

Hope for Troubled Hearts

John 14.1-3

Series: Signs of Life

March 14, 2021

I. The Pervasiveness of Trouble

- A. You know my wife as a singer
 - 1. You may not be aware that she was a star of stage
 - a. Can't say stage and screen – never made any movies (that I'm aware of)
 - b. But stage – yes
 - 2. She starred in a number of musical theater productions in high school and college
- B. In one of them she played the role of Marian the Librarian in The Music Man
- C. Music Man revolves around the sinister manipulations of one Professor Harold Hill
 - 1. A con man
 - a. Who comes to a small town with the purpose of selling musical instruments to school children to start a band
 - b. He promises to teach them how to play them
 - c. But his intention is that once he has sold them the instruments, he would take the money and skip town
 - 2. He convinces the townspeople that they need to establish a community band in order to keep the vulnerable youth off the streets and out of trouble
 - a. The youth these days, he tells them, are on the edge of plunging into degradation and destruction
 - b. And the chief means by which the youth would be led into degradation is the local pool hall
 - 3. He sings a song entitled "Trouble"
- D. Trouble
 - 1. Trouble, oh we got trouble
 - 2. Right here in River City!
 - 3. With a capital "T"
 - 4. That rhymes with "P"
 - 5. And that stands for Pool
 - 6. That stands for pool
 - 7. We've surely got trouble!
 - 8. Right here in River City
 - 9. Right here!
 - 10. Gotta figure out a way
 - 11. To keep the young ones moral after school!
 - 12. Trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble
- E. Probably don't need Robert Preston, who played Harold Hill in the movie version, singing "Trouble" to convince you that we live in a world of trouble
 - 1. And you probably don't need the threat of a pool hall in the neighborhood to convince you of the threats facing our communities, states or nation

2. And you probably didn't even need 2020 to convince you of the pervasiveness of trouble in our lives and in our families' lives
- F. Litany of troubles – last week's message
1. Covid
 2. Political distress
 3. National disintegration
 4. Relational challenges
 5. Family distress
 6. Alzheimers
 7. Cancer
 8. Heart disease
 9. Corrupt politicians
 10. Fallen Christian leaders
 11. Long-winded preachers

II. **The Source of Trouble**

- A. Troubles can come from a number of sources
1. **Disappointment with ourselves**
 - a. **Romans 7:15** (NASB95) — 15 For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.
 - b. **Romans 7:19** (NASB95) — 19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.
 - c. **Romans 7:24** (NASB95) — 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?
 2. **Disappointment with others**
 - a. Husband, wife
 - b. Sons, daughters
 - c. Friends
 - d. Employer or employees
 3. **Circumstances**
 - a. Many things we can't control; often seem to come out of left field
 - b. Loss of job
 - c. Unexpected illness
 - d. Social unrest
 - e. Crime
 - f. Mental illness
 4. **Spiritual depression**
 - a. "Dark night of the soul" (16th Century Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross)
 - b. Sense of the absence of God
- B. **Ultimate source of all troubles is sin**
1. Troubles are pervasive because sin is pervasive
 - a. **Romans 3:10–18** (NASB95) — 10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE

WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.” 13 “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,” “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”; 14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”; 15 “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, 16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.” 18 “THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.”

2. It’s not that all our troubles are directly traceable to specific sins that we have committed
 - a. Although that can certainly be the case
 3. But that we live in a fallen world
 - a. And sin has a devastating impact on the conditions and functions of our world
- C. Jesus Himself recognized the pervasiveness of trouble
1. **Matthew 6:34** (NASB95) — 34 ... “Each day has enough trouble of its own.”
 - a. We can expect trouble every day!
- D. Golf is said to be a game of misses
1. You will almost never hit the perfect shot
 - a. The vast majority of your shots will be misses
 - b. The question is, can you miss in the right place
 - c. A place where you can recover, get the ball back in a good position
 - d. And make par, or even birdie
 2. In other words, golf is a game of managing misses
- E. Well, life is a game of managing troubles
1. We all have them
 - a. We will continue to have them as long as we are present in this world
 2. How, then, can we deal with our troubles?
 - a. How can we manage our troubles?
- F. Text
1. **John 14:1-3** (NASB95) — 1 “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

III. **The Irony of Troubled Hearts**

- A. Jesus begins with an ironic statement
 1. **“Do not let your heart be troubled...”**

