upcoming hours any easier (v.32).
2. The events that are about to happen will be severe and they will desert Him.
3. However, even in this mini-apostasy, they will return and be able to move forward in ministry (v.33).
- a) These realities are great!
 - b) They are magnanimous.
 - c) They cause praise and concerned petition by the Lord for the Father's keeping of these men in light of this hardship.
 - (1) That is chapter 17.
 - (2) The summary verse in this entire discourse is:

John 17:24

24 "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

4. Jesus prays for these men, simple, sinful, ordinary, plain, selfish, dull, men to see His glory, the glory that is Christ's by the gift of the Father (Psalm 2).
- a) Jesus' love for these men is evident in that the glory that the Father has determined for His beloved Son He has bequeathed to them and given to them the same glory.

John 17:22

22 "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;

- b) The glory that Jesus anticipated was the glory of the gifted kingdom in radiance and power (Daniel 6).
 - (1) This was glory determined for the Son by the Father.
 - (2) In an expression of sovereign love and will, the Son, acting like His Father, then turns and gives that same glorious kingdom to these men!!

- c) This is really incredible.
 - d) What is more incredible, is that He has given this kingdom and glory to you as well.
- D. "Do not let your heart be troubled..."
- 1. We know why they were troubled.
 - 2. They were troubled because their Master, Teacher, and Lord is talking about going away.
 - 3. What does that do to them?
 - a) He is their life.
 - b) As mentioned, His presence was all they knew for about 3 years.
 - 4. And, His teaching and life completely revolutionized them to an irreversible level.
 - a) Now, He is taking about leaving.
 - b) The anxiety that would well up in their hearts would be understandable.
 - 5. However, Jesus says: "Don't let it."
 - a) Another way of saying it might be, "Stop it!"
 - b) Or, "Don't allow it!"
- E. Why not? How could He speak like this to these men?
- 1. He is commanding them.
 - 2. He is also expecting them to adhere to this admonition.
 - 3. But, it would almost seem a little unreasonable for Him to expect them to simply continuing walking around on this planet in happiness and joy without Him.
- F. Here is where hope enters.
- 1. However, this hope is based upon truth.
 - 2. And this truth makes this hope a fact, not a pipe-dream.
- G. Let me give you a summary statement by Paul that will help.
- 1. Philippians 3:17-21
 - 2. Paul notes that these people need to observe and see men who walk in faith and follow them.
 - a) They are a pattern.
 - b) Many walk but are far from a pattern because their minds are on the world, the flesh, the lusts of them all.
 - c) Their god is their appetite, their glory is their shame, and their minds are full of earthly things.
 - d) These are not men to follow.

3. However, Paul wrote, the citizenship of Paul is in heaven and he eagerly waits for the Lord from there who will come and in so doing will transform his earthly body into a heavenly one fit for heaven.
4. Notice that Paul wrote that his citizenship is in heaven.
Ephesians 2:19

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,
 - a) Hebrews 12:18-23
 - b) That is, for Paul, the reality that he is a citizen of heaven, and God's household, motivated him to anticipate the future.
 - c) That anticipation motivated him to endure the present distresses.
5. Therefore, these men, too, are to be also completely devoid of anxiety over the present, even with Jesus leaving them.
 - a) And, in so doing, they must continue to believe in Him.

H. "Believe in God; believe also in Me."

1. These are commands.
2. In other words, to the same degree that you believe in God, believe also in Jesus Christ.
 - a) Why would Jesus say this?
 - b) Didn't they already believe in Him?
 - (1) Of course they did.
 - (2) But, He was with them.
 - (3) Now, the test comes: what will they believe once He is gone?
 - c) What will they believe once things don't go as expected?
 - d) What will they believe once they lose Him?
3. So, in light of His betrayal, trials, crucifixion, and ascension, He tells them: "Believe in Me!"
 - a) Their less-extensive unbelief is evident in Phillip (vv. 8-9).
 - b) Jesus says that his misunderstanding of the Son and the Father is unbelief.
 - c) Since he did not understand he was not able to believe the truth.
4. For example, John 16:29-31

29 His disciples *said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech.
30 "Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."
31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"

- a) Once they understood, Jesus now calls that "belief."
- I. v.2 "There are many dwelling units in the house of My Father. But if not, I would ever have said to you all, because I go in order to prepare a place for you all."
- 1. "There are many dwelling units in the house of My Father..."
 - a) What does this mean?
 - b) Is it figurative?

*"Could it be clearer from context that the first thing we are to think of when reading, "In my Father's house are many **μοναί**," is not mansions in the sky, but spiritual positions in Christ, much as in Fauline theology?"¹*

- 2. No, since Jesus says He is going to prepare a place for the disciples there.

- J. Is it spiritual?
- 1. No.

"But in spite of the portrayal of God dwelling in a "house," one must take great care not to visualize God in some earthlike "place." Moreover, since we are bound by space-time limitations in all our thinking, we must not limit our concept of God's domain to something like our idea of a three-story universe where heaven as the dwelling place of God is "up." It is now most appropriate for Christians to begin to think in dimensional concepts that are far beyond the old three-dimensional reasoning of the previous generations (see my comments in Excursus 33). Clearly God is not running fast to catch up to our supercomputer space technologies. God is a long way ahead of us. The teacups of our thinking and language have not even yet approached the capacity of holding the ocean of divine truth. The domain of God is certainly beyond our finite thinking. The best we can do is to describe God's domain in metaphors. That is exactly what Jesus, the agent of God, did for his bewildered disciples. Furthermore, God's domain has plenty of room, and the preparation of Jesus for our entrance into that domain was through his "departure" or death on the cross. Carson is surely correct when he says concerning Jesus that arriving on the scene after his departure is not the point when Jesus "begins to prepare the place," but "it is the going itself, via the cross and resurrection" that is the act of preparation. The Gospel of John is not trying to portray Jesus as

¹ Gundry, Robert H. "In my Father's house are many monai (John 14:2)." *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der Älteren Kirche* 58, no. 1-2 (1967 1967): 68-72. ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost(accessed May 7, 2017).

John 14:1-2

Theology, pp.596-602;
880, 883-884.

being in the construction business of building or renovating rooms. Rather, Jesus was in the business of leading people to God."²

K. Is it literal?

1. Yes, since Jesus says He is going to prepare a place for the disciples there.
 - a) Notice that the house is with the Father.
 - b) Jesus is going there.
 - c) In that house, in heaven, with the Father, are the many dwelling places.
2. Either Jesus is doing exactly what He said He was doing, or He is not.
3. Where are these "dwelling units"?
 - a) Jesus said that He is going there in order to prepare a "topon"; a place.
 - b) It is a place.
 - c) He calls them "dwelling-units."
 - d) They are places to live and dwell.
 - (1) And, v.3 would indicate that that place is the place where Jesus is going as well.
 - (2) Further, v. 28 indicates that it is a place where the Father Himself dwells.
4. Therefore, it would appear to be a place where Jesus is going to work and prepare for His brethren.
5. At some point in the future, He will return for them and bring them back to that place.
 - a) The indications of chapters like Ezekiel 1, Revelation 4-5, and others seem to indicate that the place where the Father dwells is a place much like the Temple of the OT.

Hebrews 8:1-2

1 Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

² Borchert, G. L. (2002). *John 12-21* (Vol. 25B, pp. 104-105). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

John 14:1-2

Theology, pp.596-602;

880, 883-884.

Hebrews 9:11

11 But when Christ appeared *as* a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

III. Conclusion

This is faith-believe in the future

Hebrews 11:8–10

- 8** By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.
- 9** By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;
- 10** for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.