

CARE FOR THE TROUBLED HEART

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By the Book™ A Chapter by
Chapter Bible Study Series
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Let's Begin

A common misconception that many people have is the idea that once a person becomes a Christian, that person ceases to have problems. That includes no guilt, no depressing moments nor ever again having doubts or joyless periods. However, Christians are just as vulnerable as other people are in succumbing to these circumstances. Only developing a consistent walk and relationship with Jesus Christ spares the believer from a defeated life.

In John 14, we see Jesus teaching His disciples how much He cared for them and wanted victory over a troubled heart for them. We have so much to learn from this passage about the care Jesus gives. As we focus on John 14, we will use the following outline to get us through:

- I. Our Faith Stabilizes Us (vv. 1-6)**
- II. Our Father Secures Us (vv. 7-15)**
- III. Our Friend Satisfies Us (vv. 16-31)**

I. Our Faith Stabilizes Us (vv. 1-6)

Faith is a fact. In its most fundamental sense, life cannot be lived without faith. A farmer plants seed in faith that God will give a harvest. The surgeon makes an incision in faith; God heals the wound. We buy insurance, pay on it a lifetime, and believe at death someone will pay its face value after.

Life is about faith. Human achievement is about faith. Columbus sailed west with faith in his heart. Edison performed thousands of experiments, believing he would one day perfect the incandescent lamp. One needs only to attempt to live one day without faith to learn of faith's absolute necessity.

Reflection Connection

Ponder your daily routine. Name five things you did and/or decided based solely on faith. Share these with the class.

Jesus begins this section with "Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (v. 1). Faith is the instrument God created for us to connect with Him. Faith has its focus. Jesus gives our faith a particular focal point, a specific object of faith. What is that object? Listen once again: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Just as the disciples expressed faith in the God of the Old Testament, now they were called upon by Jesus to place trust in Him. The significance of faith is not in itself but in its object. In fact, faith is only as good as its object.

What is the object of your faith? Upon what does your faith rest? If your faith rests on anything other than Jesus Christ, your faith is inadequate to save you (cp. Hebrews 12:2). The disciples were called to completely trust in Jesus. So are we.

In addition, true faith has its fruition. Note that the verb tense of Jesus' words "believe also in me" is present tense. In other words, Jesus is saying, "Keep on believing in me." Faith is to remain constant; it is to be a continuous experience. This means that we are not only saved by faith, we live by faith each day.

When faith is stabilized, we reap a *secure future*. Observed Jesus' words: "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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (vv. 2-3).

Here Jesus promises a secure place. What could be more secure than "my father's house"? Jesus never gave any indication that Heaven was a "state



Reflection Connection

What is your greatest fear? On a scale of one to ten, with one representing "little fear" and ten representing "much fear" where would you place your fear of death? Allow others to share in this practical exercise.

of mind" rather than a real place. This is consistent with the Bible's pattern as a whole. Scripture speaks of Heaven as a country, a city, a kingdom, and a paradise. Jesus refers to Heaven as a home. What a glorious thought. When Christians die and go to Heaven, they are going home!

Additionally, heaven is seen here as a cure for heart trouble—"let not your heart be troubled..." (v. 1). Knowing that we have a home waiting on us is like a soothing balm for a weary traveler. Notice the description Jesus uses "many mansions." That term literally means "abiding places." There will be room for all.

The "abiding places" about which Jesus spoke were in preparation (v. 2). God has never taken His people to an unprepared place (cp. Deuteronomy 6:10,11). The implication that has for our daily life must not be overlooked. In whatever circumstances we find ourselves, wherever we find ourselves, we can know God has preceded us. He has prepared our way. In fact, Jesus not only promises His preparation, He promises to return for us personally! He clearly stated, "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (v. 3). Our future is rock solid because of Jesus.

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The third way Jesus stabilizes our faith is through a *sufficient foundation* (v. 6). If your life is resting in Christ, you need not be troubled in heart. Jesus speaks in no uncertain terms: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (v. 6). Jesus is life's pathway. He says He is "the way." Men are wanderers at heart, inevitably inclined to travel in the wrong direction- away from God and not toward Him. Jesus is the only way to God. Jesus is also life's philosophy. He said He was "the truth." What is your life's philosophy? Will it do to live by? Could you die by your philosophy? Let it be known that truth is not to be found in mere human philosophy but in a person. Truth is found in Jesus.

Finally, Jesus is *life's permanence*. He said He was "the life." Into a world filled with death, the Son of God descended. In doing so, He brought life from heaven. The divine irony is that it took His death to bring about life.

II. Our Father Secures Us (vv. 7-15)

The context of this passage is constructed around a series of questions the disciples asked and the answers Jesus gave. Peter's question is found in 13:36-37; Thomas' in 14:5, Philip's in 14:8, and Judas' in 14:22. Specifically, this section zeros in on the question Philip asked Jesus.

