

Look! Listen! - And Overcome!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com

www.lightfordarktimes.com

**"Believe! The Remedy for a
Troubled Heart"**

Lord's Day Morning

April 27, 2008

Pastor Jeff Crippen

Sermon Text: John 14:1-3

Introduction

How are you doing on our assignment? Remember, it is an ongoing thing – *giving thanks to Him in all things.*

List the difficulties, trials, griefs, burdens, pains that the Lord has sent your way. Also include in the list things which you would have chosen but which the Lord has withheld from you. And then, one-by-one, item-by-item, thank Christ for them all.

NKJ John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

When you think of the book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ, what is most likely the first thing or theme that enters your mind? Well, it is of course, *Christ's return. The Second Coming. His coming back to get His people and to judge the earth.* Right?

And this is the promise, the central truth that is the basis of the Christian's hope. When we speak of giving thanks in all things, including trials and griefs, we realize that if it were not for the certainty that Christ is coming again, *giving thanks in all things would be – might we say – impossible?* Because our giving of thanks and our rejoicing in trials is rooted in the knowledge that the Lord is working these things together for our good, to make us less attached to this temporal world, and to look for His coming and His kingdom with more intensity. Trials and suffering has a way of clarifying our perspective, of helping us see the ultimate vanity of temporal things and to then set our eyes more definitely upon the things of heaven.

NKJ Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Thus the Bible speaks of the promise of Christ's return and of our seeing Him face to face one day as *our blessed hope*. Our *happy* hope.

NKJ Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

That is how we are to live, you see. *Looking for....* Don't yield to worldly lusts, live in a godly manner in this

present age, and keep looking up! Watch for it! Yearn for it. It is a blessed hope and a glorious appearance. Watch out, be careful. This present age is, well –

NKJ Ephesians 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

This is that "living soberly" that we heard Peter speak of this morning in the SS hour. Sober living. Not somber living. Not joyless living. But we dare not live carelessly. The days are evil. This present age is evil. That lion is out there prowling. *This is war*. So we dare not fail to keep watch.

NKJ Romans 8:23 Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

Eager waiting with perseverance. That is the perfect description of the Christian's life in this world. We were saved *in hope*. Saved, but not yet recipients of the full package. Hope in that future blessed appearing of Christ and all that will accompany it – this is interwoven right in the very character of our salvation. Every real Christian has this hope. He waits for what he can only see by the eyes of faith. And yet by that faith *he really does see it*.

There will be a time of final *hopelessness* for us! But not in the sense of despair. Right now we have this certain and blessed hope, but when that which is *hoped for arrives, hope will no longer be hope!* The reality will be here. Listen to Paul -

NKJ 1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 13

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

See it? Faith and hope and love characterize *the now era*. “But now....these three abide.” However, when we are with Christ, when His Kingdom will have come in its final fullness, think about it now – *faith and hope will be no more*. Only love will remain and that is why Paul says that love is the greatest of the gifts. *Love never fails*. It is eternal and I suppose then that Paul means something like *love is the most heavenly of these qualities*.

But for now, we patiently endure and persevere by faith and by this eager, hopeful watching for Christ's glorious return. No wonder then that the Bible ends with this particular book. Christ leaves us with this –

“*Yes, I am coming quickly.*” To which His people constantly reply – “*Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*”

The blessed hope, you see.

Now, this same Apostle John gives an account in his Gospel of another time that Jesus encouraged His followers with this very same blessed hope. It is found in the 14th chapter of the Gospel of John, and this is the text I want to open up for you this morning. It is one

of the most beloved passages of Scripture to the people of God –

NKJ John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "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. 3 "And 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.

Heart Trouble

Most people are concerned today about heart problems, and rightly so. We need to eat correctly, exercise, and watch out for this incredible little pump God has created in us.

But there is another kind of “heart trouble” which, in eternal terms, is more dangerous yet. A man or woman can have a failing physical heart, but if this other “heart” is not troubled, they will be able to endure it – even with joy.

