

Main Idea: How do you encourage someone with a heavy heart? Jesus shows us in John 14:22-31. There He talked openly with them about the Father’s plan, and taught them that the Father’s plan involves three things: a loving relationship (22-24), living resources (25-27), and a liberating response (28-31).

- I. The Father’s plan involves a loving relationship (22-24).
 - A. We are called to love.
 1. The person who loves Jesus obeys Jesus.
 2. The person who doesn’t love Jesus doesn’t obey Jesus.
 - B. We are loved.
 1. The Father sent His Son for us.
 2. The Father loves the person who loves His Son.
 3. The Father and the Son make their home in the person who loves His Son.
- II. The Father’s plan involves living resources (25-27).
 - A. We have the Holy Spirit (25-26).
 1. He teaches us.
 2. He reminds us of what Jesus said.
 - B. We have peace (27).
 1. It comes from Jesus.
 2. It calms the troubled heart.
- III. The Father’s plan involves a liberating response (28-31).
 - A. He wants us to be glad (28).
 1. Our joy doesn’t depend on what we see.
 2. Our joy is rooted in the person we know.
 - B. He wants us to believe (29).
 - C. He wants us to embrace His will (30-31).
 1. He has something He wants the world to know.
 2. He invites us to join Him in making it known.

The Bottom Line: The Father is a generous giver.

1. Be encouraged by His gifts.
2. Share His gifts with others.

How do you put courage into the heart of a person who is anxious or fearful? You yourself may be that person. We all know those who are. So how do you encourage someone with a heavy heart?

I have good news for you. Our Savior is going to show us how this morning as we note what He did in John 14:22-31. How did the Master encourage the heavy-hearted? He spoke truth. He talked openly with His disciples about a vital subject for the discouraged of heart. What subject? The subject of *the Father’s plan*.

If a person doesn’t know the truth about the Father’s plan, that person will likely remain overwhelmed with a heavy heart. But if a person *does* know, and then acts on that knowledge, that person can experience joy and peace, regardless of the circumstances.

Of course, Jesus in the upper room has already had much to say to His followers about His Father. He’s talked with them about the Father’s house (1-7), the Father’s identity (8-14), and the Father’s gift, which is the Holy Spirit (15-21). Now He concludes chapter 14 with straightforward talk about the Father’s plan (22-31).

We could easily split this text into a two or three week study, but I want us to get the effect of the whole. So we’ll take it as a whole, in one message. In John 14:22-31, Jesus taught them that the Father’s plan involves three hope-giving realities: a loving relationship (22-24), living resources (25-27), and a liberating response (28-31).

I. The Father’s plan involves a loving relationship (22-24).

** Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

This is what the Father is after, a *relationship*, specifically, a *loving* relationship.

The section begins with a question in verse 22, “Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, ‘But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?’”¹

First of all, who was this Judas? There are seven different men named Judas mentioned in the NT. The writer John is careful to distinguish this man from Judas Iscariot, for good reasons. Remember he's already left the room to betray Jesus (13:30).

So this is the other Judas. Matthew's gospel (10:3) records his name as Thaddaeus (perhaps the name change due to what Judas Iscariot did). Luke tells us his father's name was James (6:15). That's about all we know about this Judas.

But this question reveals something very important about him. He's confused (and so were the other disciples) about the Kingdom.

“But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” That's how the NIV reads, but I'm not sure the question is *why*, so much as *how*.

“How is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” That's how the ESV renders it. It literally reads, “Sir, what hath come to pass, that to us thou art about to manifest thyself, and not to the world?”²

Why did Judas ask that? Because he's confused about what he just heard Jesus say.

Back in 13:33 Jesus told the disciples He was leaving them for a while. But He also revealed that He would not leave them without Help. “I will ask the Father,” He said in 14:16-17, “and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

That's what Judas just heard Jesus say, and it made no sense to him. *Through My Spirit, I am going to manifest Myself to you, but not to the world.*

“Lord, how are You going to do *that*? How are You going to reveal Yourself to us, but not to the world?”

Why did Judas ask that? It's because he, like nearly every other Jew, expected the Messiah to set up a visible, mighty, worldwide kingdom.

So when Judas and the rest of the Eleven first met Jesus and heard Him say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt 4:17),” they couldn't wait. They hated the cruel oppression of the Romans. They knew the OT said when the Messiah came, He would rule the world with a rod of iron. So for three years, the disciples have been waiting with anticipation mounting. At any time they just knew Jesus would stop His preaching and start swinging His Messianic sword.

