

The Helper
These Things Are Written That You May Believe Series
John 14:1-31
Pastor Bryan Clark

Everything is falling apart; the world is unraveling; the end is near. Have you heard any preacher say something like that in the last few weeks? I think a lot of them have been talking about it, and this is nothing new. Actually it reminds me a lot of the '70s when there were different things going on, but a lot of preachers were talking prophecy and, "This is the end, as we know it." But really, every generation since the time of Christ has had things going on where they thought this was the end. All the way back to the disciples in the upper room with Jesus who were confused; they were troubled; they were terrified, and they didn't know what to do. And in that moment, Jesus told them the same thing that He tells us today—what they need to know and believe in order to have peace in troubled times. So that's what we want to talk about. If you have a Bible, turn with us to John, Chapter 14. This is the last time that we'll be in the Gospel of John this summer. We'll pick it up again in September and finish somewhere early in December. Josh and Ryan and Jeff are doing a summer series, something we've had planned long before the COVID. We're staying on track, and it should be a really good summer series.

So we find ourselves in the upper room. Jesus has told the disciples that one of them will be a betrayer. There's an arrest warrant out for Jesus. Jesus has told them He's leaving, and they can't come with Him, and now He's told Peter that before the night is over, he will have denied Jesus three times. Now just imagine that if you're these disciples, trying to figure out what's happening, feeling like everything's unraveling and falling apart, and they're terrified. So Jesus speaks to that. Chapter 14, verse 1:

"Do not let your heart be troubled;" (Literally that's, "Stop being troubled." The word troubled we've seen several times before. It means *to be stirred up* or *to be agitated*. Their emotions are stirring, and it's easy to understand why.) **"believe in God, believe also in Me."**
(*NASB, John 14:1)

So first of all, it's interesting that in this moment, Jesus doesn't tell them to manage their emotions. You really can't do that. You can't just decide, "I won't be anxious...I won't be anxious...I won't be anxious." Then you start getting anxious about being anxious. But rather you have to believe; you have to learn what's true and believe that's where you're going to find the peace that you're looking for. So when Jesus says, "...**believe in God, believe also in Me,**" those are two distinct phrases in the Greek language, and grammatically they can either be the indicative, which is a statement, or they can be an imperative, which is a command. The structure in the Greek is identical, so there's a lot of conversation as to whether these are commands or statements, and you could have one of each. So there's a lot of possibilities. I think, given what Jesus talks about through the rest of the chapter, that the best way to understand the first one is a statement. It's in the indicative mood. It's, "You **believe in God.**" Of course they did. Then the command—the imperative—"believe in me". So what they're struggling with, and it will be evident throughout the text, is really coming to grips with Jesus, who He really is as God in the flesh, and He's going to explain all this to them, and they need to listen and learn and believe and trust Him. That's where they're going to find their peace. Verse 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. 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. And you know the way where I am going.” (Vs. 2-4)

So, **“In my father's house.”** The only other time Jesus has referred to His *Father's house* is chapter 2, when He referred to the temple. The idea with the temple is it was the place where heaven and earth met, where a holy God met with sinful people, and it's a picture of the world to come—ultimately the new heaven and the new earth. You can tell just by the language, it will once again be a place where heaven and earth will dwell together, and that God will be with His people. So that's the idea of the **Father's house**.

He's talking about *someday*. He's going to go there and prepare a place, and *someday* the disciples will join Him there. There are **many dwelling places**. If you're familiar with the King James, it says *many mansions*. All the way back when the King James was translated *mansion*, it didn't mean what we think of as a mansion today. It just meant a manor or a place where people stayed. Now we think of mansions as huge, multimillion-dollar dwellings, and who is going to get the biggest mansion in heaven? But the term means not just rooms; it means **dwelling places** within a house.

So, if you think first-century Jewish context, it was very common that as families grew, those extended families would move into the family house. They would just get a room. You often had extended family living together; that's still true today. So the idea here isn't that Jesus is going to get them a motel reservation in heaven. What they're terrified about is that Jesus is leaving, and they want to be with Him, so what He's saying is not, “I've reserved you a room;” it's, “I'm preparing a room in My house, so that you will be with Me in My house forever.” It's a very personal conversation. **“If it were not so, I would have told you.”** He goes **“to prepare a place,”** and then, **“I will come again and receive you to Myself.”** So again, notice the language in verse 3, **“that where I am there you may be also.”** It's very personal. To understand this conversation in chapter 14, you really have to understand that what terrifies them is the idea that Jesus is leaving. They love Jesus. They want to follow Jesus, so the thought of Him leaving and they can't follow, is what's terrifying them. Jesus isn't just saying there's life after death. What He's saying is, “I'm going to prepare a place for you.” So that would include the cross, and then the ascension to the Father. This commitment is based on what He has done for them. Then He's preparing a place for them and one day He's going to come back and get them and deliver them to this place, and they'll be together forever. Just think how comforting that would be for these men in that moment.

