

Gospel of John #21

Eyes on Me

John 14

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Some Village history: 20 years ago, Rod Hukan was 52 years old and preached on John 14. Now I am 52 and preaching on this passage again!

This passage starts with:

John 14

1 “Do not let your hearts be troubled.

20 years ago, Rod highlighted the word LET: it is a choice not to be troubled. If you take an adult and spin them around in a circle and ask them to do fine motor skill projects, you will find that they will become disoriented, unsteady and confused. Troubled means to lack peace or calm. John 14 is considered Jesus’s farewell speech, similar to Jacob and Moses and Joshua’s last speeches. To understand what it means not to be troubled, we need to view this as a child.

When my children were little and we went on an outing, in the car my parents would give us speeches of instruction of how they were to behave if things happened at the event ahead. What will you do if you have to eat something you don’t like? This was more successful the more we did it. Jesus is doing this now: he is preparing the disciples for the events ahead of them. Their world will be changed.

You believe in God[a]; believe also in me. **2** My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. **4** You know the way to the place where I am going.”

This seems like the beginning of an orientation speech: the key to not being troubled is to BELIEVE in Him. There are MANY ROOMS and he will make sure there is a place for them. YOU KNOW THE WAY implies that there are many options. Jesus knows they are disoriented and spinning in a circle. Like any good parent, he takes their disorientation and reorients them.

5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

I love verse 6 because it is an orientation statement.

7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Where they are going is WITH HIM! He is the way; all they need for their reality, truth, and animated life is to orient on Jesus: go towards Him. He is establishing how to navigate confusion. When we feel completely disoriented, the answer Jesus gives you is “eyes on me!” People look down when they are disoriented and he says to look up at him.

8 Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Philip feels unsteady; he needs something more concrete. Philip bases his longings on what he knew, an Old Testament theophany (a manifestation of God): an appearance, a burning bush, a voice. But Jesus says HE IS THE THEOPHANY! Philip is trying to understand but he still doesn't get it: he declares he wants to see the Father.

Jesus answers him as a parent would:

9 Jesus answered: “Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. 12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

To answer Philip's unsteadiness, Jesus offers a firm foundation: First they must see:

- Jesus's Unity with the father
- (KEY!) This is all about relationships: If you know him, you would know he is telling the truth. Go back to the speeches parents give their children in the van on the way to an event. Jesus offers them two points:
 - ***They get to do greater works than Jesus.*** What does this mean? I've never done raised someone from the dead! I think he is saying that if you believe Jesus can do these things, you will have an even greater impact over the world **to make disciples, his primary work for us.**

- **Prayer:** Jesus says to ask in his name: When you go out to preach the gospel and lay hands on people, you know you have authority to ask and speak in his name and **he will act in line with his character.** As you walk in the mission of Jesus and speak in Jesus's name, you will have his authority.

We might have questions about how this will work but that is not our concern here: Jesus wants us to know that he is acting for us when we are in line with him. He wants us to know His power and authority and advocacy.

He picks up this farewell address:

15 “If you love me, keep my commands. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

He tells them they know where he is going and that he will send them the Holy Spirit. Notice that the Spirit is WITH them and not IN them at that moment: this will happen after he leaves. Think of this as inside your womb (harder for men to imagine). The language of the Old Testament is built around the concept of birth.

18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. **21** Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

He won't make them orphans, though. Jesus is making a home and coming back (his second coming) and he wants them to follow him; they will not be alone.

What does the Spirit actually do? Theologically, we pray and engage through the Son, by the Spirit, to the Father. But Jesus is saying here it's not that narrow. If you have the Spirit, you are also WITH the Son and the Father. Jesus is saying that while he was alive, heaven and earth touched on him and the Spirit was in him AND that that this will happen in the future with you. All that is heaven and trinity is present in YOU as you engage the world. You give life and birth into dead spaces.

The spirit cannot be seen by the world but will be given to the disciples.

22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

Kids focus on the unimportant details; this is a legitimate question but not relevant to what Jesus just said about giving them heaven and earth. Many times this happens to us as we read Scripture, we're excited about what God is doing but then we hit something we don't understand. But Jesus clarifies their confusion:

23 Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. **24** Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. **26** But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

First, any time you see "LOVE AND OBEY" it is entrusting yourself to someone. This is what parents ask of their children. For clarity, Jesus tells them they need to trust themselves to Him.

To deal with their **disorientation**, **unsteadiness** and **confusion**, he will send the Holy Spirit.

- When we are **disoriented**, we need to be reminded and taught the truth.
- When we are in these **unsteady** spaces, we need to be taught and reminded where to put our feet.
- **Confusion** develops anxiety and we need is peace. When you enter into difficulty, remember that Jesus brings reminding and peace when we entrust ourselves to him.

Eyes on Jesus.

28 "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. **29** I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. **30** I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, **31** but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

"Come now; let us leave.

I love this last line. I would add that war has begun. He asks them not to be afraid (or timid or cowardly). There is a coming world that you might not think is good. But this is the time to stand firm. The invitation is:

Eyes on me

Do not be troubled

Do not be a coward

Jesus understands this is what we need. We need to ask where we are taking our eyes off of Jesus.

Let's look at a passage in Matthew where Peter took his eyes off of Jesus.

Matt 14

29 Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **30** But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

What happens when our eyes are NOT on Jesus? Consider the places in your life where your eyes are not on Jesus.

As you enter into trials, remember **John 14:2, 3:**

2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

You will not be in heaven or in a mansion, you will be WHERE HE IS.

Later in vs. 23, he says:

"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

I love this picture of believing in Jesus and his making a home with us. As you wrestle where you are, you don't need to work hard at keeping your eyes on Jesus. **You are in the Jesus Mobile Home, traveling through this life.** This passage is not about how to live your life but about what life is like with and without the Trinity. The waves and winds of life quickly invite us to take our eyes off of Jesus, no matter where we live. However, we are not alone in the dark: we just need to go to Jesus's door in the traveling mobile home and knock on it. It's not about figuring out how to do it right, it's about putting our eyes on Him.

Eventually it won't be like this: some day the mobile home will have a firm foundation in the Kingdom.

