

Lesson 14
John 13:36 – 14:31
HEART TROUBLE

Memory verse: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6 NIV)

Chapter 13 ended with Peter declaring his love for Jesus indirectly and he returned to the subject of Jesus' departure (v. 33; 8:21). He was unclear about "where" Jesus meant He would go. Jesus did not answer him unambiguously, probably because such an answer would have created even more serious problems for him. It was not God's will for Peter to "follow" Jesus through death into heaven then ("now"), but it would be later (21:18-19). Jesus' answer implied that Peter had asked his question so he could accompany Jesus wherever He was going. Peter's statement was an indirect expression of affection for and commitment to Jesus.

This section opens and closes with our Lord's loving admonition, "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1, 27). We are not surprised that the apostles were troubled. After all, Jesus had announced that one of them was a traitor, and then He warned Peter that he was going to deny his Lord three times. Self-confident Peter was certain that he could not only follow his Lord, but even die with Him and for Him. Alas, Peter did not know his own heart, nor do we really know our hearts, except for one thing: our hearts easily become troubled.

Peter's question was only the first of several that the disciples proceeded to ask Jesus. The questions show their bewilderment and discouragement. They should have been comforting Him in view of what lay ahead of Him (12:27; 13:21), but instead Jesus graciously proceeded to comfort them by clarifying what lay ahead of them.

Perhaps the heaviest blow of all was the realization that Jesus was going to leave them (John 13:33). Where was He going? Could they go with Him? How could they get where He was going? These were some of the perplexing questions that tumbled around in their minds and hearts and were tossed back and forth in their conversation at the table.

Thomas had voiced the disciples' continuing confusion about Jesus' destination. Apparently the "Father's house" did not clearly identify heaven to them. Without a clear understanding of the final destination ("where"), they could not be sure of the route ("the way") there. Thomas' question was a request for an unambiguous explanation of Jesus' and their destination, and how He and they would get there.

Philip asked for a clear revelation of "the Father" that would satisfy the Eleven. He apparently wanted Jesus to give them a theophany (Exod. 24:9-10; Isa. 6:1). People throughout history have desired to see God as He really is (cf. Exod. 33:18). Jesus, in His Incarnation, made that revelation of the Father more clearly, fully, and finally than anyone else ever had (1:14, 18; 12:45; cf. Heb. 1:1-2).

How did Jesus calm their troubled hearts? By giving them wonderful assurances to lay hold of, assurances that we today may claim and thus enjoy untroubled hearts. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you may claim every single one of these assurances.

Scripture Reading: John 14: 5-29

To learn in this lesson: 1) Heaven bound and know the Father 2) Privilege of prayer and know the Holy Spirit 3) Enjoy God's love and His peace.

Discussion Questions:

1) What comfort do you take when you know that you will be heaven bound and that you can know the Heavenly Father even now from Jesus' explanations to the disciples found in John 13:36 to 14:11?

2) What makes the privilege of prayer and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers so important in the midst of troubles?

3) Jesus speaks about enjoying His Father's love and His gift of peace in verses 19 to 31. How reassuring will that be for you?