Do not let your heart be troubled. These are our Lord’s words to His disciples – and to us.

Now, consider the context. Why was there a need for this warning and instruction? Well, Jesus had just

countered Peter’s excessive self-confidence – “*I will lay down my life for You*” – with – “*I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny me 3 times.*” In other words, before tomorrow morning, dark and momentous events are going to happen, including Peter’s betrayal of Christ. He had already told them –

NKJ John 13:21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

So darkness was already arriving on the horizon of the disciples’ world. Furthermore, Christ was about to leave them. Leave them *in a world that hates Him and those whom He loves.*

NKJ John 15:18 " If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

“We are threatened with heart trouble – trouble of heart – because Christ is ‘away’ and because we live in an evil age in an evil world where all who love Christ will have trial and trouble and tribulation.”

NOTE: One of the comforts and cures for this *heart trouble* is the text before us this morning (John 14:1-3), but we also want to carefully note that there is another remedy for this heart trouble provided by Christ and that remedy is *the Helper* –

NKJ John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- 17 "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

NKJ John 14:25 " These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 "You have

heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

And you see there in that 27th verse this connection between the coming and presence of the Holy Spirit in us and this matter of *peace of heart*. No need to have this spiritual heart trouble, you see. Christ is present in us and with us in the person of His Spirit – peace being one of the chief fruits and benefits of the Spirit’s presence. Peace in the midst of trial.

NKJ Philippians 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Peace – be still! Just as Christ commands the troubled sea, so He in His Spirit can calm our troubled heart. That peace will not make sense – it is beyond all understanding – yet there it will be guarding our heart and guarding our mind against all storms of the enemy.

Alright then, heart trouble. Don’t LET your heart be troubled. It will, if we let it. But here is this great resource. By prayer, casting our cares on Christ (the One who cares for us) we can

experience the calming, peaceful effect of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.

This word troubled is an interesting one. Its literal use has to do with water being stirred up and agitated. This kind of heart trouble is characteristic of the wicked man's heart –

NKJ Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 "*There is no peace,*" Says my God, "for the wicked."

Not so, not necessary for Christ's people. *Do not LET your heart be troubled*. Did you notice when we read 14:27 this matter of fear? –

NKJ John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Neither let it be afraid. So that *fear* is directly connected with a troubled heart. Perhaps the Lord might have said then *Do not let your heart be fearful*. It's true, is it not? When we are fearful, we have heart troubled. Just as a storm stirs up the waves on the sea, so *fear stirs up waves of trouble in our hearts*.

The Remedy for Heart Trouble

And what is the remedy? What is the remedy for a violent storm at sea? It is for the Lord of the wind and the waves to speak and command that they be still – be at peace.

Therefore, what we must do when the storm comes and threatens the calm peace of our heart is – listen to Christ say it again –

NKJ John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Believe God. Believe Me. This is nothing less than the very thing we talked about last week – the victory of faith. Do not be afraid. Trust Christ.

And sure enough, the Lord Jesus not only instructs us to believe Him, He immediately provides promises for us to believe. We believe IN Him because we know Him and we know we can entrust ourselves to Him. But we also believe His promises – we believe His Word. And what is His promise here?

NKJ John 14:2 "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. 3 "And 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 where I go you know, and the way you know."

Here then is what we believe –

1. There is room for every single one of Christ's people in His Father's house. It is a really big place.

2. We have been joined to Christ so that we are His brethren – we are sons. Therefore, we have a place in our Father's house.

3. If this were a fable and myth, Christ would have told us. He did not spare bad news to us. He is truth. He cannot lie. He cannot make false promises.

4. Christ is 'away' in His Father's house preparing it all to receive us. Therefore, if He is doing this, it is certain that He will come again and take us to the place He has prepared for us.

5. Our Lord's intent in all this is to receive us into His own presence *so that where He is we can also be*. He will dwell among us and we with Him.

6. It is an impossibility for us to get lost on our journey. He is the Way. All who are in Him are on and in the Way and cannot get lost.