It's interesting that He says, **“I go to prepare a place.”** If you read the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus had just told John and Peter to go and prepare a place for the Passover. So now Jesus is turning around and saying, “And I'm going to be the Passover Lamb, and I'm going to go prepare a place for you and it's a place where we'll be together forever.” I also think it's interesting that He doesn't say, “I'll leave you directions.” “You know, maybe it's going to be really complicated. I'm going to get lost; maybe I can't find Him.” It's, “I'll come get you and I will bring you with Myself, and we'll be together forever.” So in the midst of all this turmoil, the first thing He talks about is He's making the necessary arrangements, and they will spend forever together. That's equally true for us today. Verse 5:

Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?”

You can hear in Thomas' words the frustration, the confusion, the fear. I mean, it's not hard to understand why these men are so confused and fearful. **“Lord, we don't even know where You're going; how could we possibly know the way?”** So Jesus responds in verse 6:

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.”

Now at this point, they are just not even sure what Jesus is talking about. They have no idea what the next twenty-four hours are going to hold. They're trying to figure this out, but Jesus has told them again and again, He's *the way*; He's *the gate*; He's *the only way to the Father*, and they believe that. They're just trying to figure out what exactly Jesus is talking about. Jesus didn't say, “I'll tell you the way.” He said, “I am the way.” He didn't just say, “I'll tell you the truth.” He said, “I am the truth.”

We believe in absolute truth because we believe there's an absolute God. The ultimate source of truth is not the Bible. The ultimate source of truth is God. Then God has revealed Himself in the Bible, but ultimately He's the truth and He's the life. He's the source of life. He's talked about that quite a bit in the Gospel of John. Now this again is one of those verses a lot of people don't really like because it seems too exclusive—that Jesus is the only way to God. So here's a couple things to think about. One would be: if there were other ways, why would Jesus do this? The only way it makes sense that Jesus did this for us, is there is no other way. But in addition to that, let's say maybe you want to believe that there are multiple roads or different ways to God. So, you are free to believe that. The question I would ask is, “What is the basis for that belief?” Is it because that's your opinion...because it feels better to you...because you'd like everybody to make it there?

That is really different than wrestling with: “Is Jesus God in the flesh?” And John's recorded both His words and His works to validate that. John is an eyewitness to the discussion in the upper room. He's getting it right out of the mouth of Jesus Himself. As a matter of fact, all eleven of these remaining disciples will give their lives for this message—that Jesus is the only way to God. All but probably one of them will ultimately be martyred, put to death, because they believe this so firmly. So, I think John heard it correctly. I think they all believed it, which really leaves us with the question, “Does Jesus tell the truth?” I think John has accurately recorded it, so you have to wrestle with, “Is Jesus a liar or does He tell the truth?” And you have to wrestle with that against another view that's, “Just because I'd like it to be that way,” or, “It feels better to think that's the way it works.” But I think Jesus was very clear. Verse 7:

“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

So of course they know Jesus, but they don't fully know Jesus. There's a lot that's going to happen just in the next few days. They're going to see things they don't fully understand yet. That's why He says, **“From now on, you know Him and have seen Him.”** If you know Jesus, you know the Father, and in a few days, a lot of this is going to make more sense. Verse 8:

Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

So Philip responds and confirms our interpretation from verse seven—that they don't fully understand what Jesus is talking about—and that's not hard for me to understand. How do you come to grips with the fact that your friend that you've been following now for these years is actually the eternal God of the universe in human flesh? That would be really hard to comprehend, and they're struggling to get there. So what Philip is asking for is probably something like an Old Testament experience, kind

of like what Moses or Abraham had, or Jacob or Isaiah. I don't know quite what he thinks of Jesus. Maybe he thinks Jesus is still the "B" team, so, "Just show us the real God, and that'll be enough for us." So Jesus responds:

"Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. (Vs. 9-14)

