

It's still the Easter season but we are moving from the wonderful news of Easter morning - to the sad good bye of Ascension Day -

Our texts are also then moving for this wonderful joyful news "He is risen" to the more sobering "HE is leaving"

Surely it must have been a roller coaster for the disciples - Jesus dies - Jesus Lives - Jesus Leaves

This roller coaster of emotions for the disciples is reflected in our readings and sermon text this morning as they focus on the fragility and constantly changing nature of this world. This world does change constantly and quickly, everything flashing by in a constant blur of color too quick to catch and yet we humans have this insatiable need to analyze and understand every passing shadow.

Anyone remember Evie Garland from "Out of this world," she could pause time by touching her fingers together. Wouldn't that be a wonderful power.

In the midst of this swilling cloud of chaos Jesus says to us be still, be calm, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Sounds like a command, but really it's a promise. Last week we had the opposite, "my sheep hear my voice and they know my voice" that was a command to learn the voice of the shepherd. This sounds like a command but it is a promise of peace.

This was certainly a promise I needed this week. My mother will soon be with Jesus. My daughter was doing so well for the last three months, but now she is failing in different ways again. No matter how much work I do, it seems like at the end of the week there is a greater pile of things to do than there was last week. I got this letter this week from the state talking about 'investigating badger care funds' you have to fill it out and return it with all this other documentation.

I mention all of this, not because my life is particularly harder than yours. But because I know that you all have had, or have, or will have similar worries, weighing you down. And in the midst of all these worries Jesus promises us, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Why? How? How can we let go of all of this burden?

What follows in our text is just a list of all the reasons we can let go of these burdens. All of the reasons why we don't need to worry. You remember that picture on the front of the Children's Bible Garden Story book? The little girl and boy walking hand in hand through the garden, wouldn't it be nice to be those children? Ok well here is the list of all the reasons why we can be.

1. This is not our home

Ultimately all of our worry comes from the sinful attitude that continually attempts to make this world our home, that continually seeks as a goal happiness in this life. Again and again the bible tells us, bad things are going to happen in this life. This life is pain and suffering. But we don't listen, something bad happens and we get mad at God. How can you let this happen God!! If God is good why is there pain and suffering.

And God sits in heaven and shakes His head. I told you this is not your home. Why do you keep making it the source of your happiness? "in my Father's house there are many rooms," that is our home, and there there is no pain and no suffering. Make that the goal of your life, make that the source of your joy, and then you will have peace. Who can break into heaven to steal that from you?

You have heard it said, "you can't take it with you." I recently heard a pastor point out there is one thing that can go with you, your family.

## 2. Jesus is coming again

Will there be another world war three? Will the US descend into a dictatorship? It doesn't matter does it because Jesus is coming again. That knowledge allows us to see past the worries of this life, and realize that having the fanciest new Iphone, just doesn't matter.

## 3. We know the way there

With all the bickering, with all the false information, we are often left wondering what is the right thing? Who really will be the best president? Who really will be the best governor? We are so often left wondering what is the right path?

But not when it come to heaven. Then we know the path. And the path is this that Jesus died for our sins. "By grace you are saved through faith." We know the path and the path is simple. Your sins are forgiven. ALL your sins are forgiven. No worries there. They are all taken care of in Christ Jesus.

## 4. We have seen the Father

I can certainly sympathize with Thomas, both on the week after Easter and here in our text. Wouldn't it be nice to see God with our eyes? Wouldn't it be nice to see heaven open as did Stephen? Wouldn't it be nice to see it for ourselves and know it is true and certain?

That sounds great, but here is the problem. God is not a physical being, nor is heaven a place in the way that we commonly understand the term. Any such vision, any such manifestation of God or of heaven would be only an allusion. It wouldn't be real because it is not possible for us to see the Father or heaven in that way.

And sure such vision even if we know it to be a symbolic allusion is might still be comforting. But God doesn't want us to get to know him through an allusion. What he wants is for us to get to know Him as he really is, which is only possible through Jesus Christ.

Karl Marx's was just dead wrong when he called religion, or at least the Christian religion, the "opiate of the masses" because the peace that comes from Christ Jesus is not the fake false like the peace of drugs and alcohol that only spirals down into greater and greater depression. In which there is no truth and no real peace only a temporary hiding from our own sins.

The peace that God gives lifts us up. It teaches us how to live for God and walk with God. It gives us true comfort at the same time it doesn't hide the truth from us. Yes we are sinners, but Christ died for our sins and now we live in Christ.

#### 5. And we are seen by the Father

What a wonderful source of peace that is. The Father knows us and our burdens and is only waiting, waiting for us to come to Him and share our burdens with Him in prayer, so that He can carry them for us.

#### 6. Greater Works you will do

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Half of the battle is simply knowing that we can make it through.

I was talking to Jack Bremmer last week about water skiing. When you are water skiing there is always that moment between crouching and standing, when the tension in your arms is at the greatest, and it feels like there is no way you can hang on and make it up, but actually you can. And it's only half a second and if you just hold on and pull through then you are up and having fun.

Jesus promises, whoever believes in me greater works he will do?

if I say the greater work is the preaching of the gospel you might think I am giving you a cop out, and that in reality Jesus has really let down his promise on this point. But here is the thing, Jesus healed every kind of disease, he cast out demons, he raised the dead, and he himself rose from the dead, all these things Jesus did and what could we possibly do, even if we had all power, what could we do that could top that? What could we do that is greater than raising someone from the dead? Indeed in our day men have done amazing things through science and technology, even almost to the point of raising the dead. But what they have not and cannot do is change the heart of man, so that instead sin, evil, bickering, fighting and war, man's heart and will are changed to love God, to seek what is good and right ( not for himself but for his neighbor ), surely to have the power to change the heart of man is the

greater work. And therefore to say that the preaching of the Gospel is the "greater work" is not a cop out, but absolutely the thing that Jesus was talking about.

ALL THE TECHNOLOGY OF MAN IS NOTHING COMPARED WITH THE GOAL OF A PEOPLE WHO DESIRE TO DO THE WILL OF GOD

For all of these reasons and for so many more we have peace in Christ Jesus our Lord. Let not your hearts be troubled, you believe in God believe also in me.