So this didn't make sense to Judas. He couldn't figure out how Jesus could manifest Himself to His disciples, but not to the world. “Jesus, when You set up your kingdom, won't everybody see it?!”

Of course, what Judas failed to see was that before Jesus would put on His crown, which He certainly will one day (and for all to see!), He would first take up His cross. And by His cross He would establish the loving relationship that He has in mind as He responds to Judas in verses 23-24.

“Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.’”

¹ This isn't the first question either. In the upper room discourse Jesus deals with one question after another. First, Peter in 13:6. Then John in 13:25. Then Peter again in 13:36. Then Thomas in 14:5. Then Philip in 14:8. And now Judas.

² The Young's Literal

Judas, your heart is anxious because you're not thinking rightly about My kingdom. You want the big show now, but it's not time yet. It's time for something else, and that's why I've come. Not to rule the world, but to establish a loving relationship with you, My followers.

My friend, if you are Jesus' follower, He's talking to you, too. He's telling us two things about this loving relationship He came to establish. The first is something we're called to do. The second is something that's done for us which makes it possible. First...

A. We are called to love. "If anyone loves me," says Jesus. This is the fundamental mark of a follower of Jesus. He or she *loves Jesus*. Jesus did not come to establish a religion, but rather, create a relationship with people who *love Him*.

And how can you tell if a person truly loves Jesus? It's not complicated.

1. *The person who loves Jesus obeys Jesus.* That's what Jesus says three times in this text. In verse 15, "If you **love** me, you will obey what I command." In verse 21, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who **loves** me." And now again in verse 23, "If anyone **loves** me, he will obey my teaching."

It's not what a person claims, but what a person does. But not *does* in a general sense, but does specifically with Jesus' commands. The person who loves Jesus obeys *Jesus*.

We looked at His commands last time. There are about fifty or so recorded in the four gospels, such as... *Repent. Love one another. Love your enemies. Believe Me. Abide in Me. Do not worry. Do to others what you would have them do to you. Go and make disciples.*

So a person who loves Jesus governs his life by what Jesus says. In contrast...

2. *The person who doesn't love Jesus doesn't obey Jesus.* "He who does *not* love me," says Jesus next in verse 24, "will *not* obey my teaching." Again, it's not what he claims, but what he does, or in this case, *doesn't* do. The person who doesn't love Jesus *doesn't obey* Jesus. And he doesn't obey because He has no relationship with.

Fellow followers of Jesus, this goes for us too. We're called to love. To love our Savior first and most, but to love each other too, even to love our enemies in ways that reflect our Savior.

But there's another side to this relationship. We're called to love, yes. But there's an amazing benefit that comes into the life of the person who loves. Jesus says...

B. We are loved. By whom? "My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our home with him..." Amazing. We who love Jesus experience the amazing love of the Father and the Son. And just like our love is demonstrated by action, so is divine love for us. Notice the sequence of the Father's love. Three things happen.

1. *The Father sent His Son for us.* That's the end of verse 24, "The Father who sent me." Why did Jesus come into the world? The Father sent Him. God so loved the world that He *gave* His only Son.

The order is significant here. We don't earn His love by our love. We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:10). It's by receiving His love that we're enabled to love. And yet, notice His grace in this.

2. *The Father loves the person who loves His Son.* "My Father will love him," says Jesus. When the Father sees a person love His Son, He manifests His own love for that person. And what's the tangible result?

3. *The Father and the Son make their home in the person who loves His Son.* Jesus says, "We will come to him and make our home with him." Literally, our *mansion*. Mansion? That's right. The word "home" in verse 23 is the same Greek word translated "mansion" in the KJV of verse 2. There Jesus said He was leaving to prepare a "dwelling

place” for His people. Now get this. During this time that He's gone, He's not really gone! The Father and the Son are actually making their dwelling within the true believer.

Keep in mind, Jesus is answering Judas's question. *Why you and not the world? Because My kingdom is for you, Judas, and for all who love Me. The world can't see it, for it doesn't know Me. But you do.*

And may I ask, my friend, *do you?* The Father's plan involves a loving relationship. Does it include you? Do you love Jesus? Have you responded to His love for you, and His Father's, and are you enjoying their abiding presence in you, which is the expression of their unmatched love?

How do you encourage someone with a heavy heart? Do what Jesus did. Let them know about the Father's plan, which involves this first reality, a loving relationship.

II. The Father's plan involves living resources (25-27).

Jesus mentions two, and they're vital for life in this age. If we're in the living relationship the Father planned, then we possess these two resources.