So Jesus responds, "Philip, how could you ask that question? How could you not understand that if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father?" Now, we as readers got this in John, chapter 1, verses 1-5. *Jesus is the eternal Creator of the universe, the Son of God, who became flesh.* Chapter 1, verse 18, *...in order to exegete or reveal the Father to them.* So if you've seen Jesus, you've seen the Father. Jesus in the Father, the Father is in Jesus. So that's what he's saying there, and this has been validated by both His words and His works. Then when He says that those who believe will do even **greater works** than these, because I go to the Father, what does he mean there? Because Jesus goes to the cross and then ascends to the Father, and then sends His Spirit which He's about to talk about, these disciples are going to do **greater works**. Now not more spectacular; I mean, how do you do something more spectacular than raising Lazarus from the dead? But *more* in terms of the mission. In just a few weeks, Peter himself will preach a message at Pentecost and three thousand people will give their lives to Jesus because of this one sermon. And from there, this little flicker will be fanned into a flame, and it will go around the world and it will change the world. So that's what Jesus is saying in terms of the mission, it's about to be even greater. But the only way that's going to happen is if He goes to the Father, so He can send the Spirit, and we'll talk about that in just a second.

I don't think in verses 13 and 14, the primary point here is prayer. What I mean by that is, Jesus is still helping them understand He is God in the flesh, and that's a part of what they're going to have to believe. So in verse 13, when He says **whatever you ask in My name**, that's not like a secret formula. That, if you have the secret formula, and you say your words just right, then you can ask whatever you want and you'll get it. That's not what He's saying. For a Jewish mindset to hear that from now on when you pray, you'll pray in *My name* would have been blasphemous unless Jesus was God. You have to appreciate how radical what Jesus just said was. Same thing in verse 14: **If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.** So Jesus gives them two things that would have been new to them. One is, "When you pray, ask in *My name*," and number two, "You can even ask *Me*." What he's saying is, you can pray to Me, and I'll give you what you ask. This is, again, the reminder, this person who is with them is actually God in the flesh, and He's going to keep His promises to them. Verse 15:

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

Now I don't think He's doubting their love. Jesus has said that keeping His commandments means to obey—to listen, to obey—to believe. So this is the group that has believed and He's contrasting them

with the world who has not believed. This is what's going to happen to them because of their belief and their love for him. Verse 16,

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; *that* is the Spirit of truth,

So Jesus is going back to the Father. He's going to go to the cross. He'll be crucified, rise from the dead, and He's going to go back to the Father. Then He's going to send His Spirit, what He calls **the Spirit of truth**. He describes Him as a **Helper**. Different translations have different words right there. The Greek is a *paraclete*. Literally it means *to come along side*. It was used of an advocate—typically a legal advocate or a legal counselor—someone who comes along side to help. There's really no one English word that captures this, but He says, **“I will give you another Helper.”** So there are two words in the Greek for *another*. One means *just another*; the other means *another of the same kind*. So this is the word that means *another of the same kind*. But I have to tell you, there's quite a bit of discussion and disagreement as to how strongly this term actually means that; perhaps it's been exaggerated. I would say in all of my commentaries, it was split about fifty/fifty as to those who think it strongly means that and those that don't. But in this context, just the fact that He says **another Helper** implies that they've had a helper and now they're going to have another helper. John, in 1 John, chapter 2, actually identifies Jesus as our *paraclete*, as our *advocate*. So Jesus has been their paraclete; He's been their advocate; He's been their helper. But He now has to leave and go to the Father, in order to send His Spirit to be another Helper for them.

So again, stop and think about this. These are men who have now given up everything to follow Jesus, and they've figured out that when Jesus is here, everything's different. If you need water to turn to wine for the wedding feast, Jesus can do it. If you've got five thousand people you need to feed, all it takes is a few loaves and some fish. If you're out on the storm and you can't move the boat, Jesus just walks on the water. If there are people that are suffering with diseases, Jesus just heals them. If your good friend Lazarus is dead, Jesus raises him from the dead. No matter what situation they were in, as long as Jesus is here, there's this feeling everything's going to be okay. So imagine the terror when things are so intense and Jesus says, “By the way, I'm leaving,” and that's what is terrifying them.

