

AFTER THE RESURRECTION WHAT?

by

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CHAPTER NINE

THE HERITAGE HE LEFT US

HIS PRESCRIPTION FOR TROUBLED HEARTS (John 14)

THIS CHAPTER has to do with a heritage Christ left His disciples as expressed in the fourteenth chapter of John, before His death and resurrection.

It was just before He had instituted the Lord's Supper in the Upper Room. Judas had gone out to betray Him, and in the shadows of the cross, somewhere between the Upper Room and the gate of the Garden of Gethsemane, with the weight of a lost world on Him, He delivered the matchless message recorded in John 13 to 16, and concluded the sermon with His intercessory prayer in John 17.

His message known as the Sermon on the Mount was delivered in the early part of His rising ministry, when His praise was on every lip, when the multitudes were applauding Him. He delivered that world-influencing sermon on a mountain in northern Galilee. It is doubted whether there is any other sermon that has influenced the world quite so much. But this message in John 13-16 was to eleven men, defeated, discouraged, was delivered in the night, delivered at the gate of Gethsemane.

The shadow of the cross fell across His path, the dampness of the tomb must have chilled the blood in His veins. He was soon to be crucified as a culprit. He was soon to drink the awful, bitter hemlock of the world's distilled sorrow, and drink it to its bitter dregs. And yet, just before He entered the Garden on His way to Calvary and to Joseph's tomb He said: "**Behold, the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have trouble: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.**"

Now, with this tragic background and dark setting He spoke the vital, never-dying truth set out in John 14. I wish that we would study this heritage left us just outside the Garden. Certain great, outstanding truths are set out here and left to us, marked by His own blood. This was not part of the messages of the forty days, but was a fitting setting for these and other days.

THE HERITAGE OF LOVE

An analysis of this chapter shows us the following things the Saviour left us just before He entered the Garden and climbed Golgotha and plunged into the tomb.

God. **“If ye believe in God, believe also in me.”**

The Bible begins with **“In the beginning God.”** John gave at the masthead of His great love letter, his Gospel, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**

Now, if we have God, our troubles are minimized, our difficulties are made soluble. Life is a guaranteed success, sorrows will end in joy, life will cross all the Jordans of death and have a resurrection, night is explained, hope is realized, and heaven shows its coming gleams of light when we hypothecate God.

Home, an eternal home. **“In my Father’s house are many mansions.”**

He said, **“I go to prepare a place for you . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”**

Home is one of the earth’s biggest words, and the nearer it approaches the heavenly home the more glorious it is. The homes here dissolve and break up. The house itself decays. The loved ones of the home scatter. But not so with the home that Jesus leaves us and is preparing for us; no decay, no destruction, no rust, no thief, no tooth of time can ever take away from us the home that He is preparing for us. He says it is a mansion, and He says He will come back and take us to that home. He will be with us and we will be with Him forever. In the light of this heritage of our Saviour there ought to be joy in all Christian hearts, because of the certainty of the eternal home.

He left us the glorious heritage of His identity with the Father. **“I am in the Father and the Father in me.”** This guarantees all the great truths He promised us, and holds with an eternal grip all the relationships that are guaranteed in His revealed will. If Christ the Son and God the Father are one, and they are interrelated and interwoven into each other, this satisfies hope and guarantees expectancy.

He left us a task, work, a world-wide work. He defines it when He says, **“I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”**

What did Jesus do? What were the works that characterized His marvelous ministry?

- Soul winning was one.
- Spiritual education, the training of the saved, was another.
- The healing of the sick was a third.

- The comforting of the distressed was another.

Along all the lines of evangelism, education, benevolence and comfort He charged us to go forward with His work. He says at another place, "**As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**" This task puts heavy obligations on us under an ever-enduring trusteeship, stewardship and guardianship to Him.

He left us an open access to Him and to the Father in prayer. What a great heritage is prayer! And this is one of the items of His heritage to us. He said, "**Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it.**"

Prayer is sometimes regarded as God's best gift after Christ is given to us. He gives spiritual radio and telephone and telegraph connection with the throne of God. We are to wire God over the wireless, signing Christ's name and pleading our case, and He guarantees an answer. His answer might be "no," or half of what we ask, or less, or sometimes more than we ask, but prayer is one of His best gifts to us.

Love's obedience. He says, "**If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments,**" and "**If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**"

The power of love cannot be calculated by any mathematical process, not even the calculus of the angels. Suppose the world had no mother-love, no filial devotion, no love of friends, no love for God, and suppose love had no obligations, no debtorships, what sort of a world would we be in? A loveless world is a godless world. How grateful we ought to be for this item in Christ's last will and testament, this item of love!

