

# In the Shadow of the Cross - Therapy for Troubled Hearts

by J. Glyn Owen

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God and Jesus as the solution to troubled hearts amidst life's challenges.*

**Duration:** 1:11:30

**Scripture:** John 13:36, John 14:1, John 14:27, John 15:8

**Topics:** "Cross"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of trusting in God and Jesus, and not letting our hearts be troubled or filled with worry. Jesus is portrayed as the perfect teacher and Savior who provides for our needs and feeds our faith with promises. The preacher encourages listeners to take these teachings to heart and live by them, in order to overcome fears and troubles. The problem Jesus is addressing is the common issue of heart trouble, which the preacher describes as the most prevalent problem in the world. The sermon also mentions the importance of trusting in Jesus despite the opposition and persecution he faced, and highlights the principles underlying his approach to addressing the problem.

---

## Transcript

I feel very much in need of the grace of God as we come to such a precious passage of scripture as the one that is before us tonight. And I think perhaps we ought to pause at this moment and just tell the Lord how much we need the illumination for which Lois prayed in her song. Let's tell him again, shall we? Holy Spirit of God, we do need your ministry among us now.

We always need your help when we come to your word. But when we come to such a gigantic passage as this, so full of precious truth, complex truth upon which your saints have fed over the years, we in this rather superficial age are in special need of your grace that we should see what we need to see here. Understand what we need to understand, that we may experience what we should experience, that we may live as we ought to live.

Hear our cry to the glory of your own name and to the good of our souls and the welfare of others outside this church. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Therapy for Troubled Hearts Now, we're going to look at this passage tonight under a twofold division of the material. Without any introduction whatsoever, we shall note first of all the problem that Jesus is here addressing, and then we are going to look at the principles underlying his approach to that problem. So you know the way we're going, and we can pray for one another as we get on the move.

First of all, let us look at the problem that Jesus is here addressing. Do not let your hearts be troubled. These same words, you will notice, come also toward the end of the chapter, verse 28.

Do not let, I'm sorry, verse 27. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. The late Bishop J.C. Ryle describes this heart trouble which Jesus addresses in this context in these words.

Heart trouble, he says, is the commonest thing in the world. No rank or class or condition is exempt from it. No bars or bolts or lock can keep it out.

Partly from inward causes and partly from outward, partly from the body and partly from the mind, partly from what we love and partly from what we fear, the journey of life is full of troubles. Even the best of Christians have many bitter cups to drink between grace and glory. Even the holiest saints find the world a veil of tears.

The trouble of the human heart, the troubled heart, the heart and its fears and its woes. Now, in this particular passage, we have some indication, first of all, of the source of the heart trouble that the disciples were specifically suffering from at this time. And I think we ought to take a few moments to look at them, or to look at it, though it is a complex one.

And there are a number of possible sources for the fear and the dread that they experienced in their hearts. In the first place, we notice the recent announcement of Jesus' imminent death. This was probably the first thing that really shook them out of their complacency and kind of brought them up with a joke.

Oh, they have been told about it for some time now. Taking our guide from John's gospel, for example, a way back in chapter three, Jesus said that he was going to die. He indicated that just as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

And that was right at the very beginning of his ministry. In one way or another, our Lord has indicated this many times over, but it never got home. They were so absorbed with him and his teaching and his ministry and his person that thus the thought of his dying and especially being betrayed and being crucified, this was something they couldn't countenance.

But in John chapter 12 and verse 23, Jesus told them, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. And he goes on to make it quite clear that by being glorified, he meant dying. In verse 24, he says this, I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a single seed.

But if it dies, it produces many seed. Go on again to the end of the chapter and verses 31 and 33 of chapter 12. And you will see how Jesus makes it still clearer that this is what he has in mind.

Now he says it's the time for judgment on this world. Now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to myself.

And John goes on to say, he said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. So then the first source of the heart trouble of the disciples was this. Jesus has announced his imminent death.

The hour has come. Secondly, there was the more recent announcement concerning Judas and the concerning Peter that we were considering last Lord's day evening. Evidently this shattered them.

We saw something, I trust we caught something of the atmosphere in that upper room. And Jesus broke into the situation and said, he who shares my bread does lifted up his heel against me. John 13 verses verse 18.

He who has been eating at my table, he who's has been my familiar friend. And then in verse 21, he makes it still clearer. I tell you the truth.

One of you is going to betray me. Now this was a shattering blow. You imagine all of us here tonight as if we knew each other and had lived each other for three years or so.

Every one of us, we knew each other by name, knew each other rather intimately. And then Jesus was to stand before us and say, now one of you, one of you, you here, one of you is going to betray me. It would be a most shattering experience.

We couldn't believe that anyone was going to do it. We would look at one another and we would probably do exactly as the disciples didn't look inwardly at ourselves. Can I do this? Can any one of us do this? It was a most disconcerting, a most unnerving moment, a most shattering moment.

And yet I don't know whether it was any worse than what was to come. The announcement concerning Peter. Peter was quite put out because Jesus said to him, I'm going somewhere and you can't follow me just now.

Arrogant that he was and full of conceit and a sense of his own capacity and his own ability to do things. Why can't I follow you now? You notice he speaks in the singular, nevermind about the others for the moment. Arrogant Simon Peter says, why can't I follow you now? I can do it.

Whatever about these, that's the implication. I can follow you. And Jesus answered him, look man.

He says, will you really lay down my life for me? As you say, you're prepared to do. I tell you the truth. He says to Peter before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.

What? Imagine yourself sitting there. Imagine yourself being one of the disciples. And you're hearing someone say this about Simon Peter, who in Caesarea Philippi, not all that long ago said, this is the Christ, the son of the living God.

And here's the same person turning around and telling him now, look, man, three times you're going to disown me. You can hardly believe that the, uh, prognosis, the, the, the, the prophecy of our Lord Jesus is true is accurate. Or can you then following that there was the announcement concerning our Lord's pending departure and the disability of any of them to follow him.

The Reverend Eric Alexander, who has spoken from this pulpit and incidentally will be here again, God willing on the last Saturday in April, when we are hosting a conference of Philadelphia, hosting the Philadelphia conference on reformed theology here for a Friday evening and, uh, the whole day, Saturday concluding on the Lord's day morning. And among the speakers will be Eric Alexander. Well, now that was

not meant to be a commercial.

Uh, but the Reverend Eric Alexander in speaking on this passage in expounding it, he says that we seek quite clearly in the background here, the three classical enemies of the saints. And indeed we do in chapter 15 and verse eight, we see a reference to the hostility of the world. And the disciples were aware of that, the world that hated the savior and the savior said, the world hates me.

And because it hates me, it's going to hate you. So don't be, don't, don't be, don't be taken aback. He says it's inevitable.

Then there is the flesh and its weakness. He's referring to from verse, the passage beginning with verse 36 in chapter 13 about Peter, right on to, to the first verse of chapter one, the flesh and its weakness. And then lastly, in, in, uh, verse 13, verse 30 of chapter 14.

And again, in verse five of chapter 17, there is reference to the devil. So you have the world and you have the flesh and you have the devil. Now you bring all these things together and you have a very, very, uh, full picture, of the source of the disciples heart trouble.

It's no wonder they were, they were afraid. It's no wonder they were bewildered and troubled and sore and perplexed. They didn't know what to think.

They didn't know what to do. They didn't know where to turn. Now the symptoms of their heart complaint were many.

First of all, they were perplexed at the announcement that anyone would betray Jesus. Secondly, they were uncertain as to numerous issues that arose with the announcement of Jesus' betrayal and his pending, Jesus' removal and his, his, his intended departure. You notice the multitude of questions that seemed to burst to the fore the moment Jesus has said that he's going away.

Peter has a question in chapter 13, verse 36, Lord, where are you going? Thomas has a question in chapter 14 and verse five, Lord, we don't know where you're going and how can we know the way? Philip has a question in verse eight of chapter 14, Lord, show us the father and it will suffice us. Judas, not Iscariot has a question in verse 22 of chapter 14, but Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world? You notice all their latent questions now come out to the fore. They got so many things to ask as if something like this has happened.

Jesus says, I'm leaving. They realize it. He's serious.

And they realize that this is the last opportunity possibly to ask him the questions that have long been within their hearts, so out it comes. Symptoms of their sorrow. But then there was that evident grief that is mentioned in chapter 16, verses five and six.

Now I am going to him who sent me, says Jesus, yet none of you asks me, where are you going? Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. Sorrow says the King James version has filled your heart. You see if they had pinned their hopes upon their Lord exclusively, there was no one else in their lives at this moment, Jesus and Jesus only.

And not only that they had pinned their hopes upon his physical presence as much as upon his spiritual ministry. So that the notion of his being taken out of their lives physically was something they simply could

not contend with. Something they simply couldn't bargain with.

They did not at first even hear the promises that Jesus made. I'm not going to pursue that thought tonight, but when Jesus was talking, and we shall see when we come to those studies in chapters 15 and 16, when Jesus was impressing upon them the fact that he was going away, he was at the same time telling them of the provision that he had made for them. But you notice when you read those chapters, they hardly hear the promises.

Because they're so full of fear and of sorrow because he's going away. We can be so taken up with our own sorrow and sometimes so sorry for ourselves that we really don't hear the promises of God. And though he's thundering in our ears, I've made provision for you, I'm going to do this for you, and I'm going to do that for you, we don't hear those things.

Because we're just thinking of ourselves and our problems and we don't think they can be resolved. The disciples were in that situation. Jesus addressed them with these problems then, not as an academician talking about theory, but I want you to notice that Jesus addresses them as one who is himself acquainted with that self-same kind of heart trouble, even a more devastating heart trouble than they could possibly know.

He, the man of sorrows, knew a kind and a quality of sorrow, a measure of sorrow and a depth of sorrow, a dimension of sorrow that they simply could not know. And it's most significant that three times in these very same chapters, we are told that our Lord was troubled in spirit and in heart. The same words exactly as we have in chapter 14 and verse 1, let not your heart be troubled.

But Jesus was troubled in heart three times. He tells us himself. For example, he tells us that at the graveside of Lazarus, chapter 11 and verse 33.

Then we read that he was exactly in that condition in, uh, in chapter 12 and verse 27, at the prospect of the hour having arrived. And then we saw that last Lord's day evening. He sensed this terrible commotion in his heart, this deep emotion at the imminent departure of Judas as the one who was going to betray him.

Chapter 13 and verse 21. But now notice though Jesus had sorrow that was far, far deeper than theirs. He was able to overcome it.

He was able to master it. He was able so to master it and to forget about himself in order to minister to others. And here he is completely forgetful at this point of his own deep sorrows and of the cross that was coming tomorrow and of the death he was going to die tomorrow in order to minister to the needs of his fearful and timid disciples.

Now that all about the problem Jesus addresses here about the source of the problem and the symptoms. Now let's come to what I want to stay with for a little time. Some principles underlying Jesus response and Jesus reaction to this problem, the way he deals with it.

There are three main things I would like us to notice. The first is this. Jesus taught that the therapy for troubled hearts lay in an ongoing faith in God and in himself.

Let not your heart be troubled. On what then? What's the answer to it? Believe in God or trust in God. Trust also in me.

That's the answer. So first of all, in a nutshell, Jesus puts it, the therapy, the answer for this heart condition is found in a positive and an ongoing confidence in God, the father and God, the son. Trust on in God.

Keep on trusting in me. Now let's look at this. First, will you notice Jesus told them not to let their hearts be troubled.

Now, this means you'll see that Jesus is dealing with them as believing men. You can't tell an unbeliever not to let his heart be troubled. It's quite impossible.

It's like telling a tombstone not to, not telling a tombstone to listen or to talk or something. You know, an unbeliever can't really stop being troubled, but our Lord Jesus Christ is dealing with and is addressing his disciples here as men who have come to know the source of grace in Christ. And now he's telling them in effect, look, he says, there's no need for you to be troubled.

Stop it. Now, Mark you, there's a world of difference between this and the kind of cheap rhetoric, superficial counsel in the old song that some of you may have sung, pack up your troubles in your own kit bag and smile, smile, smile. That's very cheap.

That's not what Jesus is saying. He's not telling them to forget about their troubles. He's telling them there's no need for you to worry.

There's no need for you to have this heart trouble because provision has been made and you know me and you know my father, just keep on trusting me and trusting my father. The answer is there. Jesus' command to refrain from being troubled in heart then was actually based on the fact that there was simply no need for such commotion.

He, the son of God who had come into the world to accomplish the father's will and it's his people's redemption had done or was about to do everything that needed to be done to cope for these disciples in every exigency between them and the glory. So there was no need for them to trouble. Now, of course, they couldn't see it quite like that because they were submerged in sorrow.

But we can see it from that vantage point. We have the privilege of looking back upon it now from the vantage point of history and we can see why Jesus was saying this. Don't let your hearts be troubled.

How could he say that for this reason? He'd made full provision for them. And if he hadn't made full provision at that point, he was going to the cross. He was going to die.

He was going to rise again. He was going to ascend to the father. He was going to send forth the Holy Spirit.

He was going to do everything necessary. He had covenanted to do it and his word was as good as his bond. That's the point you see.

Don't let your heart be troubled. Because the provision is adequate. It's in the covenant.

It's in the promise. It's in the making. And how much more, how much more relevant this is to us tonight.

When Jesus comes to us and tells us, let not your heart be troubled, there's nothing more that he needs to do. Objectively, he's done everything to take away our troubles and our fears. He's died.

He's risen again. He's already ascended. He sits at the father's right hand.

He makes intercession for us. And he has sent forth the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit has given us the word and the Holy Spirit has given us the church and the fellowship of the saints. There is nothing we need outside of the provisions that God has already given us.

Other than trust and obey. Jesus told them not to let their heart be troubled. Don't let it.

As if to say, there may be a tendency in all our hearts to worry about things. Don't let it, he says. And if you're a Christian tonight, and if you're in Christ tonight, this is the picture I would like to give you.

If you're in Christ, in Christ, and you share in his wealth and you share in his life and you share in his prospects, let not your hearts be troubled. It's unnecessary. But now let's move on.

In place of perpetuating such a condition of heart, Jesus bade them to go on trusting God and trusting himself. Simply trusting every day. That's exactly it.

Trusting in a narrow way or a thorny way. Trust in God, trust also in me. Now, we have the same Greek word used concerning our duty of trusting God and of trusting Jesus.

The same word exactly, the same tense and the same mood. The King James is a little bit misleading when it says, you do believe in God, believe also in me. No, we can't change them.

It's the same mood for both. Either it says, you do believe in God and you do believe in me. Or it says, you should believe more in God or continue to believe in God and you should continue to believe also in me.

It's exactly the same for both. And probably it's the imperative mood that we have here and not the indicative. Meaning this, go on trusting in God and go on trusting in me.

This is the answer. Brothers and sisters, you've heard this a thousand times before. So have I. But don't we forget it? Doesn't it make you feel as if there is a devil who, like the birds of the air, comes to get the seed that has been sown on our hearts.

And we believe it's necessary to worry. And now we wouldn't put it quite like that, but we act like that. Notice that despite his full knowledge of what was coming his way, Jesus had no doubt as to his being the son of God and as to his ultimate victory.

So much so that he's able to tell his disciples, now look here, trust me, believe in me, rest in me, depend upon me, just as you depend upon God. Tomorrow you'll wonder what's going to happen. I'm telling you, trust me.

And you'll hear them cry, crucify him, crucify him. We will not have this man to reign over us. You'll wonder what's happening.

You'll think the whole world's going mad. Well, that may be true, but trust in me. I'm not going mad.

There is no knowing of God, the father in a saving way, save through Jesus Christ his son. We noticed that this morning. And you notice how Jesus brings the two things together as belonging together here again.

Likewise, believe in the father, believe in me in, in, in verse 20 of chapter 13. Jesus said something that corresponds to this. Whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.

When you accept Jesus, you accept the father. When you reject Jesus, you reject the father. Now he says, as if this were one act with two dimensions to it, believe in God, believe also in me.

The moment you believe in the one, you believe in the other. You can't have the one without the other. Keep on trusting the one and the other.

I am my father. Trust me, trust my father. The therapy for troubled hearts was an ongoing faith in God as revealed in Christ.

Brothers and sisters, we need to pause here. How often do you check out the measure of your trust? There's a lot of influenza around these days and people take their temperatures to see whether they've got a fever. I've seen so many people do that recently.

Secondly, do you take your spiritual temperature every now and again? It's a good thing to do it from time to time. Don't do it every day or three or four times a day. Certainly not.

But there are times when one needs to do it. How many of my troubles are due to the fact that I simply do not trust? It's easier to talk than to trust. Secondly, Jesus encouraged and inspired such ongoing faith in God and in himself by the promises he immediately and, dare I say now, though we can't deal with them, later also made.

You see, Jesus tells them there's no need for you to doubt. There's no need for you to worry. Believe in God.

Believe also in me. And then you see the perfect teaching. And the perfect Savior he is and was.

He goes on then to feed the flame of faith. It's just like him. He's telling us to do something and then he makes the provision for that which he demands.

Believe in God. Trust in God. Trust in me.

And you know what he does? Just look at it. He feeds them with promises. He tells them what he's going to do and he tells them what is going to happen.

And what he's doing is feeding their faith with facts. Oh, may the Spirit of God bring this home to every one of our hearts tonight. If we've never seen this before, please God, let me, let us see it tonight.

Now look at the first thing he says. There's no need for you to worry. Well, no need to worry.

No, he says. I'm going to my father's house. I'm going home and I'm going to my father's house.

And I want to tell you, he says, first of all, there's plenty of room there. So that when the time comes for you to come home, you don't need to worry. There's plenty of room in my father's house.

I'm going to leave you temporarily. But when the time comes for your arrival, I've told you, you can't follow me just now. But when the time comes for your arrival, I want you to get this right out of your minds.

There's tons of room, plenty of room, more than adequate in my father's house. There are many abiding places, not mansions. It's not mansions, abiding places.

Now, Jesus earlier, you remember, had spoken of the temple, the earthly temple, the Jerusalem temple as his father's house. Do you remember that? When he purged the temple in John chapter 2 at the beginning of his ministry, he did it later at the end of his ministry, it would appear. But in chapter 2 of John and verse 16, he says, how dare you turn my father's house into a market.

That's the New International Version reference, and I think it's pretty good. Turning his father's house into a marketplace. That's exactly what they were doing.

Now, why did he speak of the temple as his father's house? Well, it was the place where God's glory dwelled. And it was the place where God and man met, around the mercy seat. But that father's house there in Jerusalem was patterned after the heavenly reality.

The reality is in heaven, the real father's house. Not in the heavens of the sky or of the birds, but as Jesus says, in heaven. I came from heaven, he says, the place of God's dwelling.

Heaven is the father's house in truth, after whose design the earthly structure was made. But it has many more rooms than the earthly structure. You can go into the Jerusalem temple, or you could go into the Jerusalem temple of that day, and even though it was a magnificent place, it didn't have room for many people to live there.

You see, what Jesus is telling them is this, that the home in the sky, the home in the heavens, the home in the heaven of the heavens, is a massive place, and there's plenty of room there for all the people of God. He assures his worried followers, therefore, that there's no need for them to get worried about all that. He's going ahead of them, but in due course he'll come back, and there'll be room there awaiting them.

But now he goes beyond that, follow the next step. Jesus says that he is personally going there in order to prepare a place for them. I am going there, he says, to prepare a place for you.

His terminus, his destiny, is the father's house, his home, his father's home, and his pledged purpose is going there in order to prepare a place for his own. So then, according to Jesus, I don't know what you've been reading recently, but according to Jesus, heaven is a place, not simply a state, but a place, a location, a real location. Jesus doesn't give any details about heaven in this context, save that it was his father's house, his father's house, and therefore his home.

He'd come from there, and he's going back there. It's a location. Elsewhere he added such thoughts as these, that he himself had come down from heaven, John 6, 38.

He taught his disciples to pray to the father, our father who art in heaven, and if we are really praying as Jesus taught us to pray, we are focusing our minds upon heaven every time we do so, because our father is elevated above the earth. The earth is his footstool. The heaven is the seat of his glory, his real glory.

And Dr. James Boyce has a very helpful passage on this in one of his books. He refers to two problems that people have with a passage like this, stating that heaven is a place. Now there are more than two problems, but I think Dr. James Boyce, very helpfully, and incidentally, he will be with Eric Alexander on that last weekend in April.

I'm really having another moment in tonight, aren't I? And they remember these things usually. Now, he mentions two problems concerning heaven as a place that really worry people. Some people are worried about it, and the way in which the problem comes to them is this.

They say God is spirit. Not a spirit, but spirit. And a spirit has no flesh and bones.

God is an incorporeal being. He hasn't a body like you and I. And therefore, God is everywhere. How then can you think of God being located in a place? Yes, says Dr. James Boyce, but that's not all the truth.

That is true. God is spirit. But Jesus, who has ascended into the Father's presence, does have a body.

A glorified body, but a body. And he said that he was going into the Father's presence, and he was going into the Father's house in his glorified body. And the angels have bodies, so we read in Scripture.

And we are going to be with Jesus, so we read in Scripture. So therefore, there must be a place, a location. But the second reason why some people have difficulty in thinking about heaven as a genuine place is linked with scientific considerations.

Let me read to you a few words from Dr. Boyce. These people, he says, are aware of the vast distances of our universe, as well as the fact that no one using any of the gigantic telescopes of our time has ever seen anything like a heaven. They say, if Jesus had ascended into heaven beginning in A.D. 30, and if he had accelerated until at last he was traveling at the speed of light, he would not yet have reached the furthest star, let alone heaven, wherever heaven may be.

How then are we to imagine that heaven is a real place? That Jesus went there, and that he's coming again to take us, to be with himself, and take us there? Nothing is nonsense, people say. Now this is an important problem. Dr. Boyce concedes that, and we would all have to concede that.

For if there is no material, spatial heaven, then the Lord Jesus Christ did not ascend into it. And if Jesus Christ did not ascend into it, you and I will not ascend into it. And we're almost back where Paul says, if Christ is not risen, then is our faith vain, you're yet in your sins.

But why on earth, asks Dr. Boyce, must we thus limit the Creator? And then he refers to an incident in the experience of one of his predecessors, Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse, who was asked this very question, a question about ascending at the speed of light. To which Dr. Barnhouse replied, as only Dr. Barnhouse could, I guess some of you heard him at any rate, why do you wish to slow the Creator down to the speed of light? He who created the universe is able to move with the speed of thought, not light. And it is possible to think from here to the remotest point of the universe, as quickly as it is to think down the corner drugstore.

We readily admit, of course, that we do not understand how this operates. We cannot think clearly beyond known physical laws. But God is not bound by the laws that he has created.

Consequently, let me say my, what I believe. All things are possible to the God who made us. Otherwise, he is not the God of the Bible.

So heaven is a real place, a real location. And though there are many, many mysteries about it, that I don't understand and the Bible doesn't even reveal. Jesus says very little here, as much more said elsewhere, of course, but Jesus himself says very little as if the only thing we need to know is this.

It's his father's home and the father sent him to be our savior. And the father gave him to us. And he's going to the father and he's coming back from the father.

It's enough for us to know it's his father's home. His father loves us as he loved us. And that should be enough.

All our hunger and thirst for knowledge that we do not need is sometimes an inquisitiveness that needs to be condemned. The basic thing that Jesus saw his disciples needed was this. Heaven is your father's house, your father's home.

I'm going there to prepare a place for you in my father's house. And I'm coming again for you that where I am in my father's house, you too may be. That should be enough.

But now I find a special comfort in these words. I'm going to prepare a place for you. A place for you.

Something intimately personal about this. Imagine that Jesus looking at this handful of men and he's saying, now look, fellows, he says, I'm going to prepare a place for you. And my friends, if you're believers in the same savior, if you're trusting the same savior as the 10, the 11 did.

And the truth applies as much to you tonight as it did to them. He's gone to prepare a place for you. A place for you.

There's a place there prepared by Jesus for you, for you. See. There is something, there is some hankering in all our souls for a place of our own.

He's gone to prepare a place for you. Some of us may never own a home of our, of our own and pay for it. But listen, here's a place prepared for you, for you, prepared for you.

One of man's basic problems since the fall is this. It's the problem of being alienated from God and the problem of homelessness. It can't feel at home anywhere.

It arises from the expulsion of man from the early paradise. Man was expelled from paradise, from Eden. And God put cherubim on duty with flaming swords to bar the way to the tree of life.

And though we don't see these flaming swords today, they're still there. And the sinner cannot move into the presence of God for communion with him and to enjoy him and to partake of the tree of life. The way is barred.

But Jesus says, I'm going to prepare a place for you inside the father's house. I'm going to pass the flaming cherubim. I'm going into paradise.

I'm going right inside the father's house. And inside the father's house, I'm going to prepare a niche for you. Hallelujah.

Can I put the emphasis on the other word for a moment? I'm going to prepare a place for you. This question has been asked a number of times. And I'm not sure how I've answered it, but I think I know how I ought to answer it now.

What does it mean when it says that Jesus was going to prepare a place for them? Does it mean, as many people think, that Jesus is awfully busy just now? The reason why he hasn't come back a second time is

because he's got too much work on his hands. The poor Savior is really sweating it out, preparing something there, some cupboards or some beds or some something or other. And he just can't get through.

He's working day and night. He's really sweating it out, but he can't get ready. Now, that's the concept that some people have of the Savior.

Now, it's not altogether dishonorable because they believe that the Lord is going to do everything that's necessary, that he's going to prepare everything. But that's not the truth. When Jesus says, I am going to prepare a place for you, the first place on the way to his destiny was the cross.

And at the cross, he was going to do the most important thing necessary to prepare a place. He was going to purchase our access in past the cherubim, into the holy of holies, into the presence of God, close to the heart of God. And he was going to purchase our redemption and our access into heaven with the price of his blood as the first act of preparation.

Says the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, he has opened up for us a new and a living way into the heart of heaven itself, into the presence of God. The veil of the temple is rent, and he's opened up a new and living way right in there to God. He's purchased it.

But the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews adds another thought to that. He has passed through the heavens and now he is, he is performing a ministry in heaven for us. What's he doing? Well, he's presenting his plea as our mediator and our high priest.

He, the plea of his passion for those are on behalf of those for whom he died. Jesus has gone into the presence of God as the high priest went into the holiest place of all on the day of atonement, bearing the names of the children of Israel on his breastplate and the effort and so forth. He's gone in in a representative capacity, and he's gone in with a blood to plead that they for whom he's shared his blood should have access.

But I'll tell you, he's doing something else too. He's taken possession of the place for us. He's taken the tenancy into his own hand.

He's holding the fort in heaven until you come until I get there. He's possessing heaven in our name because he's the head of the church. He's the bridegroom of the bride.

He's there in a representative capacity and having procured our right of access, having pleaded for our entry and gained it because God the Father would not despise the blood of his son. All for whom Christ died shall receive access. And now he's taken possession and he's there holding the fort until the time is right to gather in his elect from the four corners of the earth.

I go to prepare a place for you on Calvary, on the throne, in the heaven. That is beautifully illustrated really in two places. One I can't go after tonight in the great doctrine in the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter six, the doctrine of the forerunner.

The end of chapter six. Some people start with Hebrew six and they only see the difficulties at the beginning. They don't see the glories at the end of it.

You read on to the end of chapter six. Whoever the forerunner is for us entered. Now I can't say anything about that.

The what the other I want to refer to. Jesus did exactly this in principle himself. He did it in the earthly setting just a little time ago.

It was time for the Passover. Some of the disciples said to him, Master, where do you want to eat the Passover? Oh, he said, I'll tell you. And he chose two of them and he told them, you go ahead of us.

And you prepare a place for us. Not exactly those words. You prepare the place where we will eat the Passover.

I'll tell you where it is. I'll tell you how to find it. And he gave them instructions and they went and they made the preparation.

And when the rest of the disciples came, they found the place prepared and they were able to get on with the meal. Now, Jesus himself is doing exactly the same. He's going ahead of his disciples into heaven itself to prepare a place.

Well, the marriage supper of the lamb will take place in due course. And we shall find when we get there that everything is ready. Having prepared a place for them, Jesus promised them to return.

To take them to be with himself. Can you see what he's doing? Have faith in God, have faith in me, keep on trusting in God, keep on trusting in me. Now he's giving them these promises.

You see, I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I'm coming again. And I'm coming again to receive you to myself that where I am there, you may be.

I don't want to separate from you any more than you want to see me separated from you. It's the desire for one another is on both sides. I want you and you want me.

We want each other because we love one another. Now, that's the that's the believers experience with Jesus Christ. We want each other.

He wants you, brother, sister. He needs you. He wants you.

He wants to talk to you. He wants to live with you. And he wants to see you in his father's house.

However much you want him, he wants you to because he loves you. If I go to prepare a place for you, he says, I'm not going to leave that place unoccupied. Far from it.

I'm going to come back again, and I'm going to receive you to myself that where I am right where I am, not outside in the open or in the distant place, but where I am, you, my disciples, you will be also all brothers and sisters. Get hold of this. He wants you where he is.

I don't feel very happy. When I hear some folk grumbling, relatives sometimes when a dear one is taken away, perhaps in early life, we say it's a great tragedy. I want you to think of it the other way around.

Jesus says, I want you to be with me where I am. Why can't he have some young people around him? Why shouldn't he? Why shouldn't he have some young dancing children around the throne? Why shouldn't he? You like children around you at Christmas time. Why shouldn't the Savior who died for

young and old have young and old around the throne and call some of them home very, very young? Don't let's be selfish.

He wants his own with him. Now, that is primarily the thought. Primarily the thought here is a clear reference to the second coming of our Lord, the return of Jesus Christ.

But now, in the wake of that, there is another truth here. Now, that's the main truth. It's unquestionably so.

But if he's coming, if he's so concerned to get us there, you see, and to come back for us and not to leave the work for an angel, important as the angels are, there is no one to deputize for him. He says, I'm not sending a deputy to bring you home. I'm coming myself to escort you there.

Now, surely then, it is understandable that he comes also for his own at death. I don't believe that the Savior is so concerned to get us right home and to see us arrive. I don't believe that he can possibly leave his believers flounder in the moment of death.

And I believe that involved in this promise is this other one. It's hiding there. It's not on the surface, but it's implicit.

He's coming back, ultimately, to take us out to the graves and give us our new bodies that we may inhabit the new Jerusalem, the Father's house. But the first step into death, is he going to leave us to take that alone? Not on your life. David was no fool when he said, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

Why, David? He looks up and he says, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. But in death? Stephen was no fool, nor was he a dreamer.

If ever any man was realistic in his preaching and in his attitude, this was the first martyr Stephen. But you remember what Stephen saw? Full of the Holy Spirit, looking up to heaven. He saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

And the vision was so terrific. It was so tremendous for Stephen. You remember what he did? He turned to the people round about, his enemies who were persecuting him, persecuting him and stoning him.

And he says, look. But of course, they couldn't see a thing. They were as blind as dodos.

And look, Sir Stephen, I can see him. He's standing as if to come to meet me home. All's well, he says, he's standing.

He's on his feet. Oh, men and women, brothers and sisters in Christ, if you and I took these things into our hearts and lived by them, you and I would lose so many fears and troubles. He will keep me till the river rolls its water at my feet.

Doesn't stop there. Sing on, friend, sing on. Then he'll bear me safely over where the loved ones I shall meet.

Yes, I'll sing of my Redeemer and his wondrous love to me. Sing it with the saints in glory gathered by the crystal sea. I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless.

Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness. Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory, I triumph still if thou abide with me? And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. The last thing, and I just referred to it.

We have seen the therapy for troubled hearts is found in an abiding faith in God the Father and God the Son. We have seen the promises that Jesus made in order to encourage such constant faith. And I'm just referring to this.

The adequacy of Jesus and his ministry should transform our troubled hearts into a mood of joyful trust. The adequacy of the Lord Jesus. I have no time to go into it, but this picture shows how completely adequate he is to pacify all our fears and all our sorrows.

You see, Jesus himself did exactly what he's telling his disciples to do here. Earlier on, I said that three times over, we're told that Jesus' own heart was troubled. And I did say that he overcame all that in order to minister to his people and to finish the work that God gave him to do.

How was he able to do that? Let the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews answer better than I can. Do you remember these words? Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Now get the principle, forget the details, the principle.

What is the principle? This. Our Lord Jesus was able to despise the pain and the anguish of the cross. He was able to count it but little and trifling, speaking comparatively, because his heart was set on the joy that was beyond the cross.

And so in these very chapters, brothers and sisters, Jesus speaks of my peace I give to you, not as the world give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled. And he speaks of my joy being in you.

But where's the joy coming from? And where's the peace coming from when his heart is also a heart of trouble? It's coming here who for the joy set before him in the heavens, in the presence of God with his work finished and his people gathered. He saw it all and he lived for it. And as he saw that and believed it, he was able to face the nails and the spitting and the scoffing and the sarcasm and everything else.

And that very same principle is one which the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ over and over again impress upon the readers of the New Testament as something which is absolutely crucial. I consider, says the apostle Paul, that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8 a.d. I'll take this passage from 2 Corinthians 4. Therefore, we do not lose heart, though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Paul is saying exactly what Jesus said. Jesus says, I'm going to prepare a place for you, and I'm going to come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, you may be also. Now look, he says, set your heart on those things.

Believe in me, just see the things that are unseen. They are the eternal realities. It is said of dear, the dear and saintly Samuel Rutherford, that he had his feet on the ground, his hands on the plow, and his heart in

heaven.

Is your heart in heaven? Do you let the things that are in the promises of God so bolster you and so inspire you and so instruct you and so enervate you, that you can think lightly of the pains and the anguish and the turmoil and the trials of this world, all of which are passing by very quickly? Where are you going when you die? Where are you going to? If you're in Christ, you're going home. And home is where Father is, and where Jesus is, who is our life. Are you going home? It was D.L. Moody, I believe, who used to tell the story of a mother trying to explain to her infant daughter, who was very young, what was happening to her father.

He was very ill and he was not going to get better. He was going to die. And the mother was very, very, finding it very difficult to explain to her infant daughter what death was.

She tried many different ways and she had to give it up because the little girl had more questions to ask, the more she told her. And at long last, she confined it to this. She said, Look, dearie, she said, the best way to put it is this.

Your dad is going on a long, long journey to a beautiful place and he's going to live there. And momentarily, that seemed to satisfy. Kitty went out to play.

Later on that day, she came back into the house and her father was in the bed in the house at home, quite seriously ill, but he was able to talk. The kitty slipped into the bedroom and she said, Daddy, you're going on a long, long journey. Yes, yes, dearie, he said, I'm going on a long, long journey.

Daddy, she says, you got a home in that country you're going to? And he didn't. But her very question made him think of the one and only one who could make heaven his home. And he trusted the Savior.

How sweet. Have you a home in the land where you are going to? At death? Well, you may have a home if Jesus Christ is your Savior, for he's the only one who can prepare it, procure it, and prepare it. And if you ask him, he is the way, he is the truth, he is the life, and it is his gift to those who come to him in simple faith and trust.

If you've not done so before, ask him tonight. It'll take such a burden from your soul and it will begin to gem the peace and hope that you never knew before. Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we desire a thousand tongues to sing the praises that are your due for the gift of your Son and that are his due for the grace manifested on Calvary's cross, procuring for us a place in the eternal abode in our Heavenly Father's home. Oh God, our Father, forgive us that we do not take his promises more seriously. And we pray that each one of us gathered here tonight may know what it is to trust him.

And when at last the summons comes to us to leave this earthly sphere behind us, we may know where we go, because we are trusting the one and only capable, first of all, of procuring the place and finally of bringing us there. Grant us that as we await his return, we may do so with great joy in the knowledge that he is our Savior. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-glyn-owen/in-the-shadow-of-the-cross-therapy-for-troubled-hearts/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**