- B. What's ironic about that is that Jesus' own heart is troubled!
1. John 12 – Gentiles had come to worship at the feast – they came to Philip and asked to see Jesus
 - a. Jesus recognized this development as a sign that He headed for the cross
 - b. That His journey had taken a decisive turn
 - c. That He was coming down the home stretch of His mission
 - d. And that from that time on He was in the final days of His earthly course
 - e. That He would be leaning into a left hook
 - f. That He would dive into suffering
 - g. Suffering unlike any other human being had ever experienced
 - h. Suffering that would entail His experiencing the wrath of God for the sins of all those who would ever believe in Him
 2. **John 12:27** (NASB95) — 27 “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.”
 - a. Jesus' own heart, His own soul, was troubled!
 3. Not long after that, Jesus predicted that one of His own would betray Him
 - a. **John 13:21** (NASB95) — 21 When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.”
 - b. Once again, Jesus was about to be disappointed by one of His own
 - c. Disappointed in a way that I'm quite sure none of us has ever experience, however we've been disappointed by our own friends
 - d. One of His own would hand Him over to be crucified
 - e. So His soul was troubled
- C. So Jesus, in John 14, tells His disciples not to let their souls be troubled
1. All the while, He's dying inside!
- D. What are we to make of this irony?
1. Is this some inherent contradiction?
 - a. An internal inconsistency in the logic of Jesus?
 2. No!
 - a. It's simply an affirmation that Jesus understands us in our troubles
 - b. He knows what it is to be troubled
 - c. He understands when our souls are tied up in knots
 - d. When we're preoccupied with trials and tribulations
 3. He's been there!
 - a. He understands!

IV. **Reasons to Be Troubled**

- A. So Jesus says, “Do not let your heart be troubled...”
 1. Do the disciples have reasons to be troubled?
- B. Absolutely they have reasons to be troubled
 1. Colleague of mind had a poster in his office – a picture of a dog, sitting at a

desk, with glasses on

- a. He's surrounded by piles of papers and books – they nearly bury the dog!
- b. Caption: If you can keep your head a time like this, you really don't understand the situation.

C. Did the disciples have reason to be troubled?

1. We've already seen that Jesus had reasons to be troubled
 - a. He was driven toward His suffering a crucifixion
 - b. He had every right to be troubled!
 - c. But what about the disciples?
2. Of course they did!
 - a. Jesus was leaving
 - b. They were struggling to know who would betray Him
 - c. Their association with Jesus was about to put them in all kinds of trouble
 - d. It was natural for them to be troubled

D. And it's natural for us to be troubled as well

1. We don't believe in a Pollyanna Christianity where none of the world's dysfunctions and disintegrations will ever touch us
2. Christians are realists – we are the ones who understand the true nature of our world
 - a. We are the ones who know the fallenness of our world
 - b. We are the ones who should be surprised with disappointment, trial, and affliction
 - c. **John 16:33** (NASB95) — 33 "... In the world you have tribulation..."

E. So we shouldn't be afraid to share our troubles with a trusted believer

1. And the trusted believer should never minimize those troubles as they are shared
 - a. Shouldn't rationalize them – "Oh, it could be much worse"
 - b. We shouldn't minimize them
 - c. We should take them seriously
 - d. Mourn with those who mourn
2. Because we all have reasons to be troubled

V. **Reasons to Not Be Troubled**

A. But the good news is that there are even more reasons not to be troubled!

1. That's why Jesus says, "Do not let your heart be troubled!"
 - a. Then He lays out all the reasons why, in spite of all the reasons you have to be troubled, you can overcome them!
 - b. You don't have to be enslaved by your troubles
 - c. Your minds and emotions don't have to be captivated by anxiety and despair
2. He gives five reasons why we should not allow our minds and hearts to run away with our joy in Jesus!

B. **We know Jesus**

1. **John 14:1** (NASB95) — 1 ... “believe in God, believe also in Me.”
2. We’re faced with a bit of an interpretation issue
 - a. Two phrases
 - b. Either of them could be understood in one of two moods
 - c. Either indicative – a statement of fact
 - d. Or imperative – a command or exhortation
 - e. Both moods are the same in the Greek; only the context helps here
3. For instance, is it “believe in God” (imperative) or is it “you believe in God” (indicative)
 - a. Or is it “believe also in Me” (imperative) or is it “you believe in Me” (indicative)
4. There is not a huge difference between the two in the final analysis
 - a. My sense of the context would lead me to follow the King James version (or NKJV): “you believe in God, believe also in Me”
 - b. The first is indicative: “you already believe in God”; “you’re not questioning whether God will care for you”
 - c. The second is imperative: “so since you believe in God, you should believe in Me”
5. Why would that fit the context?
 - a. Because Jesus has told them He’s leaving them, that’s He’s going to the cross
 - b. This is devastating news; that’s why they are troubled
 - c. But He wants to assure them: “You already trust in the Father; now you need to muster up the trust in Me. Trust Me that I know what I’m doing. While things will look grim for a time, when I am delivered up for crucifixion, just know that it will all work out for your good and for God’s glory”
6. Bottom line – don’t let your hearts be troubled because you have Jesus!
 - a. And Jesus can be trusted – all this about to take place will accomplish redemption for all those who will ever believe in Him
7. In a sense, this statement is shorthand for what we learned last week in the message in the Blood Wonder series
 - a. **Romans 8:32** (NASB95) — 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
 - b. In other words, “You believe in God; you should also believe in Me”
 - c. Because I’m giving My life for your sakes
 - d. How will I not also take care over everything you need!
8. Do not let your hearts be troubled
 - a. Because you have Jesus
 - b. Believe in Him!