He left us "another Comforter." In John 14:15-18 the Saviour says: "**If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.**"

Can there be a richer heritage left to a family of mourning children than this promise Christ made at the gate of the Garden?

Let us notice the value of this gift. This seems to be the gift based on love, for He says, "**If you love me,**" and "**I will pray the Father.**" It is divine love's gift to human response in love.

Then He says "**another**" The intimation is that He, Christ, is a comforter, and the Holy Spirit is another comforter, evidently like Himself. Then He says, "**He will abide with you forever.**" It is an enduring comfort. Sorrow is often for a moment but the Comforter is forever. He says also that He is the "**Spirit of Truth**" whom the world cannot receive— that is, the people of God have a monopoly on this "**Spirit of Truth.**" He is ours.

The eyes of the world are blinded to Him. They cannot see Him and cannot have Him.

And then He says He dwelleth with us—that is, He makes His home with us and will be in us. He takes up His enduring home in our hearts. Then He says, “**I will not leave you comfortless,**” or, “**I will not leave you orphans.**” “**I will be parents to you and take the place of all the losses that may come in your family life.**”

And His closing promise is, “I will come to you.” Thus He identifies Himself with the Holy Spirit. Now, what a blessed heritage that is to us! He is ours, ours forever. He gives a holy parentage, father and mother to us. He comforts us. He lives within us and will dwell with us forever, and His presence in us is identical with the Saviour’s presence. What could be better for us than that?

Security in life and the security of life. He says in the nineteenth verse, “**Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.**”

He not only is making a home for us, but He is making a way home. This promise gives the guarantee not only for this item in His will for us, but this item guarantees all the other items. He identifies His life with our life and makes us coexistent with Him. The impartation of Christ’s very nature in our regeneration is a guarantee against all the losses of this life and the life to come. He came not only to give life, but to give life more abundantly.

He says, “**From within you shall flow rivers of living water.**” The life He gives us is an endless life. And it is an overflowing life, not only enough for us but for the parched deserts around us. We need not fear anything that is behind us, within us or before us. No grave of the past, no peril of the present, no womb of the future has any dangers for Christ’s disciples. Our life is His life and His life is ours.

Love. Love is one of Christ’s major gifts. Verses 21-24 are God’s classic on love. “**He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him . . . If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**”

Here is the Father’s heritage of love. John’s main subject in all of his writings is love. He saw the love side of Christ. Christ interpreted the love side of the Father and he interpreted the words and deeds of the Saviour in the light of love’s eyes, and added to the list of items of our joy the united, propelling, conquering power of a new affection.

Christ not only left us a Comforter, but He left us *a teacher and a guide* in the same personality. He says in the twenty-sixth verse: “**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**”

Here He gives us a guide. He is the true sky pilot. He is familiar with all the stratospheres of the heavens and all the needs of the earth.

- He knows the mind of the Father.
- He knows the needs of men.
- He guides men in the light that the Father gives, in order that men thus enlightened may find the Father and the Father's will.
- He does not limit the Holy Spirit's teaching ability. He says "**all things.**"
- He does not limit His power to quicken memory.

He will bring to our memories the things that Christ has taught us. Thus, with this divine teacher with us, all of life's paths will be clearer and more joyous.

Peace. In the twenty-seventh verse He says, "**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**"

One of His greatest "leavings" is peace, and the best part of peace is Christ's peace. I wonder what He means by "**my peace I give unto you.**" He evidently means the output of the costs to which He has been put in bringing peace from a peaceful heaven. His peace was not easily given.

It came by a very expensive route—incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection. All these costly items entered into the sum that He had to pay for peace. It means peace with God, peace with our own consciences, peace with a world in war and storm, peace with our fears, peace with our troubles.

The peace of Christ in our hearts makes them hearts that trouble not. Oh, what a longing Christ expresses here that His people should not live with troubled hearts! God's people ought not to worry. There are two things we ought not to worry about, the things we can help and the things we cannot help. We should save the strength wasted in worry for work, and work would be more happily done and with more cheer in the doing of it, and the amount of it would be greater and the efficiency of it more satisfying. A nerve-strung hand cannot do the best work. A worry-wrought soul cannot achieve the best. The Saviour would have us have His peace. If Christianity had back the strength it had lost in worry and would use that strength in work with a peaceful soul, we would be centuries ahead of where we are now in the achievements of the gospel. Worry halts, it distresses, it tires, it pains, it slows down the machinery of life. Worry cannot achieve; it cannot think straight; it does not act bravely. Worry has no crown, but peace has. Peace advances the kingdom of God. It brightens the eyes, pushes back the horizons for hope to act. It achieves.

The heritage the Saviour left us begins with God and ends with peace, and all these items of the heritage coming in between make life one round of joy. The Saviour's will is that His people should not only hope but happily work.

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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