



Sermon #48 from the Gospel of John

“Never Alone”

Sunday, July 18, 2021

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John 14:22-31 (King James Version)

Good morning and welcome! I want to thank everyone who has been praying for my sister, Patty Rexrode. Two months ago she was a picture of health, then six weeks ago that changed when her liver started failing and she would need a transplant. I was with her this past Thursday night at UVA, and the call came that a liver had become available. She had the full transplant Friday, and she is doing much better. Patty is my only sibling, and we praise God for her recovery. We also pray for the donor and his or her family who gave such a precious gift.

Today, we'll finish John 14. Chapters 13 and 14 capture one evening Jesus spends with His disciples in a room; some Gospels call it an “upper room.” As He meets with them privately, He shares the Passover meal Thursday evening—the Lord’s Supper we celebrate came from this meal. Jesus, the God of the Universe, the Savior of the World got down on His knees and washed the disciples’ feet that same evening. This was the ultimate act of humility—the lowest of servants washed peoples’ feet. Jesus tells them to take this act of humility to others. Serve others and love others with the love of Jesus Christ; He teaches us that today. Also in that evening, He dismisses Judas Iscariot as His betrayer who goes out into the night. Not only does he go out into a dark night, he leaves that room with a dark heart—Satan himself coming into his life. These eleven men are meeting with Jesus Thursday night before the Friday of the cross. We’re standing at the center point and centerpiece of human history in this moment. The next twelve hours are crucial in the history of the world. These men will witness the crucifixion of their Master and Savior; however, they don’t know it but realize the gravity and tension of the situation. Within those next hours, they will experience grief as they have never known and yet as Jesus knows His coming agony—the nails, crown of thorns, overwhelming pain—He reaches beyond that to comfort them.

We’re reminded of His words—“Let not your heart be troubled...I go to prepare a place for you...I will not leave you comfortless...Peace I leave with you.” It’s amazing that Jesus is building His disciples up, knowing what’s going to happen to Him. I’ve seen that before with families in a hospital room with a loved one facing a life-changing surgery. They are gathered and wondering what will happen—will they recover? I’ve heard the one facing the procedure say “It’s OK; we’ll get through this. God is going to bring me through and heal me. He’s in control and will lead the surgeons.” This is what Jesus is doing here on the divine level—giving His disciples comfort as they face the unknown of the old rugged cross and watching Him die. Today’s Scripture is their last conversation together.

“²²Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?
²³Jesus answered and said unto him, **If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. ²⁴He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me. ²⁵These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. ²⁶But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you**

before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. ³⁰Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. ³¹But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.”

Jesus closes that meeting with His disciples in that room, and they’ll move on to the Garden of Gethsemane. I want you to remember that Judas Iscariot has left the group into a dark night with a dark heart. Another disciple, whose name is Judas, speaks up. This Judas in Matthew 10 is also named Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus. He’s also been identified as Jude, the half-brother of Jesus. He wrote the book by that name in the New Testament. We don’t know much about him; he came to Jesus later in life as did His other brothers. They did not believe Him immediately as the Savior. We know this Judas loved the Savior and surrendered to the will of God in his life. Read verse 22. We could rephrase his question “Lord, why are You revealing Yourself to us in this room but not revealing Yourself to the world?” Jesus answers in verses 23-24. He says “I’m speaking right now to the men of the world who love Me the most.” During this sermon series on John, you know there were seekers following Jesus looking for the truth and those following Him as disciples. There were also those who followed Him because they hated Him and wanted the world rid of Jesus the Christ. He said there are many in the world who don’t believe and who won’t receive the Word of God through me but you do. You’ve heard the Word of God and are following Me the closest. Because of that, I have news for you: You are going to take My place. The day’s going to come when I won’t physically be here to walk you through My ministry. I’ll be with you, but you will be the ministers. You will be My mouthpiece, My hands, My feet; it will be very soon when you pick up where I left off.