A. We have the Holy Spirit (25-26). Notice verse 25, "All this I have spoken while still with you." Jesus is preparing His men for the time of His absence. That's why He just told them what we've been considering. But He's about to leave. Then what?

Verse 26, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

Why does Jesus call the Counselor the "Holy" Spirit? The word "holy" means "unique, one of a kind, transcendent." It's what God is. He is unique. It's what the Holy Spirit is. He is God. He is one of a kind.

Yet there's another reason He is called the "Holy" Spirit. It has to do with His work. Granted, just like Jesus, the Holy Spirit is completely sinless. Yet His title means more than that. He is holy, and His aim is to make others holy. Namely us.

That's what *sanctify* means, "to set apart, to make holy." And that's what the Holy Spirit does. His objective is to set us apart from sin, and make us holy. He does so, according to Jesus, in two ways.

1. *He teaches us.* Teaches us what? "He will teach you all things," says Jesus.

What does that mean? It doesn't mean all things without exception. Jesus is not saying the Holy Spirit gives us an exhaustive knowledge of computer science, or cell biology, or renaissance literature (so I recommend you do some studying before taking your finals, young people!).

Jesus qualifies "all things" at the end of verse 26, by saying, "everything I have said to you." That's what the Spirit teaches. The Holy Spirit is our Resident Teacher. Jesus taught the Twelve, and now the Spirit continues this teaching ministry.

But He has a second ministry activity.

2. *He reminds us of what Jesus said.* "And will remind you of everything I have said to you." So the Spirit teaches and reminds.

However, let's be careful at this point. Remember, Jesus is talking to the apostles here. He personally selected these men and gave them access to direct revelation. So the Holy Spirit spoke directly to them (as in the case of Peter in Acts 10:19). The Spirit reminded them of Jesus' words so they could pass them on to the world.

Does He do that with us? No, not in the same way. We are not apostles. We don't receive direct revelation. In fact, we don't need it. Why not? We have something the apostles didn't. We have the completed Scriptures, all 66 books.

So does the Spirit teach us and remind us of Jesus' words? Yes. How? As we read the Scriptures. Which is an important reason to read the Scriptures, right? The Spirit doesn't remind us of what we have not first learned.

But there's more. A second resource...

B. We have peace (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."

What does a person with a troubled heart need? What Jesus gives, *peace*.

The word 'peace' that Jesus used here was a very special word, a common Hebrew word used when two people greeted or said good-bye to each other. *Shalom*. As Americans, we think of shalom as peace, but our view of peace is much narrower than the Hebrew view. To us, peace means the absence of conflict. We think of peace as tranquility. Peace is kind of a passive word.

However, for the Hebrew, which included Jesus, shalom was much more than staying out of trouble. In fact, when a Hebrew said Shalom to another person, he wasn't just extending a generic greeting. Shalom means "wholeness, completeness, and well-being."

Carson points out that there are three dimensions involved in this well-being.³ The first is vertical. To have shalom is to have peace with God (Num 6:26 "The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee shalom/peace."). Paul made it clear in Romans 5:1, that if you have been justified through Jesus Christ, you have shalom (peace) with God. This is the most fundamental dimension of peace. If you don't have peace with God, you won't have it in the next two dimensions either.

We know this. It's why, when a person is on his death bed, there's no more encouraging sentence than to hear, "He's at peace with God."

The second dimension of peace is horizontal. To have shalom is to have peace with men. Friends, we are born into this world as sinners, and our sin makes God our enemy. But our sin also makes other people our enemies. Why can't people with different ethnic backgrounds get along? Why do marriages crumble? Why do neighboring countries so often hate each other? Because sin alienates us. Our sin robs us of peace with each other. Oh, how our world needs shalom!

The third dimension of peace is personal, that is, peace within ourselves. That's primarily what Jesus is offering to His disciples in John 14. He knew they'd face trouble. He didn't offer them an escape from trouble, but peace within the trouble.

Think about something. Warren Wiersbe remarks, "Unsaved people enjoy peace when there is an absence of trouble; Christians enjoy peace in spite of trials."⁴ What makes the difference? In the world, peace is something you hope for or work for; but to the Christian, peace is God's gift.

You say, "How can I have peace?" According to verse 27...

1. *It comes from Jesus.* "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you."

