

In Perilous Times: Let Not Your Heart be Troubled (Jn. 14:1)

I. PERILOUS TIMES WILL COME: THE MESSAGE OF PAUL AND JESUS

***1* Know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: *2* For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, *3* unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, *4* traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, *5* having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away... *13* Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13)**

A. Paul wrote of the *falling away* in the latter days (1 Tim. 4:1-3). In 2 Tim 3, Paul used the future tense, writing that perilous times “will come.” Paul prophesied concerning sinful attitudes and activities—He gave 20 descriptions highlighting facets of loving pleasure and self-centeredness. We are to act in the opposite spirit and teach others to do so and to be alerted instead of surprised and offended when mistreated by such people. The call to resist these sinful actions parallels the call to the *Sermon on the Mount*.

B. On Tuesday, two days before the last supper (Jn. 13), Jesus prophesied concerning military conflict, racial conflict, pestilences (plural), earthquakes, betrayal, and martyrdom in Matthew 24 (and its parallel passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21). Jesus called them not to be troubled (Mt. 24:6). The truths in John 13-17 can equip us to respond to the end-time troubles.

***2* Jesus said to them, “...not one stone [of the temple] shall be left here upon another... *6* You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled... the end is not yet. *7* For nation [ethnos] will rise against nation...there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes ...*9* They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you...*10* Then many will...betray one another... *11* Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.** (Mt. 24:2-11)

II. JESUS’ COMMAND NOT TO LET TROUBLE DOMINATE OUR HEART

***1* Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me...*27* Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you...Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (Jn. 14:1, 27)**

A. There are not many things that He repeats in these five chapters, so pay special attention when He repeats a command twice in one chapter (14:1, 27).

B. **Let not your heart be troubled**: Jesus *commanded* the disciples to not allow trouble to dominate their heart (Jn. 14:1). The troubled heart Jesus is referring to is the one that leads to unbelief, jadedness, disillusionment, and bitterness... etc.

“...See that you are not troubled..” (Mt 24:6)

- C. Negative emotions are part of our human earthen vessel (2 Cor 4) experience.... What we do with those emotions is our response of faith or our response of unbelief. Our response to these emotions leads to life or death.
- D. ***Let not:*** Jesus instructs us to “let not”. In other words “don’t let it happen.” We have our part to play in not having a troubled heart. This does not mean we are never troubled but rather that trouble is not what directs our minds and emotions. Included in His commands is the promise of His enabling to walk out His commands. If He instructs us to do something He always provides the help and means to obey Him.
- E. To let your heart be troubled is to let your heart be swept away by the present trials... When you “let your heart be trouble” you allow the troubled to dictate. The trouble dictates: your thinking, your decisions, your faith, your experience, your perceived reality...etc. When we let the trials dictate we are like that double minded man spoken of in James.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind...8 he is a double minded man unstable in all his ways. (Jm 1:6,8)

- F. John 14:1 is essential to obey in a consistent way because when our hearts are weighed down with grief, despair, fear, and shame, we are more vulnerable to darkness. His peace guards our hearts. A troubled heart is a seedbed of the very confusion and deception about which Jesus warns us in Matthew 24.
- G. In Matthew 24, Jesus emphasized the danger of deception more than persecution or tribulation (24:4-5, 11, 24). A troubled heart is a seedbed of the very confusion and deception about which Jesus warns us. We must not lose clarity as to who Jesus is, and what the gospel is all about.
- H. ***Peace I leave with you:*** In verse 27, He promises to release His supernatural peace in those who will cooperate by not letting trouble dominate their thinking and emotions. I assume that most people do not obey this commandment in a consistent way. So, I want to stir us up. Trouble or fear assaults our mind and heart and, if it is not resisted, grows until it dominates our mind. Fear must be repelled and resisted. It does not mean always go away quickly. We need the Spirit’s supernatural help to overcome it, but we do have to do our part. He will help us if we will exercise our heart to do our part.
- I. In John 12:27, Jesus says “***Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour, Father, glorify Your name.***” How can Jesus have a heart that is troubled and at the same time command us to not “let our hearts be troubled”? Jesus response to His trouble is key to our understanding. Jesus says “*what shall I say?*” In other words how should I respond. Jesus poses two potential responses.. “*save me from this hour*” and “*glorify Your name.*” Jesus’ chose the later.