Read verses 25-26. Jesus says “I’m teaching you this tonight because tomorrow is going to change everything you have known over the last three years. Your life tomorrow is going to be very, very different than it has been. Something monumental is happening that’s going to be a transference of ministry to you. When I am not here with you physically, you must know I’m still going to be with you. I’ll be in your hearts and minds, and you will continue My ministry. As you do, you’ll remember My words I taught you for three years. After the cross, the empty tomb, the ascension to glory, I won’t be walking by your side anymore. But here’s the good news: I’ll be walking inside you. When I send the Comforter, the “Parakletos,” I’ll be living inside you. Our relationship will be deeper and closer, and you will remember My words that I taught you.” Jesus knows something the eleven disciples cannot and do not know at this moment: In the next twelve hours, they’ll face more gut-wrenching fear than they ever faced in all their lives. On the eve of Jesus’ agony, instead of thinking about Himself He says “**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**” I call your attention to the fact that “heart” is singular. At the beginning of this Chapter, Jesus says “**Let not your heart be troubled...**” He’s speaking to each disciple individually. “Men, when you watch the day of the cross unfold tomorrow, don’t be afraid. Remember these words of comfort. My peace I’m giving you. I’m not leaving you; I’m giving you Shalom. The cross is not going to separate us for eternity.” Amazing—the night before the cross He tells them “Peace I leave with you.” Knowing what the disciples will see tomorrow, they need that peace, that comfort, that assurance. It’s also amazing what Jesus said to them after His resurrection—“**Peace be unto you.**” (John 20:19)

Peace is the theme for His disciples and also our theme. We can live in peace, comfort, and assurance that the Lord is with us. John 14:27 is our verse for today. When you and I know Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are never, ever alone! We have the peace of the Lord God Almighty within us and upon us. On those “average” days of life—mowing the yard, washing dishes, going to the store, etc.—you’re not alone. The Lord God Almighty is within you, upon you; He loves you and leads you through those days. When you have an opportunity to witness for Him because

someone needs to hear about Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior and His love for them, the Lord inside you will give you the words. So many people have said over the years they want to witness to a friend or family member but don't know what to say. I tell them to start talking, and the words will come because the Spirit of God living in you will give you the words. He will "bring them to your remembrance." When you're in the doctor's office waiting for a test result, you're not alone. When you're in a hospital bed, He's by your side—I can attest to that personally. When you need wisdom as a parent or grandparent, He'll give you what you need to relate to them. When a relationship is falling apart, He's a healing God. When you celebrate the greatest joys of your life, He celebrates with you! He's living inside; He's not walking three feet away from you! Child of God, whatever the joy, trial, smooth road or pothole—you'll not go through it alone. That promise to the disciples the night before the cross and after the resurrection is just as much yours and mine today as it was two thousand years ago. These words could have been written this morning! Praise God we have that promise!

In verses 28-29, Jesus tells His disciples "Even as you will see the cross you can rejoice that this is my Father's chosen means by which I will return to heaven to be with Him." Remember, Jesus laid aside His robes of glory in heaven. He has always existed—in the beginning of John's Gospel it says God Almighty breathed the Words of creation from "ex nihilo"—nothing. He didn't start with someone else's dirt; it was His dirt! When He brought everything from nothing, Jesus was there. There came a time in God's holy history and timeline that Jesus laid aside His heavenly authority and came to be born in a manger to walk the soil of this earth as a sinless Lamb of God for thirty-three years. Jesus tells His disciples it's time for Him to go back. "I'm going to die for the sin of the world, but I will go home in glory. Through the cross, I'll finish my course providing salvation and forgiveness for the world." In verse 29 He basically says "I'm telling you this men, before it all happens. As you see the cross tomorrow, think of these words, feel this comfort, have this assurance that I knew it was going to happen just like this. Believe Me, trust Me, listen to Me, follow Me, and My presence and peace will be in you because I'm your Lord, Master, and Savior."

