

I. Introduction

A. John 14:1-8 . . . "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. [2] In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. [3] 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 you know the way where I am going." [5] Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" [6] Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. [7] If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

B. Three Lessons: (1-vs 1) The prevention of and remedy for a troubled heart. (2-vs 2) Most often, what God has said is enough. (3-vs 4-5) Most of us know more than we think we know or admit we know.

C. Pray

II. Five Lessons

A. First Lesson: The prevention of and remedy for a troubled heart.

1. John 14:1 . . . "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me."
2. In other words, do not let not allow anxiety to enter in – for any reason. Should you be anxious already, drive the anxiety out and replace it with trust in God. Do not fret or give way to despair. Do not live in fear of what might happen. Do not entertain irrational fears, excessive fears, or unnecessary fears, but rather...
3. Believe in God, believe in His trustworthiness, His goodness, and His faithfulness, believe that there is absolutely no evil, no cruelty, no unkindness, no carelessness, and no lack of mercy or love in Him, believe in His wisdom, believe in the wisdom of His will, believe in His sovereign and providential work in the world, in the church, and in your life, believe He has given you everything necessary for life and godliness, believe that He wants you to be conformed to the likeness of His son, Jesus Christ and that He is doing what is

necessary to make that happen, believe that He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear, believe that He disciplines you for your good, believe that He does not deal with you according to your sins but has compassion on you, believe that confessing your sin brings His forgiveness of your sin, believe that if you seek His kingdom first He will make sure you have what you need, believe that He works all things out for good when you love Him and live according to His will, believe He is your rock, your fortress, your deliverer, your shield, and your stronghold, believe that He himself, His Son, and His word is all you need.

4. Believe in Jesus, believe that all the fulness of deity dwells in Him in bodily form, believe that He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, believe that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, believe that He is the way, the truth, and the life, believe that He is the Bread of life, the Water of life, and the Light of the world, believe that by living according to His word and example you will not walk in darkness but in the Light of life, believe that He came so that you may have life and have it abundantly, believe that He is the Savior of all mankind, believe that His death and resurrection frees you from the enslaving power of sin, the practice of sin, and penalty of sin, believe that having Christ in you is your hope of present and eternal glory, believe that He sympathizes with your weaknesses because He himself was tempted in every way that you are tempted, believe that if you sin, He stands before God as your advocate, believe that He is meek and humble of heart, believe that His yoke is easy and His burden is light, believe that you must abide in Him and He in you in order to bear the fruit of godly living and godly service, believe His teachings as recorded in the Gospels, and believe He is coming again.
5. Believe in the Holy Spirit, believe that you can be filled with the Spirit, believe that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you, believe that the Holy Spirit in you is God's pledge of the wonderful things to come, believe that the Holy Spirit seals you in Christ, believe that being led by the Spirit is one proof you are a child of God, believe that the Holy Spirit steps in to pray on your behalf when you don't know what to pray, believe that the Holy Spirit is intricately involved in your being sanctified, believe that walking by the Spirit will keep you from carrying out the desires of your flesh,

believe that by the Spirit you can put to death the deeds of the flesh, believe in the Holy Spirit's prompting, convicting, teaching, and bringing to mind what you have been taught – but also believe that you can grieve the Holy Spirit and quench His work within you, believe in the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, and believe that God gave us the Holy Scriptures by the Holy Spirit working in and through those who wrote it.

6. Believe in the Holy Scriptures, believe that all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness so that you may meet God's requirements for godly living and eternal life, believe that the Holy Scriptures are able to equip you for every good work, believe that the Holy Scriptures teach you about the mind of God, the mind of Christ, the ways of God and the life of Christ, and believe that the Holy Scriptures provide the standard for overall godliness – and for godliness in the home, in the workplace, in the community, and in the church.
 7. If you will believe these things – which includes living accordingly – you will have peace in the midst of uncertainty, inner calm in the midst of outward trials and tribulation, and confidence that you are safe in God's hands in the face of threats, danger, suffering, and loss.
 8. In other words, the prevention of and the remedy for a troubled, anxious, fretting, fearful heart is to believe in God – or as I have tried to convey, to put your trust in God, His Son, His Holy Spirit, and His Holy Scriptures.
- B. Now I want to step aside for a moment and make a point that has nothing to do with today's teaching, but rather with pondering and meditating on scripture.
1. Jesus statement in John 14:1 – about not letting your heart be troubled – is a total of fourteen words.
 2. However, if you were to ponder and meditate on this statement over the course of several months with a focus on what it says about how to prevent or remedy a troubled heart, it would grow in your thinking and understanding from the original fourteen words to something much larger and comprehensive – something closer to the size of what I just spoke to you.
 3. My point is, don't read past these kinds of statements, but rather take the time to ponder and meditate on them, to study and ask God to

Speak to you through them so that you can discover and learn the fuller truths and the practical application of the truths that God has for you in His holy scriptures.

