

## Be Encouraged

Written by By Bill Emmerling Pastor-Gallup Christian Church  
Friday, 27 April 2018 07:45

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Events around us in the state, nation and world might tempt us to throw our hands up in despair. Through the news we seem the many results of sin that seems to be out of control, violence and murder, theft, various forms of addiction. Sometimes we even look at our own lives and become depressed because regardless of how hard we try our actions sometimes harm ourselves and others. We are often left wondering where God is in the midst of all this evil and chaos.

In chapters 13-17 of the gospel according to the apostle John, Jesus shares important teachings with His disciples on the night before His Crucifixion. By the time we reach chapter 14, Jesus has given them troubling news: one of them will betray Him, all of them will desert Him, Peter will deny Him three times. He then shares these words of encouragement to help sustain them during the dark days ahead.

*“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me... And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also .”* John 14:1-3 (ESV)

Jesus knew their hearts were troubled. He knows that we have troubled hearts, walking through this troubled world. Yet, he knows us inside out, and still loves us and seeks to comfort us. He reassures us, regardless of how difficult our walk through this world becomes, it is our relationship with Jesus and His Father that will carry us through. It is not our faith, but the object of our faith, Jesus and God the Father, that is our true source of strength.

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Jesus also speaks of going and preparing a place. The language here speaks of the cultural practice of a bridegroom returning for his bride after he has completed construction and preparation of the room he has attached to his father's house. The language Jesus uses here speaks of Himself as the bridegroom going to prepare such a place for us. It is intriguing to consider that Jesus seeks a spiritual relationship with us, which compares to the intimacy of marriage. The imagery here speaks of an eagerness, a desire on His part to have us with Him.

Jesus had just shared troubling news with the disciples, and He now reminds them that they are His spiritual bride. He is reminding them that He is going to prepare a permanent, eternal home for them, in His Father's house, in the house of God Almighty. Consider the imagery here, keeping in mind that the spiritual reality of marriage existed before the earthly example. Marriage on earth is intended to point to the reality of our spiritual marriage with Jesus.

Jesus is assuring his disciples, and us, that He has not abandoned us; He is coming back to gather us home, forever.

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