C. **A place in heaven**

1. **John 14:2** (NASB95) — 2 “In My Father’s house are many dwelling

places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.”

2. Knowing our destiny is crucial in setting our hearts at ease
 - a. If you are a believer in Jesus, your destiny is in heaven
 - b. Jesus, in these verses, assures us of that
 3. The unbeliever has great cause for a troubled heart
 - a. But not so the believer!
 4. Knowing our destiny can set our hearts at ease
 - a. **Philippians 3:17–21** (NASB95) — 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.
 5. Do not let your hearts be troubled – you have a place in heaven!
- D. **A place for you**
1. “I go to prepare a place for you”
 - a. Seems like the same point I just made
 - b. But perhaps you would do well to put the emphasis on a different syllable
 2. Instead of “I go to prepare **a place** for you”
 - a. Say, **“I go to prepare a place for you”**
 - b. Your own personal place in heaven
 3. Have you ever prepared a room for a specific person?
 - a. When we first prepared to move into our house here in Fort Myers 8 years ago we had the whole house painted inside
 - b. Jean had picked a tropical pallet of colors that were coordinated by Sherwin Williams
 - c. Except for one room
 - d. One of the bedrooms we decorated was designed for Jean’s mother
 - e. This was long before this past fall when she moved in with us; it was a time when she could still travel and be with us
 - f. But we painted the bedroom pink; her love of pink is legendary
 - g. And of course, we put other things – furniture, wall art – in the room that spoke about Jane
 - h. We prepared the room for her
 4. But Jesus is preparing your place in heaven – for you!
 - a. You aren’t just going to a fancy hotel where the rooms are all beautifully decorated – but they are all the same
 - b. Jesus has you in mind in His preparations

5. Do not let your hearts be troubled – Jesus is preparing a place for you!
- E. **Jesus will come again**
1. **John 14:3** (NASB95) — 3 “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”
 2. This is what Paul says
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (NASB95) — 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.
 3. We long for the appearing of the Lord Jesus
 - a. He has promised He will come again!
 - b. This is a source of great encouragement to the believer
 4. **2 Timothy 4:7–8** (NASB95) — 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
 5. Do not let your hearts be troubled – Jesus is coming back!
- F. **We will be with Jesus forever**
1. **John 14:3** (NASB95) — 3 “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”
 - a. “That where I am, there you may be also”
 2. An eternity with the One who came to this earth to save us from our sins
 - a. An eternity with the One who loved us from beginning to end
 - b. An eternity with the One who gave His life for us
 - c. An eternity with the One who rose from the grave
 - d. An eternity with the One who sits at the right hand of the Father
 3. An eternity with the One who is love
 - a. The very embodiment of love
 - b. The essence of love
 4. There is no other being in the universe that the glorified believer would rather be with than Jesus!
 5. In our sinful state in this earth we may not feel the affection that we ought to feel
 - a. But know this – when we see Him as He is we will know Him because we will be like Him
 - b. And there will no longer be any sinful hindrance or obstacle to the whole-hearted, full bodied, holy affection for our Savior
 6. Our Savior who we will enjoy
 - a. For all eternity
 7. Do not let your hearts be troubled – you will be with our loving Savior forever!

VI. **Application**

- A. So what are we to do when our hearts are troubled?
 - 1. We are to engage in an act of will
 - 2. We are to be like the psalmist who says,
 - a. **Psalm 42:5** (NASB95) — 5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence.
 - b. The psalmist talks to himself: “Hope in God!”
 - 3. We’re to do the same
- B. Do not let your heart be troubled!
 - 1. Are your hearts troubled?
 - a. Stop it!
 - 2. Set your hearts on these truths
 - a. You know Jesus
 - b. You have a place being prepared in heaven
 - c. Jesus is preparing a place in heaven for you!
 - d. Jesus is coming back for you
 - e. Jesus will take you to be with Him – forever
 - 3. Think about those things!
 - a. Let your minds be occupied with the assurances that Jesus gives
 - b. So even in the midst of your troubles, you will have peace in your souls
 - 4. You might have to turn off the news for a while!
 - a. Instead turn on the scriptures!
 - b. Study with the Pastor
 - c. Channel 13 – Marquis Laughlin reads scripture
 - d. Channel 13 – Encounter with God devotionals
- C. Set your minds on things above!
 - 1. **Colossians 3:1–4** (NASB95) — 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.