Let's break it down. First, consider Philip's *request*: "Philip saith unto him, Lord show us the Father and it sufficeth us (v. 8). This query discloses the *development of Philip's life*. Philip had come a long way having now reached a high water mark reminiscent of Moses—"show us the Father." Have you developed in your walk with God? Do you desire to know God intimately as did Philip?

He also disclosed his *desire for life* expressing the universal desire of the human heart. He really wanted to see the Lord. How real is your desire to see God in your life?



Reflection Connection

Reflect on a time when you asked God for direction and later realized that He had already been directing you but you ignored the direction He'd revealed. How did it make you feel? Explain.

Additionally, Philip disclosed *deficiency* in his life- "show us." Many people want a God they can see. Yet the Bible teaches that the most real things are things unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Let's move on to consider the Lord's *reply* found in verses 9-11. Jesus gave a mild rebuke to Philip (v. 9). He'd missed God's highest revelation of Himself right under his nose— Jesus! How many times do we look for answers from God when we are unwilling to observe the answers He has already given?

Jesus makes the Father real: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (v. 9). Everything Jesus said was God speaking; everything Jesus did was God doing (cp. Matthew 7:29; John 7:46).

Finally, consider the Lord's *revelation*. (vv. 12-15). Here, He reveals the possibility of greater works. This is a staggering thought, for the greater works about which He speaks are not those He will do. Instead, it is the works Christians will do! Can a mere believer do more than Jesus did? Observe that Jesus served in a limited geographical area. He won only a small number of converts. But when He ascended to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit, His disciples spread the gospel throughout the known world. On Pentecost alone, over 3,000 souls were saved. Greater works? Yes! However, not greater in *quality*, only greater in *quantity*.

III. Our Friend Satisfies Us (vv. 16-31)

Jesus is giving comfort to His disciples whose hearts are very troubled over the coming events. In offering comfort, He introduced them to the truth that the Holy Spirit would one day come to take His place. There is no greater comfort the Christian can possess than knowing the Holy Spirit seizes his life. He is indeed our Divine Friend!

First, let's observe the *promise of the Holy Spirit*. Jesus said: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever" (v. 16). Here the Holy Spirit is promised. But observe that Jesus was following the pattern of the Old Testament in the promise of the Spirit (cp. Isaiah 44:3, Joel 2:28-29).

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Thus, through the centuries, God's people had anticipated the showers of His blessing through the Spirit's foretold coming. Jesus adds now His own promise to the mix. Also, though there are many wonderful gifts that come down to us from the Father (cp. James 1:17), none was so wonderful as the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, let's note the *personality of the Holy Spirit*: "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (v. 17). So many look upon the Holy Spirit as being impersonal, as if the Holy Spirit is some sort of raw power or force. No line from pop culture captures this error more precisely than Star Wars: "May the force be with you."

Reflection Connection

In the Old Testament, the Spirit is many times perceived as "coming upon" certain men like priests, prophets and kings. How is His coming upon them different from His presence today? Explain.



The Spirit is definitely not a “force” or an “it.” The Spirit is a person in every sense in which we may conceive the Person of Jesus Christ. While He has no visible body of flesh and bones, He is nonetheless a Person in every sense of the word. The Holy Spirit possesses intelligence (1 Corinthians 2:11), feeling (Ephesians 4:30), and will (1 Corinthians 12: 11).

Next, let’s consider the *presence of the Holy Spirit*. Before Pentecost, the way the Holy Spirit’s presence was described was “with you.” This was true in all eras before the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. After Pentecost, however, the Holy Spirit would come and not only would He be with them, He would be in them (v. 20). The coming of the Spirit’s presence brought a new day in the Kingdom of God.

Finally, let’s consider the *power of the Holy Spirit*: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (v. 26). All the power we need is available in the Holy Spirit. Three words He uses are significant. The term “comforter,” Jesus uses in relation to our *suffering*. We have power over the difficulties we face.

The second significant term used of the Holy Spirit is “advocate.” This term is used in relation to our *sin*. We have power over a defeated spirit because Jesus serves as our defense attorney.

The third term is “helper.” This relates to our *service*. All the power we need is in Him. Whether we need wisdom for life, power to walk, or confidence to witness, the Holy Spirit is adequate. Remember “What a friend we have in Jesus?” Well, what a friend we have in the Holy Spirit!

Golden Greek Nugget

Jesus said He would pray to the Father and the Father would send “another Comforter” (v. 16). The term translated “another” means not another of a different kind but another of “the same kind.” The great Baptist educator, B. H. Carroll, preached a sermon on this passage calling the Comforter “the other Jesus.” In a real sense, the Holy Spirit ministers to us in the same ways Jesus ministered to His disciples.

Wrap Up

Jesus’ cure for the troubled heart includes a stable faith that intimately relates to God and experiences the power of the Holy Spirit. What else is needed? Even more, what else could possibly be desirable? Why not make a firm commitment today that you will be fully surrendered to Him so that you may walk with Him daily without experiencing heart trouble!

