

## **“Troubled Hearts Trust”**

Message by DD Adams  
Providence United Methodist Church  
Pentecost Sunday  
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Today’s gospel lesson is from John, chapter 14, verses 8 through 17 and 25 through 27. I’m reading from the *Common English Bible*. Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us.” Jesus replied, “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?”

The words I have spoken to you I don’t speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works. Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. I assure you that whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. They will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father.

I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father can be glorified in the Son. When you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it. “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I will ask the Father, and he will send another Companion, who will be with you forever. This Companion is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world can’t receive because it neither sees him nor recognizes him. You know him, because he lives with you and will be with you.

“I have spoken these things to you while I am with you. The Companion, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you. “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don’t be troubled or afraid. This is God’s word for God’s people. Thanks be to God.

Let's pray. Mystical and loving God, renew us today by your eternal Spirit. Reveal to us your love in new ways as we give it to others. Make it glorify you. Work within us to worship you intimately and embrace the life in Christ that declares your love everywhere in all languages. Give us courage to be a messenger of that same love. Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of our heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

Peace be with you! The Acts 2 passage is what's typically preached on Pentecost Sunday, but I thought we'd take a look at another angle. John's gospel was written about twenty years after the other three gospels, and life was a lot different. Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Romans in 70AD, and Christians were experiencing persecution and discrimination. So we find John providing something that's missing from the synoptic gospels—sort of filling in the gaps.

Most scholars see the apostle John as the son of Zebedee—the “beloved disciple.” The one who leaned back on Jesus at the Last Supper, and “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” John followed Jesus faithfully and was on track time and time again throughout Jesus' ministry. And being written 20 years later, his perception adds something the other three gospels don't have.

The synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, paint the story of Jesus' life and ministry with a broad brush covering much of the same events—but at times presenting them in a different order with some different details. Synoptic means they see with a common view, but John's gospel was written later, and comes around from another angle. His writing is introspective and theological.

John 14 is the start of Jesus' farewell discourse and is his final lecture series to his disciples. Jesus said he would be ascending to his Father, but that he'd send a Comforter and a Companion—a Spirit of Truth to be with them. The Spirit of Truth—you know—a reality heart checkup—a checkup from the neck up of what

they'd learned. Jesus was going to send someone who would continue teaching and reminding them what he said and did so they would do the same and obey.

Jesus kept telling them to believe and said "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." I can just see the disciples standing there thinking, "Sure, sure, we'll keep your commandments . . . . . and how again did you say we're to do that?" Philip you might say was a ringleader at that moment. He came right out and said it, "Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us."

Jesus replied, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don't speak on my own. The Father who dwells *in me* does his works. Trust me when I say that I *am in* the Father and the Father *is in me*, or at least believe on account of the works themselves."

So how can we believe so we can love and obey Jesus' commandments? How can we increasingly trust God more? The hearts of the disciples were troubled. They already felt afraid, Jesus was leaving them. But Jesus speaks his peace to them, and soon the Comforter would dwell in them and empower them. Jesus told them to believe what he had told them—to trust him.

Jesus tells us as he told the disciples that the Spirit will continue to teach us everything. The love and Spirit of God has been poured into our hearts given to us by the Holy Spirit. We're not on this faith journey alone! The gift given to us who believe lives in us, and we get promptings from the Spirit who leads us into all the truth. But wait a minute. Proximity isn't the same as intimacy in a relationship right? Just because you're right next to someone doesn't mean you know them.

We can attend church every Sunday and not have a relationship with Christ. We can come to the altar on Communion Sunday, take the bread and drink the

juice, but not acknowledge that the living presence of Christ is all around us. In times of troubled hearts we can leave God out of the faith equation. Our stress and troubled hearts don't have to stand alone. Troubled hearts can pray and trust and acknowledge and know they're not alone for the Spirit prays with them. When we believe God we include God in our troubles and know we can let go of fear.

Developing an intimate relationship with Christ is cultivated over a lifetime. It's an ongoing spiritual journey. We change as we draw near, we change as we pray and petition God, we change when we do mission work, we change as we give money to keep the electricity on in this building, we change when we truly embrace the life that dies to self. It's a process, and it's the Spirit that empowers and enables us to embrace this new life in Christ. Jesus said, "I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father can be glorified in the Son."

The purpose of John's gospel is that we would see Jesus and let our troubled hearts trust more. To let go of things we can't control and trust that God hears our prayers. As we believe and trust God he says he'll give us anything that honors and glorifies the Father. Don't let your hearts be troubled, but continue to trust for the Spirit lives with us and in us.

Let's pray. God who is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, hear our prayers and remind us your Spirit prays for us. Move in us and give peace to troubled hearts. Help us to trust and continue to pursue you in relationship. Amen.