I will come again. I will come again. I will receive you. I will. So don't let your heart be troubled. Believe these promises. Put your trouble on Me and My Spirit will calm your troubled heart.

My Father's House

It appears to me from examining the Old Testament, that this idea of *my father's house* is a really loaded one in Hebrew thinking. It isn't just a place – or some mere structure. Let me give you some of the ideas that this term would have carried to the Hebrew mind. My Father's House is –

- a. A place of safety from enemies
- b. A place of provision – food, shelter
- c. The place of one's inheritance
- d. It is a place that a person longs for when he is away from it
- e. It is one's family and relations
- f. It is that which provides one's *identity*. I bear my father's name, I am of the house of..... It provides one's citizenship in Israel
- g. So that to leave one's father's house was a traumatic and at times shocking thing (ie, the prodigal son; or Christ's

requirement that we be willing to leave our father's house and follow Him)

h. One's father's house is a kind of sacred place where you would not permit an enemy or detestable person to enter in (ie, Christ driving the money changers out of His Father's house)

And so when our Lord is telling us – *in My Father's house are many dwelling places...I go to prepare a place for you...I will come again and receive you to Myself...* - then He is speaking to us of great, great privilege. He is telling us that in Him we who once were dead and rebels – *we have a name, an identity, a Father, a country, a refuge, a family, a home, an inheritance, provision of all we require, final freedom from the presence of any enemy.* In My Father's house, you see.

Therefore, recognize that *in this world itself you will not truly and finally have any of these things.* Christ's people will experience their name being detested, they might find themselves fatherless (orphans), citizenship stripped away, hunger, disowned and without inheritance. But don't let your heart be troubled about these things – believe Me, believe Me, believe My Father.

“In My Father's house are many dwelling places...I will come again and receive you to Myself...”

So Christ is preparing them. And He was preparing us. All through these chapters – John 13 through 17 – He was preparing them and us. How to deal with heart trouble.

NKJ John 16:16 " A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father." 17 Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" 18 They said therefore, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying." 19 Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'? 20 "Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. 21 "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a

human being has been born into the world. 22 "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

You see then that *we live in this evil time of sorrow. It is the same age that the disciples entered – it is the same age in which our Lord is ‘away.’ And thus we will have grief now. We are in labor pains. We weep and lament but the world rejoices. But that is all changing.* So do not let your heart be troubled. Believe Christ. Believe the Father. Believe what we have been told in the Word –

“I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.”

Are we beginning to understand – even though we live in this materially prosperous place and time – are we beginning to understand that Jesus’ words are true? That in this world we will have tribulation?

NKJ John 16:32 "Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. 33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be

of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

It is one thing to read it, it is another thing to taste it and believe it. I think this was the Lord’s point when He asked the disciples (right after they said – *by this we believe that You came from God*) –

NKJ John 16:31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?

Do you? Really? Well, behold, an hour is coming and has already come.... And then, in the very next sentence, Christ gives them that promise we have read twice already – *In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.* I suggest that in this we can derive this truth then –

“Real peace and real joy do not fully come to us until grief and anguish and tribulation come to us.”

I am not suggesting then that this always happens instantaneously and simultaneously with the trial. But I do think that our Lord would have us realize that we simply cannot know and experience His real peace and His real joy *until we have first entered the valley.* Is this not the very thing Paul meant? Listen –

a place in My Father's house. So don't set down foundations. Live in tents.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 **who comforts us in all our tribulation**, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. 6 Now if we are afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. 7 And our hope for you *is* steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation.

That is to say, we cannot experience the comfort and peace and joy of Christ when we are comfortable, at peace, and happy. It is ONLY WHEN WE PARTAKE OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS THAT WE ALSO SHARE IN HIS CONSOLATION.

Therefore, do not let your heart be troubled. Cast your cares on Christ and, the One who cares for you, will replace that impending storm of heart with peace that is indescribable. That is His promise. Believe His promises – I will come again. You already have