

BE COMFORTED
John 14:1-27
By Raymond White

The disciples of Jesus trusted his protecting power, but they were uneasy when he started talking about dying. They expected a kingdom with an all powerful king. But earlier, at Caesarea, it became clear that Israel had rejected its Christ (**Mark 8:27-28**) and the kingdom would not be at all what they had expected: **Mark 8:31** *He began to teach them that the son of man must...be killed.* And he wouldn't leave it alone. Jesus became obsessed with it, dying, and kept talking about it over and over: (**Mark 9:31, Mark 10:33, Mark 10:45, Mark 14:8**).

By the time they arrive at the upper room for the last supper, they were upset and contentious: (**Luke 22:24**). One of them was so upset that rather than hanging around to be a part of a failed kingdom, he decided to grab what money he could and exit. And so Judas snuck away and betrayed Jesus for 40 pieces of silver. That's how tense the mood was.

In the midst of all that — quarreling, pettiness, falseness, and impending death — Jesus was filled with compassion and love. Though he was about to die, what was foremost on his mind was his desire to comfort his friends.

John 14:1 *Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

But why *shouldn't* our hearts be troubled? If we love him and he's gone, that's troubling, isn't it? Not comforting. When I lose someone that I love — whether to death, or incapacitation in a hospital, or even a long journey — I'm troubled. If I love someone, I want that person here with me, not somewhere else. Now Jesus was leaving. Of course they were troubled. Why should they be comforted? Because:

John 14:2 *In my father's house are many mansions [better is "many rooms"]. I go to prepare a place for you. :3 I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.*

That changes the picture considerably. Suppose your best friend said to you, "I'm moving to Australia." That would be upsetting to you, to be permanently so far from your friend. Letters and email are not satisfactory substitutes for the companionship that you've become accustomed to and you voice your displeasure. "Why are you leaving me?" you complain.

And your friend replies, "Oh, don't worry. I've inherited a huge house there with hundreds of wonderful rooms. I want you to come and live with me. You'll have rooms all to yourself. Trust me. You'll love it." That changes matters, doesn't it?

That's the situation here, between Jesus and his disciples at the last supper.

But you're not done with your complaining. You grumble some more, "Australia? I don't know Australia. I'll get lost in the outback. I won't be able to find your house."

And your friend reassures you, "No. You don't understand. You don't need a map. When I'm settled in, I will come back for you. I will take you there personally so you cannot get lost."

John 14:5 *Thomas saith unto him, Lord we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? :6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way...*

Okay. *Now* we are comforted. Jesus provides the place, he provides the way, and if you are still insecure about this move, he provides the assurance, the guarantees.

John 14:16 *And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter.*

John 14:26 *...which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name.*

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

While your friend is busy in Australia, settling into the new house, your friend knows that you are anxious, waiting for word. So, not wanting to leave you stranded for even that short length of time, your friend sends to you a trusted companion, (*really* trusted, perhaps a sibling), to be with you and assure your anxiety.

That's Jesus. Not only does he prepare a place for us, not only does he return to take us there personally, but in the meantime, he sends to us his own truest and best friend, the Holy Ghost to watch over us and assure our hearts that all is well.

When we die, it is Jesus who will greet us, take our hand, and escort us home. Don't worry. You will not get lost.