

Hanging Out With Jesus: The Cure For a Troubled Heart

Unedited Transcript

John 14:27-31

Good morning, men! Welcome to Man in the Mirror's Men's Bible Study, where we always have room for one more guy! Let's go ahead and do a shout out this morning. We've got a group of guys that have been meeting for six years. They meet on Tuesdays at 7:00pm, and their name is Man's Bible Study. That's the name of their group. First Baptist Church of Aberdeen, NJ. Peter McLoughlin is their leader. So I wonder if you would join me in giving these men a warm welcome to the Man in the Mirror Men's Bible Study? One, two, three, hoorah! Welcome guys! We're really glad you're here!

I want to mention to you, especially those online, that you can start your own Bible Study using the video version of this Bible Study. You can do the same questions that we do here on Friday mornings, and this is the home page (www.maninthemirror.org) for Man in the Mirror. Right here is a button called Start a Bible Study. All you have to do is go to the website, click this button and you can get all the details.

Hanging Out With Jesus is the series we are in. There is a lot of beauty in the world, like the coral reefs of John Pennekamp State Park. There's a lot that's right about the world! So when I was on vacation, my four year old granddaughter asked me if I would paint her toe nails. My life is complete! What a beautiful thing! What a wonderful thing! There's just so much that's right about the world, but we also know that there is a lot that is wrong with the world. So the prince of this world has now been released, and he is roaming about, and he is doing his thing. He's a little bit of a pipsqueak to be honest with you, he really isn't that powerful. The only power that he has is the power we release to him. One little word fells him, the name of Jesus, get behind me Satan! Flick him off like the little flea that he is! I hope I'm not making him mad right now! But we know from John 10:10 that the purpose of this prince of this world is to steal and to kill and to destroy. The series that we're in is Hanging Out With Jesus, and we're in that section of the Gospels that we're going through chronologically, going through the stories of Jesus. We're in the upper room, and we're looking at life altering lessons from the upper room. Today we come to this text in John 14 which begins at verse 27. The situation that has called this text we're about to look at into existence, the reason the Holy Spirit has desired to preserve this text, is because in this world we are going to have trouble. If you would keep your finger at verse 27 but drop back to the first verse of the chapter, chapter 14 verse 1, Do not let your hearts be troubled. He's giving this upper room discourse, these explanations, these instructions so that we will not have troubled hearts. Verse 27:

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.

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 (and he has no hold over you either, in Christ), 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.

By the way, a side bar on verse 31: I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. This is the end of the thought that he started in verse 15, if you love me you will obey me and do what I command. He’s giving us the example. If you love me you will do what I command, be obedient, and he’s saying here I love the Father and I do what he commands, so follow my example. He’s said this all throughout this upper room discourse, he’s been talking about following his example. I have set an example for you to follow.

Reasons for a Troubled Heart

What’s obvious here? What’s obvious is that the disciples have troubled hearts. What’s obvious here is that Jesus is going away. Let’s talk about the cure for a troubled heart, and we’ll start by talking about the reasons for a troubled heart. I’m talking about our reasons for a troubled heart. We know what the disciples were going through, they were about to lose their leader. It was Sigmund Freud who said the loss of the leader in some sense or another, the birth of misgivings about him, brings on the outbreak of panic. So they’re about to lose their leader. That’s the reason for their troubled hearts.

The reasons for our troubled hearts are many. It could be that you got everything you ever wanted in life, and now you’re miserable. Not because you didn’t get it, but because you did! You could have a troubled heart because you’ve never been able to get the things that you thought would make you happy, you’ve been blocked! It could be that you have a troubled heart because your marriage has failed. You may be still married, you may be divorced, but your marriage has just failed. You may have lost a child, a child who pre-deceased you. You may be under employed, you may be unemployed. Or another reason for a troubled heart, you could be like me. You could wake up every Thursday morning with a blank sheet of paper and then have to come and talk to all of these guys about the word. My recurring nightmare is that I can’t remember what I was going to say, I’m in front of a group of guys that’s smaller than it should be. I have a dwindling audience, I can’t remember what I was going to say, I don’t have my notes, and sometimes I can’t even get up here. There are all these things that are blocking me and so by the time I get here, everybody’s gone. That’s my reason for a troubled heart.

Everybody has reasons for a troubled heart, everybody has reasons to be fearful. It says don’t be fearful, so what are you afraid of? We’re never afraid of what we know, we’re never afraid of the past, it’s always the future. It’s that unknown future that creates fear. If you know something, you’re not afraid of it, you just deal with it. It seems that fear is always oriented towards the future. There is this idea of a troubled heart that Jesus is dealing with here. All men face it. The disciples faced it, you face it, and pity the man who must make his journey through this world in his own strength and fight his battles on his own. Jesus is not going to let that happen. What is Jesus doing in this text? He’s showing us that we don’t have to do it alone. He’s offering us his peace. My peace I give you, not as the world gives. The whole purpose of this upper room discourse is to do a couple of things to give the disciples the confidence and the comfort that comes from knowledge, and knowledge is power.