So, when they get their commission, you have eleven men who are going to go eleven different directions to accomplish the mission. Jesus, as He was with them in this moment, couldn't go eleven directions, so most of them would be without Jesus. So what Jesus is saying here is, “I'm going to go to the Father, and then I'm going to send my Spirit—another Helper, just like Me—only He won't just be *with* you, He will be *in* you, and everything you do, everywhere you go, He will be with you all the way to the finish line.” As a matter of fact, when the text says, **He will be with you forever**, this is an amazing statement that Jesus is making to them. “I not only will be with you. I'll actually be in you, and I will be in you now for the rest of eternity.” So think about. In the midst of their fear and their turmoil—what Jesus just said they're not going to understand until a few more things happen—that Jesus is going to make it possible to be *in* them, leading them, guiding them, teaching them, empowering them every step of the way—all the way to the finish line. And when they get to the finish line, He's going to come get them, and they will be with Him in His house, forever.

There's a strong statement here. “No matter what happens, I've got this. Everything's going to be okay.” It's an amazing thing, that when we today trust Jesus as Savior, in that very moment His Spirit comes to dwell within us and will remain in us forever. Another way of saying that is, “As of the

moment you trust Jesus as Savior, there will never be another moment forever where you will ever walk alone.” That’s what Jesus said. He’s telling them what’s true to comfort them, to give them peace in difficult times. He says,

“...that is the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” (Vs. 17)

So the world doesn’t get this because they don’t believe, but those that believe, right now Jesus is *with* them. But soon enough, He’s going to actually be dwelling *in* them. Verse 18:

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” (Vs. 18-21)

The idea of **orphans** is probably reflecting that when disciples lost their rabbi, they were referred to as orphans. So Jesus is their rabbi. He’s about to leave, but He’s not going to leave them as orphans. When he says in verse 18, **I will come to you**, it’s probably referring to after the resurrection, and then again through His Spirit. So after a little while, after a few days, this is going to finally make sense to them. The world isn’t going to see Him, **“but you will see Me and because I live, you will live also.”** So what He’s saying is after the crucifixion, which is less than twenty-four hours away, Jesus is gone from them in a tomb. But a couple of days after that, He’s going to rise from the dead and He will come to them. He will visit them; He will instruct them again on what has transpired. He will go to the Father and He will come back and dwell within them as the Spirit of Jesus. And because they will see Him having conquered sin and death—because He lives again—that is the promise that they will live again! He will fulfill His promise. They will dwell with Him in His Father’s house forever. So again, the reminder is that He is in the Father; the Father is in Him, and He will disclose Himself to them. Verse 22:

Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, *(So there are two Judas. Some think this Judas is probably Thaddeus. That’s probably the case; most of these guys had a couple of names.)* **“Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?”**

So Judas, not Iscariot, asks a good question. He thought Jesus was going to reveal Himself as the Messiah and set up His kingdom. That’s what they all were thinking. So now what’s changed? What’s happened? You know, “Peter’s going to deny You;” “You’re going to appear to us, but you’re not going to appear to anybody else? That’s kind of a strange way to set up a kingdom.” He just has theology that needs to get corrected.

Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.’ (Vs. 23-24)

So what Jesus is saying is those that love Me, I will dwell with them and the Father will dwell with them. Actually, it’s very interesting. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all going to make their abode in

you because you love Jesus and keep His commandments. But those that don't believe, will not experience that. So there will be those that see and those that don't see. Verse 25:

“These things I've spoken to you while abiding with you. 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 that I have said to you.” (Vs. 25-26)

So, **these things I've spoken while abiding with you.** Jesus is saying, “I'm with you; I'm telling you these things, but I understand this is really confusing, and you're terrified, and you don't even know really what I'm saying.” So, the next several days are going to be unbelievable for these guys, but as a result of that, they're going to start to understand what Jesus was saying. It's going to start to make sense, but there's a promise. “I'm going to send the Helper, and He's going to remind you. He's going to teach you. He's going to tell you what you need to know.” I'm going to guess a lot of this would have been very difficult to remember because of their emotional state. And that's what Jesus is saying. “I'll send the Helper, and He'll remind you; He'll teach you; He'll guide you. He'll tell you what you need to know, what you need to know to experience peace in the midst of troubled times.” Jesus said, “You believe in God. Now you're going to have to believe in Me. You're going to have to trust Me, that I tell you the truth, that I am going to do what's necessary to make it possible for Me to go to the Father and prepare a place. And when it's your time, I'm going to come get you, and you will dwell in My house and we'll be together forever. No matter what happens, we will be together forever. Trust Me. I know this is confusing, and so when I leave and go to the Father, I'm actually going to come back in My Spirit. My Spirit will dwell in you and My Spirit will teach you and lead you and guide you and instruct you and walk with you every step of the way, for the rest of your life—all the way to the finish line—and forever. So that's what He's saying. All of that then should result in peace, even in the most difficult times. Verse 27:

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

So they're troubled; they're stirred up; they're fearful. It's not hard to understand why, but Jesus is saying, *“I give you My peace. It's not like the world's peace; that's just kind of a temporary relief from what's going on. But this is My peace, a supernatural peace that defies explanation.”*

I once heard peace defined as *the possession of adequate resources*. What Jesus has just said to them in the upper room is, “You have everything you need. I'm going to dwell in you. I'm going to take your hand and walk with you every step of the way. I'll lead you; I'll guide you; I'll teach you, and when the time comes, I will come get you and take you to the Father's house. And there you will be with Him forever, no matter what happens.” He's got this. Everything's okay. That's *the possession of adequate resources*. “No matter what's happening in the world, everything's going to be okay.” That's what He just said. Verse 28:

“You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”

So there are probably a couple things He's saying there. One is: You should be happy. I'm going back to the Father. I've told you all along, I've been sent by the Father. I have a job to do—mission accomplished! I'm going back to the Father, so you should rejoice that I go back to my glorified state at the right hand of the Father. That's what he means by **the Father is greater than I**. Jesus, in His

humiliation, is going to return to His glorification. That should make them happy. But it also should make them happy because, while they're fearful of Jesus not being with them, the only way that can really change is for Jesus to go to the Father and send His Spirit that will be with them forever. So all of it is good news! Verse 29:

“Now I've told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.” (Vs. 29-31)

Jesus says He's telling them all this, because in a few hours—you can imagine what's about to happen—in twenty-four hours Jesus will have been crucified and in a tomb, and their world is going to be rocked like they can't imagine! But all of this is going to come to pass exactly as Jesus said, so that they can remember and understand and believe that Jesus really is God in the flesh, and He will do what He has promised.

He says **the ruler of this world is coming**. So it's hard to tell, but it's possible Judas, at that very moment, is making his deal with the religious leaders and they are coming for Him. **The ruler of this world** is a reference to Satan who has entered Judas, who is behind the plot. But Jesus is quick to say, “Satan doesn't have anything on Me.” Jesus isn't a sinner, so Satan has no authority or control on Jesus; He's not going to the cross because of Satan. He's going to the cross to be obedient to the mission that His Father sent Him to accomplish. Now it's time to get up and head toward the Garden of Gethsemane.

So that's where we leave the story, and we'll pick it up there in September. But, as we pull this together, there is always going to be stuff in life that causes us to be troubled, causes us to be anxious or fearful. That's just the way it is, living in this life. Maybe today's pretty good and tomorrow will be the worst day of your life. We just don't know. In those moments, what do we need to do? We need to believe. We need to listen. We need to learn, and we need to believe that Jesus tells the truth. From the moment you trusted Jesus as Savior, the very Spirit of Jesus has dwelt in you and will dwell in you every step of the way. He'll lead you; He'll guide you; He'll comfort you; He'll hold your hand. He'll give you everything you need to empower you to fulfill the mission God has given you, all the way to the finish line. When that day comes, Jesus will come and get you and He will bring you to His house and you will dwell there with Him forever. No matter what happens, He's got this, and everything's going to be okay! That results in peace, because no matter what, we possess adequate resources in Jesus. What do we need to do? We need to believe. John says in chapter 20, *“These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and by believing you might have life in His name.”* Jesus offers what we need. No matter what our story, He has adequate resources, if we choose by faith to believe!

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Opening Discussion

1. How would you describe your emotions over the past 3 months? Why are you feeling that way?
2. What are some things you have found helpful to do when your emotions are “troubled?”

Bible Study

1. Read John 14:1-15. What are some reasons as to why the disciples would be troubled in the upper room? What seems to be their great fear?
2. Jesus tells his disciples that if they believe in God, they need to believe in Him. What does Jesus mean by that according to 14:1-15? What does Jesus promise them? What then does He promise us in troubled times?
3. Read John 14:16-31. What does Jesus promise His disciples?
4. What is the practical reality of the Spirit of Truth dwelling in us forever? How does this help us in troubled times?
5. Do a summary of John 14. What do the disciples (and us) need to believe to find peace in troubled times?

Application

1. What are the steps you need to take when your emotions are troubled?
2. What are the key truths you need to remember and believe in troubled times?
3. If Jesus tells the truth, what do we have to worry about? What does worry reveal about our beliefs?