



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

The Gospel of John Sermon Series
Supports Session 3: I Will Come Again
Sermon Title: "I'll Be A Comin' Back" (John 13:31-14:6)

Connection to Session 3

Jesus calls us to live with Him eternally.

Introduction/Opening

Certain animals can only live in a particular environment. Fish for example cannot survive out of the water. They must be in water to process oxygen. People on the other hand cannot live in water. We must be able to process oxygen. This truth is applicable to the spiritual realm. Without a transformation—salvation—humans are not suited for a heavenly environment. Jesus is calling people to Himself, transforming them in the process of sanctification, and will ultimately transform them in the act of glorification so they can live eternally with Him in the heavenly environment. The Apostle Paul noted this in 1 Corinthians 15:53: "For this corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body must be clothed with immortality."

In John 13, Jesus reminded His disciples that He was leaving, and they could not follow. He was referring to His impending death by crucifixion. He commanded them to love one another, which was evidence of them being His followers. He also predicted the denial of Peter at the end of chapter 13. Chapter 14 begins on a different note. He told them He was leaving, but He also told them He would be coming back. His promise is sure for His people. He will return to bring His children to Himself. Jesus begins the conversation in chapter 14 with the phrase "Don't let your heart be troubled" (v. 1). The verb *troubled* is a passive imperative and in this context indicates the ceasing of an action that is in progress. The idea then is to stop letting your hearts be troubled. Why would they have troubled hearts? Perhaps knowing the imminent departure of Jesus, as He predicted, was the cause. Maybe they sensed shame for their pride. They were told that one of them would betray the Master. This certainly was a troubling thought. Perhaps they felt challenged by the command to love one another. Finally, they could have been troubled by the fact that Jesus told Peter he would deny Jesus three times. What could bring peace to their troubled hearts?

Outline

1. The Command to Follow (John 14:1)
 - a. Jesus's command is stated clearly: "Believe in God; believe also in me" (v. 1). Jesus directed His disciples to continue to believe, and by doing so they would not let their hearts be troubled. A troubled heart is a fearful heart because it does not trust. They were

to trust both God and Jesus. One implication, of course, is that Jesus is Himself God. Gerald L. Borchert expanded on the concept of trust as presented by the Lord. He stated:

- i. Jesus knew that his little band could and would be shaken not only by his words concerning his departure but also by the fact that he would soon become the crucified Lamb. Accordingly, he called for them to place their “trust” not in the power evident in the world but in God and in himself. This direct linkage between God and Jesus has been a fundamental assertion of John, since he identified the Word with God (1:1-2) and later Jesus with the Father (5:17-30).¹

2. The Promises to Claim (vv. 2-3)

- a. Promise number one: “In my Father’s house are many rooms” (v. 2). His first promise is a permanent dwelling place for every believer.
- b. Promise number two: “If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?” (v. 2). Jesus said He would go to prepare a place for His people. He was not constructing a mansion for His people. Rather, He would go to prepare the way for them. D. A. Carson described it in this manner:
 - i. . . . the words presuppose that the ‘place’ exists before Jesus gets there. It is not that he arrives on the scene and then begins to prepare the place; rather, in the context of Johannine theology, it is the going itself, via the cross and the resurrection, that prepares the place for Jesus’ disciples.”²
- c. Promise number three: “I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also” (v. 3). This is the promise of Jesus’s personal return. He will come again. He will not send an emissary or ambassador. He will return to receive His people to Himself. Jesus would die, rise from the dead, ascend, and be glorified. He would intercede for the saints at the right hand of the Father. At the right time, He will return to gather them to Himself.

3. The Message to Proclaim (vv. 4-6)

- a. The confirmation. Jesus told the disciples they knew “the way” (v. 4) to where He was going. The next verse reveals this was not the case on a practical level. However even with their uncertainty, because they knew Him they knew the way to the place He described.
- b. The confusion of Thomas. Thomas, one of the disciples, had an inquiring mind. Thomas needed a road map. Apparently Thomas (and the other disciples) had misinterpreted Jesus’s metaphor.
- c. The clarification. In this passage, the clear “I am” statements reveal to Thomas and the other disciples just who Jesus is. He said “I am the way” (v. 6). Jesus does not show the way. He is not standing with a road sign giving directions. He Himself is the way. He also said He is “the truth” (v. 6). He is not one who merely speaks truth. He is the embodiment of truth. He is the source of redemptive revelation. Finally, Jesus said He is “the life” (v. 6). He refers to life in opposition to death. He alone is the source and giver of life to His own. He closes the verse with the statement “No one comes to the Father except through me” (v. 6). There is no way of reaching the Father than through Jesus.

1. Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 25B, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 103.

2. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991), 489.

Conclusion

In the 1941 drama, *Sergeant York*, Gary Cooper portrayed Alvin C. York, a man drafted into the Army but with deep convictions about being in a war. After York exhausted his attempts to remain in the mountains of Tennessee, he left to serve in the Army. His family and especially his fiancée were worried he would not return. In one scene in the movie, as he stands at the door and is about to leave, he says, “I’ll be a comin’ back.” While believers are not in a Hollywood movie, we are all in a drama and on a journey. We have a clear promise from the King, who is the Lord and Savior. He has prepared a place for His people and will come again. His promise is more certain than the sunrise. He is coming back. The question then is, are we ready for His return?

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