Passion week is coming. Did you ever stop to think who the only CALM person on Good Friday was? It certainly wasn't Pilate—he was a nervous wreck. No way for the religious leaders—they were riled up into a frenzy. Scratch Judas—he hung himself. Without a doubt, the disciples weren't calm—they crumbled. Who was the only person who exhibited peace that day? Only Jesus. He went to the cross in complete control, and what He demonstrated, He offers us. Peace.

What's the effect of His peace?

2. *It calms the troubled heart.* "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." What's wrong with having a troubled heart? You say, "It's bad for me. It causes ulcers and high blood pressure." That may be true, but that's secondary. When Jesus' followers exhibit troubled hearts, it's bad *for Jesus*. Why? It sends the wrong message to the world about Him.

³ Carson, 75.

⁴ Wiersbe, p. 354.

But on the other hand, when His people face hard situations, and exhibit *peace* in the turmoil, then the world sees something it cannot deny. We have a Savior who makes a difference, for He gives peace.⁵

In the Father's plan, we enjoy a loving relationship—we love, and we are loved. We also experience living resources—we have the Holy Spirit, and we have peace. According to Jesus this leads to a third reality.

III. The Father's plan involves a liberating response (28-31).

There's something the Father wants to see in us. Jesus identifies three important actions in verses 28-31. This is the liberating response our Father intends. It's why He brought us into the loving relationship, and gave us the living resources.

A. He wants us to be glad (28). Notice what Jesus told the apostles in verse 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."

What did Jesus say He wanted from His men? What's the tangible evidence of their love for Him? *You would be GLAD.* Please notice that...

1. *Our joy doesn't depend on what we see.* What they could *see* disturbed them. They saw a Savior who said He was leaving. We too see disturbing things at times. But our joy isn't dependent upon what we see. Rather...

2. *Our joy is rooted in the person we know.* And specifically, in what the person we know *says*.

"You have heard me *say*. And, "If you loved me, you would be glad."

At first glance, this might not make sense to us? Why should the fact that Jesus said He is going to His Father be cause for a glad response? But think about it. When Jesus told His disciples, "I'm going to the Father," what did He have in mind? He had in mind the journey of redemption. He's been on a journey ever since He left heaven, and now He's just about finished. His return trip to the Father will take Him to the Cross, then to the Tomb, and then to a hill outside of Jerusalem where He will ascend to His Father.

You see, when Jesus said, "You should be glad because I'm returning to the Father," it was the completion of His redemptive work He had in mind. He could have stated it in negative terms, "If I don't return to the Father, if I stay, your greatest need will remain unmet! So if you really loved Me, you would rejoice because I'm going to My Father."

Friends, when we ponder what Jesus did, He wants us to be glad. He was. "Who for the *joy* set before Him, endured the cross (Heb 12:1-2)."

But why should returning to the Father be cause for joy? Jesus gives a peculiar answer to that question, when He says, "for the Father is greater than I."

In what sense is God the Father greater than Jesus? Jehovah's Witnesses cite this verse as a proof-text to assert that Jesus is not God, that He is less than God, that God is on a greater plane than Jesus. But is that what Jesus meant? Obviously not. Throughout John's gospel Jesus has claimed equality with the Father, most recently in verse 9.

So what does He mean? In what sense is the Father greater?

When the Son of God became a man in the person of Jesus, He laid aside His glory, right? (see Phil 2:5-8). He humbled Himself, and laid aside, not just the honor He deserves, but the expression of His glory. God possesses unapproachable splendor and glory, but when the Son became a man, He laid the full demonstration of that glory aside.

⁵ What was the first thing Jesus told His disciples after the Resurrection? Take a look at John 20:19, 21, 26, "Peace be unto you." Was Jesus merely being polite? No! He's saying, "Remember what I promised you in the Upper Room? It's yours now. My work on the cross is finished. Shalom be unto you!"

In that sense, His Father was now 'greater' than Him. Jesus' statement has to do with authority, not being or worth.

Suppose I said, "The president of the USA is greater than I." Would you take that to mean that he is more of a human being than I am? No. You would know that I meant that the president is greater in authority, and position, and rank.

From eternity past, Jesus enjoyed equal glory with the Father. But during His 33 year incarnation, He gave up the expression of His glory, and He did it willingly, to save us. Yet He anticipated the day when His glory would be restored, and here He talks openly about it (and even more openly in John 17:3-5).

Now, with that in mind, listen again to His statement in verse 28, "If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I." Do you see what He's saying? "If you really loved Me, you would want what is best FOR ME. You'd be glad that I'm going back to My Father, for there My glory will be restored. And that will be best *for you, too*. For it's in this trip back home, via the cross and the tomb, that I'm going to deliver you from your bondage to sin and death, so you can come home too!"

So He wants us to be glad. But that's not all. Secondly...

B. He wants us to believe (29). Listen to Jesus in verse 29, "I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe."

Believe. That's the appropriate response to Jesus. "But these are written that you may *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that *by believing* you may have life in his name (John 20:31)."

And keep in mind, Jesus is saying this to men who've already believed in Him. But saving belief isn't a mere past tense action, but a present tense way of life.

By the way, what's the mark of a mature Christian? Somebody that knows a lot of Bible verses? A person who is super-involved in Christian service? An individual that gives big sums of money to the church. Not necessarily. A mature Christian, according to Jesus in verse 29, is a person who lives with a confident trust in what He says. *I have told you...so you will believe.*

Be glad. Believe. And thirdly...

C. He wants us to embrace His will (30-31). Here's how Jesus finishes in verses 30-31, "I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave."

Beloved, do you see the omniscience of Jesus in those words? At the very moment He is speaking to the Eleven in the Upper Room, He sees the mob that's assembling on the other side of the city, the Roman soldiers, the temple police, the Sanhedrin members, and Judas. Jesus could see them all. And He could see what they're going to do. He knows the mob will soon arrive in the garden with lanterns, and torches, and swords, and that they would hunt Him down as if He were a dangerous criminal.

And worst of all, Jesus sees the master-mind behind this deadly plot, Satan himself. He knows that Satan has entered Judas, that Satan controls the jealous priests. He knows that the major spiritual conflict of all ages is now unfolding. So He says, "The prince of this world is coming."

Of course, Satan thought he won this battle. When he saw the spikes go through Jesus' hands, when he heard the crucified Messiah breathe His last breath, Satan thought he had won. He was so sure that Jesus' death was a victory for him.

But He was wrong. In fact, Jesus made that clear before He ever left the upper room when He said, "He has no hold on Me."

Again, we could spend a whole message unpacking this, but for today I want us to focus on something else, two things about Jesus.

1. *He has something He wants the world to know.* He says in verse 31, “The world must learn.” Stop there. Jesus wants the world to learn something. Learn what? What is it that Jesus wants the world to know? “That I love the Father and that I do exactly what My Father has commanded Me.”

Friends, why did Jesus die for us? You say, “He died for us because He loved us, right?” Yes, but there’s a greater reason. I would never want to diminish Jesus’ love for us, which is beyond our comprehension. But there is a greater love (if love can be measured) that took Jesus to the cross. It was His love for His Father, and it’s that love that He wants the world to know.

“The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.”

Jesus chose to die, not only because He loved us, breathtaking as that thought is, but because He loved the Father, and desired above all else to do His Father’s will.⁶

Carson is right when he says, “We diminish the grandeur of the plan of redemption when we neglect this divine element. It is a mark of our egocentricity...”⁷

Again, I would never want to minimize Christ’s love for us, for the Cross certainly reveals that Jesus loves us. But in an even greater way, the Cross reveals the profound love that the Son of God has for His Father. He came to do the Father’s will, to obey the Father’s command, even though it meant infinite suffering.

And notice the final words of the chapter. Jesus says, “Come now; let us leave.”

Why are those words inserted? It shows a break, so apparently Jesus delivered the next part of the address, chapter 15, while on the move from the upper room to the garden. But why does John want us to know that Jesus, at this point, said, “Come now; let us leave.”

I think the answer is this. He who wants us to be glad, and to believe, also wants us to embrace His will. He is embracing His Father’s will, and heading right into the teeth of the mob. But He also wants His followers to join Him. Yes...

2. *He invites us to join Him in making it known.* These men will be the witnesses that will eventually tell the world what He did. *Come. Let us leave.*

How do you encourage someone with a troubled heart? Let them know about the Father’s plan. The Father’s plan involves a loving relationship, living resources, and a liberating response—be glad, believe, embrace His will.

As we finish, I want to make an observation about God the Father. You can’t miss it from John 14.

The Bottom Line: The Father is a generous giver.

And I mean *generous*. From the Father’s house, to the Father’s gift of His Son, to the Father’s gift of the Spirit, and everything in between, the Father is generous!

1. *Be encouraged by His gifts.* Let them put courage into your heart, my troubled friend. Receive His gifts, enjoy them, be transformed by them. But don’t hoard them. Rather...

2. *Share His gifts with others.*

⁶ Carson, p. 84.

⁷ Carson, p. 84.