

Rev. Janet R. Doyle
Elmer Presbyterian Church
Sunday, May 3, 2026
5th Sunday after Easter
Scripture: John 14: 1-14
Sermon: Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

What does “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled” mean? A troubled heart doesn’t rest. It is in a state of unrest, from mild anxiety to full-blown panic. A troubled heart is what you would call a heart that’s filled with worry and fear and confusion. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Jesus modeled peace and a tranquil heart.

He said to his disciples “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.. I will come again and take you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14: 1-3). This is the blessed assurance of Jesus’ promise. The disciples had received the bad news that Jesus was going away, and that at this time they could not follow him. They had obviously become fearful and anxious. The disciples were fearful and distressed and Jesus gave them a reason not to be. They could choose faith over fear and believe in Him. Jesus had a plan, and he was going to accomplish it and come back for them. He was going to prepare a home for them.

Jesus knew that His disciples would experience difficult circumstances, but he invited them to believe in him and his promises.

Every follower of Jesus can claim this same promise because we know that Jesus is victorious, and we can be with him forever.

Revelation 1: 17-18 says, “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever. And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”

So, can we face difficulties with “untroubled hearts”? Can we, as his followers, experience his peace while facing all the difficult things of life? Yes! Why? Because his presence and his power are assured through his death and resurrection to all who believe in his promise.

Throughout the Bible we see God's powerful presence bringing deliverance to his people in his way and in his time. When the people of Israel were camped by the Red Sea with no place to hide and saw Pharaoh and his army approaching them, they were terrified, but God reassured them through Moses that he would act powerfully on their behalf to bring deliverance. Exodus 14: 13-14 tells us, "Do not be afraid. Standstill, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today... The Lord will fight for you, and you will hold your peace." Remember Jesus on the Lake of Galilee in the middle of a storm with his disciples and he asked them, "Why are you so afraid?" (Matthew 8:26) Then there was calm after he rebuked the winds and the waves. The disciples realized he had power over everything!

Martin Luther called this passage of John 14 "the best and most comforting sermon that the Lord Christ delivered on earth, a treasure and a jewel not to be purchased with the world's goods." These verses become the foundation for comfort, not only for these disciples but also for us. Jesus is always thinking about his disciples, then and now. Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for us and then come back and take us to be with him. He didn't want us to have a troubled heart. Jesus wants us to have peace that only he can give.

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Thomas doesn't know where Jesus is going because Jesus has been pointing to a different way to live, and Thomas cares to get it right. Maybe it's not a question of desperation and sadness, but one of resolve and commitment. He asks Jesus to explain more because he really does want to be wherever Jesus is going to be.

Philip's question reveals a similar desire for clarity, "Show us the Father" because Jesus has just said that they have seen the Father by being with him.

Thomas and Philip and the rest have missed the point, haven't they? They have missed the fact that they have actually been on the journey all along with the Father. Thomas missed the part that he doesn't have to

know the place where Jesus is going because Jesus promises to come again and take them to himself, so that they will be together. And Jesus responds to Philip: “You’ve already seen the Father because you’ve been with me. How can you even ask that?”

They are looking ahead, but Jesus is telling them to look in the here and now, to him. Everything they are looking for is in him, right now, and Jesus promises that it is enough to sustain them even when he is not there among them. The living, loving, ministering, teaching Jesus right there in front of them is their road map for the way to God, the truth of God, and the life with God. This simple verse, John 14:6, this one truth about Jesus, becomes a guide for what it means to be a Christian.

What does it mean when Jesus says that He is “the way”? Jesus is not merely One who has shown people the way. He is not merely “a” way, He is “the way”—to God. He is the one and only way that God has provided for people to obtain the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of eternal life. Jesus says it again, in the plainest of words: “No one comes to the Father except through Me.” To know Jesus is to know the way to the Father, for He is the way.

How is Jesus the truth? He teaches the truth. His words are truth but beyond this, He is “the truth”. All truth has its source in Him. He is all the truth that people need for salvation, life, and godliness. It is this “truth” found in Jesus which reveals God to people, which discloses the way to eternal life, which is the basis for sanctification, and which provides the content of the gospel.

How is Jesus “the life”? Jesus gives life, but this is because He is the source of life—physically, as Creator, and eternally, as our Savior.

Because Jesus is the life, His life cannot be taken away from Him. He lays it down, and He has authority to take it up again.

What does Philip’s question in verse 8 reveal about him? Philip is basing his request on the premise that “seeing is believing.” If they could but see the Father, then they would believe all that Jesus has told them about the Father, and then they could have peace of mind. Jesus is going to turn this reasoning inside-out. He is going to say that it is not “seeing that leads to believing,” but rather it is “believing that leads to seeing.” It is to those who believe in Jesus to whom He reveals Himself (verse 21). Christianity is a walk of faith, not a walk of sight.

Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), a German priest who wrote The Imitation of Christ, put it well:

"Follow me. I am the way and the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which you must follow; the truth which you must believe; the life for which you must hope. I am the inviolable way, the infallible truth, the never-ending life. I am the straightest way; the sovereign truth; life true, life blessed, life uncreated. If you abide in my way you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free, and you shall attain life everlasting."

Jesus himself said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Jesus is that Narrow Gate. Jesus is that Narrow Road or Way. Exclusively! To get to our destination, the Father's House, we must follow him and him only.

The disciples' troubled hearts originated with their lack of true belief. They may have listened and heard, and they may have understood a little bit of the plan, but they hadn't fully trusted in God's purposes and plans. Through Jesus, their Savior, they had yet to fully grasp the truth of Jesus' teachings and submit fully to them.

Our most troubled and anxious times are always characterized by a wrong belief that our problems, our unknowns and our seemingly impossible circumstances tell the whole story of our life.

When we really don't believe and trusting God through Christ is where we must begin when our hearts are troubled, notice also that this is a command. Jesus isn't just suggesting that we put our faith and trust in Him. He is instructing us to do so without question. Let not your heart be troubled. Is a command. When Jesus says, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, he is giving an antidote to fear and confusion

Jesus tells us that, though it may be hard going at times, we don't travel alone. So, as the storms in our lives are brewing all around us, Jesus tells us to trust him because not only is he leading us to that place he's going to get us to that safe place – and, in the meantime, he's going to stay with us. He is the way, the truth, and life.

In Jesus is life itself. Jesus calls it eternal life; abundant life; the kind of life that every human being longs for. Life is only found in Jesus. Jesus gives our life meaning beyond this world.

If you have all the things of this world, but you don't have Jesus, ultimately you have nothing. Even if you have none of the things of this world, but you have Jesus, ultimately you have everything.

Jesus is life. Jesus' way is love that is shaped like a cross.

1 Peter 1:21 tells us, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps."

Where does the way of Jesus take us? The answer is home. Heaven. Where God is. Following Jesus gives our life direction, meaning, and hope.

Jesus is the way — follow him. He is the way of the cross, and the way to God. If you are searching for answers to life's hard questions look only to Jesus and he will show you that he is the answer.

As you come to the Lord's Table this morning believe that Jesus is the Way and Jesus is Truth and he gives us Life here and eternally.

Let not your hearts be troubled—believe that Jesus died for you and lives for you and knows your heart. Give Jesus your troubles and he will give your life peace.