III. SEVEN REASONS WHY THE APOSTLES WERE TROUBLED

A. Just moments before Jesus exhorted them not to let their hearts be troubled (14:1), He spoke of leaving the disciples by death (13:36), Judas' betrayal (13:11), and Peter denying Him (13:38). Two days prior, He prophesied that personal and social troubles would come. (Mt. 24).

B. *Trouble #1—Death of their beloved leader and friend:* The thought of Jesus dying brought grief to them and was very traumatic and confusing to them. Jesus referred to His death 18 times in the Upper Room Discourse.

36...Jesus answered him [Peter], "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward"...38"Will you [Peter] lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times. (Jn. 13:36-38)

C. *Trouble #2—Personal failure:* Peter denied Jesus, and the others stumbled (Mt. 26:31; Jn. 13:38).

30...they went out to the Mount of Olives. 31Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night...34before the rooster crows, [Peter] will deny Me three times." (Mt. 26:30-34)

D. *Trouble #3—Bitterness of betrayal:* Their close-knit team was hurt by Judas' betrayal of Jesus and of them. They would also be betrayed by loved ones. Bitterness is the emotion that seeks to entrap the person who is betrayed. Betrayal is emphasized several times in John 13-17. Bitterness is a normal response to betrayal. It must be resisted tenaciously in interaction with the Spirit. Jesus gives us a line-upon-line insight on how to engage with God's heart and promises.

21 He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "...one of you will betray Me." (Jn. 13:21)

16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends... (Lk. 21:16)

12 Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. (Mk. 13:12)

E. *Trouble #4—Crisis in the culture:* Pressures disrupted the social order (Mt. 24:4-12; Lk. 21:8-24)

6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars...7 For nation [ethnos] will rise against nation... there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes ...11Then many false prophets will... deceive many. (Mt. 24:6-11)

F. *Trouble #5—Persecution:* Some were killed, beaten, or imprisoned.

9 Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you...for My name's sake. (Mt. 24:9)

G. *Trouble #6—National destruction: Jerusalem and the temple destroyed*

2 Jesus said, "...not one stone [of the temple] shall be left here upon another (Mt. 24:2).

20 When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies...23 For there will be great distress...upon this people. 24 They will fall by...the sword and be led away captive... (Lk. 21:20-24)

H. *Trouble #7—Delay of God's promises: There was a delay in the release of the fullness of God's prophetic promises to them and the nation of Israel. He was talking about leaving them physically without defeating Rome who was oppressing them or setting the apostles on thrones.*

I. *John 13-17 tells how to engage our troubled hearts to overcome grief from the death of a loved one, fear with despair from the crisis in the culture and persecution, shame from personal failure, and bitterness from betrayal.*

IV. JESUS COMMANDED THEM TO BELIEVE HIM— 8 IMPORTANT TRUTHS

A. *The command to not allow trouble to dominate our heart is obeyed by determining to believe Jesus by agreeing with His promises, trusting His leadership, and engaging with His heart.*

1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."2 In My Father's house are many mansions...3 I will come again and receive you to Myself. (Jn. 14:1-3)

B. *Truth #1—Belief in the truth about Jesus—His person, promises, and leadership. (Jn 14:1)*

C. *Truth #2—Jesus promised to return to be with us in the Father's house forever (14:2-3)*

D. *Truth #3—We can engage in a deep relationship with God in this age. (Jn 14:7-27.)*

E. *Truth #4—He supernaturally empowers us by the indwelling Spirit (Jn. 14:16, 26; 16:13-15).*

F. *Truth #5—God's love for God and His people. (Jn15:9).*

G. *Truth #6—Access to supernatural resources through Spirit-led prayer as God supplies our needs. (Jn 14:13)*

H. *Truth #7—How Jesus responded to the apostles when they stumbled. (Jn 15:15).*

I. *Truth #8—The joy of eternal rewards related to being faithful to Jesus and enduring persecution.*