In the world, we say knowledge equals power. In the Bible it's different: it's the Holy Spirit equals knowledge equals power. We looked at this last time. The Holy Spirit will teach us all things and remind us of everything that Jesus said. That's knowledge! That's power! So the Holy Spirit is the knowledge that's power. Just something to keep in mind. Jesus is showing that we don't have to do it alone, he's explained a lot of things here, he's given the disciples an example to follow, he's explained what's about to happen, that he's going away, he's told them that there's many rooms, he's shown them that he is the way, he's shown them that he is the Father, he's shown them that he will answer the prayers that they make, he promised them the Holy Spirit, and now he says my peace I give to you. So the Big Idea this morning; usually I try to come up with an idea that's an insight, something you wouldn't have thought of. This is more informational, and this is the Big Idea today: **Notwithstanding the world is such a troubled place, we can experience the peace of Christ.** What does notwithstanding mean? Even though, in spite of, etc. We can experience the peace of Christ! There's more to come to this. In John 16:33, Jesus says I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace!

Ken Moore, the man that I met with once a week for thirty-two years, now deceased, used to lead a table back there. Every time we were together, he would remind me that the two most important things to him and to all of us were to surrender to Jesus and Peace. Here's a man who died at 92 and all of his life that I knew him, he said I'm seeking peace. I need peace in my life, and Jesus says in me you may have peace. Then he goes on, in this world you will have trouble. But take heart, for I have overcome this world. So **notwithstanding the world is such a troubled place, we can experience the peace of Christ**, because he has promised it to us. That's the reasons for a troubled heart.

What's Different About the Peace of Jesus?

So what's different about this peace of Jesus, this peace of Christ? First and foremost, it's my peace. He says it's my peace. I was reading a commentator's note, and I don't know if I've ever quoted a commentator before, but there was this one sentence I ran across this week that I want to read to you. This commentator said there are moments when into one human word (the word being peace) may be condensed the love of a lifetime. Christ does but pour through these common words the fire of his eternal and infinite love. It's his peace. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God, all of God in a human body. What's different about the peace of Jesus? He is our peace. It's him. He said I will not leave you as orphans a few verses before this, I will come to you in the Holy Spirit who is also the Spirit of Jesus. He is with you. He said I will never leave you, I will always be with you. I will never forsake you. So Jesus is his own peace. When we're connecting ourselves to Jesus, we're connecting ourselves to his peace. What is the peace of Jesus? What's different about it? It's based on a reciprocal love relationship with him. That's Christianity in a nutshell it's a reciprocal love relationship with Jesus. This peace word, this love word, there's a cluster of ideas that sort of coagulate around this peace, and all of these benefits come to us. We know them as the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control. Like we said last week, the Holy Spirit is doing even more for us now than Jesus did for the disciples then. That was the Big Idea last week. We're doing greater things! Not only does the Holy Spirit remind us of everything Jesus said, but he teaches us all things!

He says here in the text, not as the world gives do I give to you. So how does the world give? How does the world give its peace? It promises its peace if you can get enough money, you can be insulated from the problems of other people. The world promises its peace if you can discipline your physique to look virile and masculine that women will find you irresistible. That's been my problem all of my life! Not so much. Or you can have peace if you're a smart person, people will look up to you and revere you and

you can win their worship, so get a great education. By the way, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with having a lot of money, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with doing a little temple maintenance and knocking off a few pounds, and I'm not saying there's anything wrong with getting a great education, everybody should get a great education! But not so that we can get peace from it. People are looking for that which can only be attained vertically through all these horizontal means.

Philip Seymour Hoffman, one of the greatest actors according to some people. Jim Seibert and I saw him in the movie *Doubt*, I thought he did a great job, I think he was nominated for an Oscar there. He's been nominated for four Oscars and won a best actor for something he did. You would think he had everything in the world he needed to have peace! But at the age of 46, having not shown up to pick up his children from his divorced wife, a couple of his friends went up to his Manhattan apartment and found him lying in the bathroom with a needle sticking out of his left arm. Dead at the age of 46 from an overdose. A cocktail of heroin, cocaine, and a couple of other drugs. They call it stacking. The problem is that when you are chronically addicted, you don't notice the impact on your respiration, and so you just stop breathing. They found 50 packets of heroin there with the label on it ace of spades, when what he needed was the king of hearts. That what Jesus is promising here. The world promises a temporal peace that is revocable. It is contingent and tenuous. Jesus says the peace that he gives you is my peace, it's eternal, irrevocable, and it surpasses all comprehension, the Bible says. In this passage, let not your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. The Big Idea here today: **Notwithstanding the world is such a troubled place, we can experience the peace of Christ.**