Read verses 30-31 regarding His final moments with His disciples in this private room of the Passover and foot-washing. "My talk and My time here are getting very short. Men, this is the longest conversation we will have from this point forward. The talk is going to be brief in these next coming hours because the prince of the world is coming—Satan." Read Jesus' words at the end of verse 30 again. "Satan has no foothold or traction in My life. I am the Son of God. Satan has no way to accuse Me of sin because there is no sin! He can't drag me down with guilt because I have no guilt! He cannot send me to the cross because he does not have that authority." Satan couldn't kill Jesus; he had far less power. He didn't even come close. I believe the moment Jesus died Satan may have swaggered back to his demons in hell and said "I killed him. I brought about the Son of God's death. Jesus died on the old rugged cross, and I accomplished his death." But, Jesus makes it very clear "I will never bow to Satan in death. He is not going to take my life; I will lay it down of my own will according to the commandment of the Father. Don't ever give one shred of credit to Satan for taking my life; He has nothing in Me!" If Jesus the Christ lives in your heart and mine as the Holy Spirit, this promise is true for us. Satan has no right or authority to touch you or me. Once you give your life to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, Satan cannot take your life—you belong to the Holy God. We know through Jesus Christ that He gave His life that we might live eternally. There is a caveat—we have to guard the doorways of our hearts and the entry ways into our lives. Believers and non-believers can open the door to Satan and allow him in. Allow Jesus to have the throne room of your heart and not allow Satan into that room. It is our desire we stay faithful and true to the one who gave His life for us.

Today, can we come together and commit our lives to following the Spirit of Jesus Christ living in us. Can we pray together and say "Lord God, by Your strength, wisdom, and leading, can You lead me to watch the doorways of my

heart?” Satan has no authority here of this gathering of the Holy Body of the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to guard the doors of church against the activity of Satan. He can get loose in churches, believe me! He loves to tear them up and dissect them from the inside. We need to pray “God, make holy every entryway into my heart and my church so we will serve You as a Holy people and live for You alone.” Can we make that promise to bind together with the Holy Spirit living in us to say “Lord God, we want You to make our hearts holy, make our church holy, our ministry purer and purer, and our love for Jesus going out into the world to stand for Him as a witness who will not back down.” Again, Satan has no authority over us so there’s no reason to be fearful or worried about compromise. Rather, we will walk into the world to serve and live for Jesus Christ alone. “Lord, give us courage and boldness. Help us to stand for You through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Keep our church pure and clean and moving forward under Your direction.” I pray we’ll make that commitment for ourselves and our church today.

Perhaps there’s someone here today who’s allowed Satan to have some type of leeway in their life. I remember something Pastor David Jeremiah said many years ago: “Consider your life to be a hundred-acre field, and you give Satan one acre. The problem with that is when he has one acre, he gets the one in the middle so he has to walk across all the other acres to get there.” Deny him the acre! If you’ve given Satan an acre, take it away today! Ask for cleansing, renewal, and blessing to give Jesus your all. All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give. That’s our commitment today. Amen? If you’re here today and don’t have Jesus as your Savior, that automatically means His spirit is not in your heart and Satan has you within his sights. You’re a target because you have no protection, no shield of the Holy Spirit living in you. That can change the very next minute if you say “Lord Jesus, I believe You died on the cross for me because I’m a sinner and I need You as my Savior. I need Your spirit to live in me; I need to turn my life and surrender to You. Because You walked from an empty grave in a life of resurrection to give me eternal life, I give You my life, my heart. Take the throne room; it belongs to You. One day, take me home to that place You have for me in heaven. I want you as My Savior.” If that’s your need and plea today, come to this altar and give Him your heart. It’s life and eternity-changing!

Let us Pray: Father God, thank You for these moments and this passage of Scripture where Jesus is building up His disciples to face the future. Lord, we don’t know our future either. Those disciples didn’t know the cross was coming. Two months ago, my sister had no idea that a transplant was coming. We don’t know what tomorrow might bring or even this afternoon. We need to turn it all over to you and say “By You living in my heart, You will give me peace, protection, and guidance by Your authority alone. I want to belong to Lord, and give You all my life.” If you need to rededicate your life because an acre has belonged to Satan, give the whole plot to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Bless the one who says I want to come home and give Him all I have. For Christians here today say “Lord, help me guard the thresholds of my heart by Your strength that all my life will belong to You.” Bless us in these moments that we see miracles happen, especially for a life separated from You and coming home. In Jesus’ name, Amen.