- C. Second Lesson: Most often, what God has said is enough.
1. In John 14:2, Jesus said, "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you."
 2. One of the inferences here is that God speaks what we need to hear, and though it may seem that He is often silent, He never misleads us or leaves us without sufficient information to believe in Him, trust Him, obey Him, serve Him, and live a life pleasing to Him. In other words, though He does not tell us all we would like to know, He tells us everything we need to know.
 3. And yet there are those times when some of us desperately want God to speak, in the moment, so as to give understanding where there is perplexity, clarity where there is uncertainty, assurance where there is apprehension, comfort where there is sickness, sorrow, or suffering, and direction when it seems we've either lost our way or we don't know what to do.
 4. In these moments it is common to think that if God would speak it would make life much easier and the situation much better.
 5. And yet, God has already spoken – through Moses, the prophets, David, Solomon, Jesus, and the rest of the New Testament.
 6. In addition to what He has already spoken, God has given us an intellect, a conscience, the ability to think, reason, and remember. And He has given us the Holy Spirit, as well as the privilege to ask for heavenly wisdom so we can make proper and practical use of what He has spoken in our current situation.
 7. Therefore, if we will read, study, and ponder the Word of God, and if we will pray for insight, understanding, and wisdom regarding how to apply God's word in practical ways to every area of life, and if we will seek godly teachers and counselors, and if we will read books written by godly people – we would have enough "God-speaking" to trust Him implicitly and live a life that is pleasing to Him.
 8. Now I want to be clear that I am not saying God no longer speaks, for it is clear from church history and the experience of some Christians today that God speaks to them, in the moment, concerning what they should say or do, or where they should go.
 - a. But we also know from scripture and life experience that God does not speak to everyone, and He does not speak to anyone all the

time, or even as much as any of us might like Him to speak in situation after situation.

- b. For example, we know Moses had a face to face relationship with God while the rest of the Israelites had to hear from Moses what God said rather than hearing straight from God.
 - c. Yet even Moses, who the LORD spoke to face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend, had to go into the tent of meeting to have these conversations.
9. So what is my point? Without question, God still speaks, yet the most common practice of Christians at any time or place is that of taking what God has already said in His Holy Scriptures and using it to discern what He wants them to do at any given moment or in any specific situation.
- a. And this is neither bad nor less spiritual. It does not mean that our relationship with God is weak or that He is ignoring us while giving attention to others. It is simply a matter of accepting that God has already said enough for us to live a life pleasing to Him, and therefore, it is up to us to put in the effort necessary to discern from what He has already said what we should say or do, and where we should go.
 - b. Therefore, do not let God's silence in the moment paralyze you or make you feel as if God is unwilling to help. Look into God's word to see what story, principle, value, example, or clear statement can be applied to your situation, and act accordingly. And if after searching God's word you cannot find the help you seek, ask someone older and wiser in the Christian life for help and counsel.

D. Third Lesson: Most of us know more than we think we know or admit we know.

1. In John 14:4, Jesus said to His disciples, "And you know the way where I am going," to which Thomas responded, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"
2. Because hindsight is often 20/20, as they say, we can look back on Thomas's response to Jesus and see what he should have known.
3. For example, we know from John 12:32-33, that Jesus said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." And He said this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.
 - a. From Matthew we learn that "from that time [onward] Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and

- suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day” (Matthew 16:21).
- b. Luke tells us that soon after feeding the 5000, Jesus said to His disciples, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day” (Luke 9:22).
 - c. And after dealing with the rich young ruler, Luke says that Jesus took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. [32] For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, [33] and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again” (Luke 18:31-33).
4. My point is that the disciples at least heard the words about what was going to happen to Jesus. Now it is true that they did not understand what Jesus was saying (Luke 18:34), but it also seems to be true that they did not press Him for further explanations or do whatever else might be necessary to understand what Jesus meant.
 5. And is this not like many of us?
 - a. People say things, and we filter it through our biases or our preconceived notions of what is going on, or we filter it through our fears so that we miss part or all of message contained in the words of what was said.
 - b. Sometimes we are so concerned with getting our point across or getting what we want or being right, that we are listening to win rather than to understand what the person is saying. In other words, we are more concerned with getting our point across than understanding what they are saying and why they are saying it.
 - c. What is worse, some of us are so self-centered or so consumed by our troubles that we don’t care what the other person is saying. Our focus is on being heard rather than hearing.
 6. My point is that like the disciples, many things strike our eardrums, including things we don’t understand but could ask about in order to gain understanding,
 - a. Or things that give us clues about what is going on in the speaker’s life that we could or even should be concerned about,
 - b. Or things that though they seem ambiguous or generalizations, give us hints about the speaker’s motives, values, beliefs, wishes,

- concerns, and fears, and therefore invite further investigation and clarifying questions.
- c. We even hear things that are partial truths or exaggerations of reality.
 - d. And sometimes we hear things that are crystal clear, and things that are deeply self-revealing.
7. To be a good listener, you have to listen with the goal of both hearing and understanding what the speaker is saying. Obviously, this requires more than letting the words strike your eardrum.
- a. For example, it requires attentive, focused, listening.
 - b. It requires thinking about what is being said so as to pick up on the concerns, expectations, fears, and hopes of the speaker.
 - c. It requires taking note of such things as exaggerations, misrepresentations of reality, and irrational fears, and how they effect the speaker and what he is saying.
 - d. It requires trying to discern – from what is being said – the speaker’s motives, values, beliefs, wishes, concerns, and fears.
 - e. It can and probably often does require asking God for wisdom and insight into what is being said.
 - f. And it might require going away and thinking about what was said before responding in some way, be it with words or actions.
8. We can give Thomas high marks for speaking up, for stating things as he saw them in that moment. But we will give him low marks for not having given proper attention to what he had heard Jesus say on previous occasions.

III. Conclusion

- A. Therefore, may we learn from Thomas to do better when it comes to listening – certainly for our sake, but mostly for the sake of those who are speaking – for this is the way of love, and when we do it, we are loving those around us the way we want to be loved, and that is a godly, loving thing to do.