How to Experience More Peace

Finally, how can we experience more of this peace? Three ideas, three applications. Overarching these three applications is this idea that I have talked to you about many times, an idea from business: your system is perfectly designed to produce the results you're getting. In business, this means if you're manufacturing automobiles and every third car off the assembly line has a missing front right fender, your system is perfectly designed to produce that result. We have coopted this business idea for spiritual purposes and we say that you have a belief system that is perfectly designed to produce the results that you're getting. So if you're getting a troubled heart, if you're full of fear, then you have a system that is perfectly designed to produce that result, and this is the antidote! This is the cure for the troubled heart that we are looking for this morning, the cure for the troubled heart is a system that is appropriating and experiencing the peace of Christ on a regular basis.

With that said, number one, a lifestyle of peace. I love good spy thrillers! I love good crime dramas! I love good courtroom dramas! They all have one thing in common, peace has been destroyed! And there's a protagonist who's about to restore it! But just imagine living that lifestyle yourself, a lifestyle that lacks integrity, that's always working people, that's abusing substances or whatever it is. Or a lifestyle that is chasing the buck. You're so hard after it! I get these emails all the time and I answer them all. I'm getting ready to interact with a guy who has neglected his kids. He's been chasing the buck, and neglected his kids and just reading in between the lines, it looks like it's not too late for him, which is really good! But he's been chasing the buck, he's neglected his kids, and he's been living this lifestyle. Listen to this, the price of pace is peace. If you live a lifestyle of pace, you will pay for it in a loss of your peace, that's just common sense. Jesus wants us to lead quiet lives. He said do not say things like I am going to this or that town, stay there for a year, carry on business and make money. Why, you're just a vapor, you're here for a little while and then you're gone. Instead, you ought to say if it is God's will, we live and do this or that. He says lead a quiet life, make it your business to work with your hands and lead a quiet life. So manage your pace, not to run unbridled because you're afraid of the future. Stop being

afraid of the future! Let not your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid! My peace! That's the first way to experience more of the peace of Christ.

The second way is to manage your expectations. We're done here, so turn with me now to 1 Corinthians 13:12. A lot of the troubled heart, a lot of the fear that we have is about a future that cannot be known, will not be known. But, a lot of the troubled heart, too, is about looking in the rearview mirror and not understanding what just happened to you. What in the world was that about! I was walking out of the gym this week, and at my gym you walk across the road to the parking lot. There's traffic going both ways, and two stop signs there. I usually just wave people on because they seem in a hurry, and they weigh 4,000 pounds. This week on Wednesday, a guy in pickup truck from the gym pulled up to the stop sign. I was already well into the road, so I didn't stop and turn back. He must have really been in a hurry, because I was about halfway across and he started rolling and he gassed it. He didn't hit it all the way to the floor, but he was really going! He raced by me at 15 or 20 MPH, missing me by two feet. Talk about a troubled heart! I wanted to kill the guy! But manage your expectations! I don't know what he's going through! Honestly, after wishing a pox on his children, I felt sorry for him, and I prayed for him, and here's why. 1 Corinthians 13:12, now we see a poor reflection, now we see in a glass darkly. Then we will see face to face. Now I know how, fully? No, now I know in part, but then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. You are fully known right now, but you do not know fully. The idea of managing expectations, understanding that in this world you will have trouble, and then taking heart that he has overcome the world! Lifestyle and expectations.

Turn with me to Philippians 4:6. How can we experience more peace? Look at our lifestyle, the price of peace is peace. Look at managing our expectations, we don't know fully now, we can never know fully, but take heart because he has overcome the world. Then, finally, prayer. Verse 6, do not be anxious about anything, but instead pray about everything. By prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, this vertical peace, which surpasses all comprehension, will keep your hearts and your minds in Jesus. How many of you wake up at night from time to time with a little insomnia? I do, last night. Once a week usually. There's something troubling on my mind. How do you get yourself back to sleep? One of the ways, and I practiced this last night and it frankly didn't work because I was up for about an hour and half! But pray, don't be anxious about anything, pray about everything. Bring your requests to God. The reason why? **Notwithstanding the world is such a troubled place, we can experience the peace of Christ.** Let's pray!

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, our dearest Father, we come to you humbly, Lord, and it is not considered manly to express fear, and yet fear is a dominant theme in the life of every single one of us. We all have troubled hearts from time to time, we all have troubled hearts every day, but Lord you have made this peace, this vertical peace with you, this peace that is available to us, we just have to be in contact with you and experience your peace, Lord, notwithstanding all the troubles of the world, we can experience this peace. Lord, I pray that you would help each of us. In fact, Lord, I bet there are some of us that need this as a system adjustment. We need to adjust our whole system of belief to make room for peace, because we've had such a troubled heart. Lord, help each of us to respond the way you would help us respond. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen!