

JJ<sup>1</sup>

They could not wait until he was gone. In fact, it was worse than just wanting the door to hit him on the way out, they wanted to kill him. Sometimes that happens to preachers of the gospel. Yes, even the threat of death. Thankfully we are blessed to not have that here! But it was different for Jesus. His enemies knew exactly who he was. They knew he was the promised Messiah, but they didn't want him. Their rejection was so great that they wanted to kill him.

Jesus knew this full well, but his disciples didn't...not yet. Even though Jesus had told them on multiple occasions that he would suffer, die, and rise again, they didn't understand what he was saying and why he would be saying it. But that night before Jesus died, things were getting very intense. Jesus told them one of the Twelve would betray him, revealing who it was by handing a piece of bread to Judas Iscariot. Jesus warned Peter about his false pride and how he would deny three times even knowing Jesus and that all the others would abandon him in his time of greatest need.

To the disciples, Jesus' words were too much. It was not what they wanted to hear and it did not make sense. Then, in the verses just before our text, Jesus began talking about how he was soon going to leave them and how only his

followers would see him through the eyes of faith. This news prompted the question, **"Lord, what has happened that you are going to show yourself to us and not to the world?"** (Jn. 14:22). None of this was jiving in their minds. How could Jesus bring about his kingdom and restore Israel if he wasn't here to be seen? Why couldn't he just show the world who he was with spectacular and undeniable signs?

Notice Jesus' response: **"If anyone loves me, he will hold on to my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. The one who does not love me does not hold on to my words. The word that you are hearing is not mine, but it is from the Father who sent me."**

Did you catch it? Did you hear what Jesus emphasizes? You might think it is love, and that would be a good thought, but love is the attitude and action associated with the main subject—God's Word. The way they would stay connected to him would be through his Word. The way his kingdom would come and grow would be through his Word. To be in the Word, to guard the Word in the heart through faith and to live out that Word in life brings with it a beautiful assurance—God's home is with you, and your home is with Him!!!

<sup>1</sup> JJ is the acronym for *Jesus Juve*, which is Latin for "Jesus Help". It is a short prayer used by many ministers and sacred musicians at the beginning of their work.

This Word, Jesus says, comes directly to you from your heavenly Father. It is not the word of fallen, failing, feeble-minded man. God's Word comes directly from his heavenly throne to you so that you would believe it. Oh that we were as quick to believe His Word as we are to believe the words of sinful human beings, especially those in the media!!!

But this should be no surprise. The disciples struggled with the same. Their hearts also so easily clung to and believed the lies and false teachings of other people because it made sense or because they put an inappropriate amount of trust in authorities. Guard yourselves also! God's Word is to be believed and consumed fully and without question. Man's word regularly needs not just a grain of salt, but a whole block!

Why? Because of reality and truth, and because of the eternal impact. To listen to the world's voice first and foremost is to not have Jesus! To listen to Jesus' voice is not only to have him, but also to have eternal life with him!

But how to distinguish between the two? Well, Jesus gives us a very basic test. **"The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of**

**everything I told you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let it be afraid."**

Jesus promises you that his Word will always bring you peace—real peace. This is something the world simply cannot give. If the message isn't bearing the peace only Jesus gives, then be on your guard! Any apparent peace that exists between people, groups of people or even nations in this world can be lost. Consider the national holiday we

observed last week. Memorial Day, more than any other national holiday, reminds us of the great cost to achieve worldly peace and that we ought to strive by all means to preserve peace apart from violence because of that great cost.

The reason this world cannot achieve real and lasting peace between people is because our hearts are incapable of having true peace on their own. Each one of us came into this world at war. And we were born into the losing side of this war. And it is losing for two reasons. 1) because it can never win. And 2) because it will never stop fighting just to spite the Victor. How foolish is that! Eventually most enemies give up. Even the Japanese in their stubbornness gave up because they saw that the only way to survive



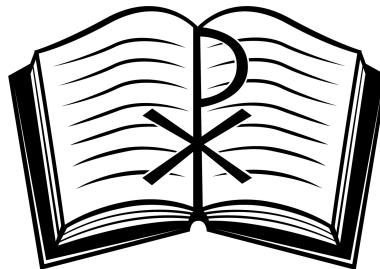
was to surrender. But not so with us. Even seeing the peace God offers we reject it by nature and would rather keep on fighting till our dying breath. This is why we see the senseless acts of violence in our society. We are a culture ever-more increasing with people who choose to deny the reality of sin and their own sinful hearts. This is also why their solutions to achieve peace are so empty and always fail. They never want to talk about the real problem and certainly do not want to proclaim the only solution.

But when Jesus gives his peace, it changes lives for the now and for eternity. As Jesus gave peace to his disciples he caused them to not be afraid to proclaim this peace to others which has been passed all the way down to us. Without the peace of Christ being given to the Apostles on Pentecost we could not have peace today. But God has kept his promise and he continues to keep it to this very day!

The peace Jesus won on the cross cannot be destroyed. Jesus' peace does not depend on peace in this world and it cannot be negated by a lack of peace in this world. It does not matter if countries keep warring, people keep hurting each other or if families fall apart. Jesus' peace transcends all of this because his peace is bigger than the problems of this world. His peace is even bigger than the greatest problem of this world—sin! Jesus

conquered sin! That is why Jesus' peace is real peace.

The peace he gives to you he speaks through the Holy Spirit, "You are forgiven! Nothing can change this fact! You are at peace with the Father who is now also your Father—the Son who is now your brother—and me, I'm your Counselor and Comforter. You now wear Christ's righteousness as your very own, eternal life is yours! Neither this sinful world, your own sinful heart or even the devil himself can steal this away from you!"



Just like the disciples did not want to see their Savior and Good Shepherd leave them, so too with you. You do not want to see your Good Shepherd's under-shepherd leave. The love and relationships built

over 13 years has been a great blessing from God. But here's the thing... What matters most is that you have exactly what Jesus' disciples had and what all believers have had—**YOU HAVE THE WORD.** Even as Jesus left his disciples, he did not leave them alone. He did not leave them helpless. He left them with what they needed, his Word, and promised to send the Holy Spirit to **teach [them] all things and remind [them] of everything [he] told [them]** through that Word. Jesus kept his promise to them. We see it fulfilled this Day of Pentecost. But that promise was not just for them 2,000

years ago. It is a promise to the Church and therefore a promise Jesus has made to you. If it wasn't a promise for the Church of all time, then you and I would not be here today. Jesus has kept his promise and he will continue to keep that promise to you. Nothing can change or break that promise. And in that promise Jesus gives you his peace of sins forgiven and constant presence. A peace only he can give you.

Not only do you have Jesus' promise that brings you peace, assuring you that you have all you need, you also have his promise of reunion. The Father's goal of giving you His Word was so that you would have an eternal home with him! Jesus assured his disciples that the coming Holy Spirit would teach and remind them of everything Jesus taught them. That includes the everlasting reunion in heaven! That assurance is ours too! Our goodbyes are only temporary!

My dear friends, not only has God given you what you need, we all have the comforting assurance of our reunion in heaven, all because **WE HAVE THE WORD!** Therefore, **"Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let it be afraid."** Amen.

SDG<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> SDG is an acronym for *Soli Deo Gloria*, which is Latin for "To God Alone Be The Glory". This is a statement of humility used by many ministers and sacred musicians at the end of their work to let themselves and others know that it isn't about getting glory for themselves, but about giving all glory to God.

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