

Sunday, May 2, 2021

John 14:1-7 Addressing Troubled Hearts with a Vision of the New Creation

1. Skim the chapters (12 and 13) preceding our text. What would have contributed to the disciples troubled hearts that Jesus addresses in the text? What realities in our world presently trouble your heart?

The religious leaders are seeking to put Lazarus to death for his testimony about Jesus – will murderous intent come for them next?

There has been a disastrous turn of events. He had been welcomed into the city with shouts of praise and the waving of palm branches and then he speaks of his death, his leaving, a betrayal, and denial.

What troubles your heart? In the midst of Covid this question could take the night. Allow enough conversation to get the breadth of trouble in our world today so that God's hope in Jesus of heaven and earth meeting will be similarly expansive.

Read John 14:1-7

2. (1-4) In the sermon Tim pulled out the 1st c. marriage customs that sit behind this text. That the groom would return to his father's house to prepare a place for his bride before returning to begin the wedding festivities. The marriage that Jesus points to is a marriage of heaven and earth, where God's kingdom comes in its fullness, where his will is done on earth as in heaven. What do you anticipate such a marriage will look like?

Our bodies physically resurrected. Our creation renewed. Injustice addressed.

Wrongs righted. Evil undone. Tears wiped away.

The beauty, majesty, love and grace of God shot through our physical reality.

Feel free to get specific as the specificity of this marriage will animate our call as followers of Jesus.

3. Jesus says I am the way there. What are some of the ways we can stay connected to Jesus by faith?

Scripture, prayer, worship, fellowship with other followers etc. – reflect on how the spiritual disciplines can root us in a larger picture of the future God has in store for us – how they animate us to live into the call of the new creation – that is to live in anticipation of all things being made new.

That future only comes about through the work of Jesus and the power of the Spirit and God has chosen to do that work in and through his people – the church. These are the practices that get us caught up in that work and resource us for it.

4. Jesus says I am the truth – I have pointed to the reality of what it looks like for heaven and earth to meet in all that I have said and done. How has Jesus shown us what his kingdom (where heaven and earth meet) looks like?

The dead raised, the sick healed, the lame walk, the blind see...

The estranged welcomed, the sinner forgiven...

The captive freed, the wronged justified...

The hungry fed, the naked clothed...

The evil one bound.

5. Later in the chapter (vs. 12) Jesus will say if you believe and trust in me you will do the works I do and more. How does Jesus anticipate we will live into the truth of his kingdom?

The things he did (above) form the content of our call. We need go no further than what Jesus did to answer the question what we should be doing as followers of Jesus.

6. I am the life – he is pointing to the promise of the coming Spirit. Chapters 14 through 16 are all about the person, work and power of the Spirit. How do these opening verses help us to understand the work of the Spirit?

The Spirit is absolutely needed for us to live in anticipation of a future where heaven and earth meet. Above everything else this is the work of the Spirit in us to empower and direct us to do the things Jesus did.

At Pentecost as the Spirit of God descends on the disciples they become where heaven and earth meet. They become the recipients of God's life, the bearers of God's presence – the signposts to God's future, the foretaste of that coming wedding feast.

6. How would these words have addressed the troubled hearts of the disciples? How do they address your troubled heart?

As a personal reflection question continue to tie this in to the text as well as people's answers from question 1.