

Our Place

Saying goodbye is a part of life, but it's not always easy.

There's the soldier who has been sent overseas and must say goodbye to his wife and little ones.

And sometimes, if you want to move up in your company, you must relocate, leaving friends and relatives behind.

Well, that night in the upper room, Jesus had to say farewell to His disciples.

John 13:33 **"Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you."**

Yes, after 3 1/2 years of walking the dusty roads of Israel together, sharing their meals together, and just being there to

answer their questions, Jesus was leaving.

How could this be happening?

Why would their Messiah forsake them when He was just about to set up His kingdom?

Actually, that was only partly true.

Yes, He was leaving them, but He had no intention of forsaking them.

In fact, He had made ample preparation for their care, and not only that, but He had told them so.

John 14:16 **"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--"the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."**

Certainly that was a wonderful provision,
but I don't think it was one they could
fully appreciate at that point in time.
And I'm also quite certain they didn't see
the significance of Jesus' words when He
said----"**I will not leave you orphans; I
will come to you.**"

Yes, in a physical sense, He would be
leaving, but in actual fact, He wouldn't
be leaving at all.

You see, because of the oneness of the
Godhead, the Holy Spirit's presence would
guarantee Jesus' presence.

No, they wouldn't be able to see Him with
the naked eye, but He would continue to
be very much involved in their lives.

And that wonderful presence is one of the
blessings bestowed upon the church of
Jesus Christ.

Yes, we can take comfort in His promise first given to the disciples--- **"where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."**

Yes, there was a great future ahead, but that night in the upper room, their immediate future was casting a dark shadow over their lives.

The kingdom they had so counted on was slipping away, and along with it, their Messiah.

And so, as their foundations seemed to be crumbling around them, Jesus pointed them to a foundation that would not pass away.

John 14:1---**"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."**

It was a word spoken in season, for their uncertainties would soon become stark realities.

And they were realities that Jesus had tried to prepare them for, and on more than one occasion.

In fact, He had brought the subject up once again on their way up to Jerusalem.

As we see in Matthew 20:17-19, He had taken
"--- **the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, "and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."**

But in spite of His best efforts, they continued to live in denial.

In fact, on one of those occasions, Peter had actually contradicted Him--- **"Far be**

it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

And so, as they arrived at that last Passover, they were still anticipating a crown not a cross.

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Certainly, such mental preparations would have been beneficial.

But as Proverbs 5:3 teaches us, even in the face of unexplained circumstances, you can **"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding."**

Yes, the real anchor of the soul is faith, but faith in whom?

Well, Jesus was right there to provide the answer to that question---**"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."**

Certainly the disciples were devout

Israelites, and they had always believed in God, but now, Jesus was asking them to take another step of faith.

Believe in Me, and not simply as your Messiah.

Yes, He knew that the events of the next day would shake that belief to the core.

No, He was asking them to believe in Him as their God, and ultimately as their Saviour.

It would be a belief that only His resurrection would establish in their hearts.

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But perhaps there was something else bothering them, even though they didn't quite realize it.

You see, it had been 3 1/2 years since the disciples had left house and home to follow their Messiah.

Certainly there had been a few friends along the way to open their homes, but most nights were spent camping out, and in all kinds of weather.

And no doubt most nights, as they looked up at the stars, they must have dreamed of their Messiah's coming kingdom.

It couldn't be long now.

Well, that evening, as their dreams came crashing down around them, I wonder if they were thinking of those homes they had so hurriedly forsaken.

Of course I don't really know *what* they were thinking about, but Jesus did.

And I believe it is quite significant that He chose this particular time to tell them about *another home*.

John 14:2---"**In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.**"

Certainly as a carpenter, any home Jesus would build would be first rate.

And as the Creator of all things, the possibilities were endless.

But if we listen carefully, we will find He hadn't promised to build anything.

He didn't need to, because those mansions were already there.

Remember His words---"**In My Father's house are many mansions.**"

So then, if those mansions were already there, then what had He promised to prepare?

Well, He told us that also---"**I go to prepare a *place* for you.**"

That's right, "**a *place*.**"

He wasn't building mansions, but making sure there was a place for His disciples in those mansions.

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Let me illustrate this point from my own personal experience.

Some years ago my wife and I decided to take a holiday in the United States.

In preparation for this upcoming holiday, my wife Eleanor had worked very hard on her computer, booking accommodations.

Well, everything seemed to be going along fine until one night when we arrived quite late at a hotel, there seemed to be a problem.

In fact, there was a problem.

After checking quite carefully, the clerk looked up and said, "I'm sorry sir, but you don't seem to have a reservation."

Now, that didn't mean such accommodations didn't exist.

In fact, the hotel had been standing for many years, and it contained lots of rooms.

Nor did it mean those rooms had not been prepared.

The cleaning staff had been busy all day making sure everything was in order.

The problem was, *none* of those rooms had been prepared *for us*.

Because of some technical or human error, no accommodation had been made, and no price had been paid.

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And that's what Jesus meant when He said---

"I go to prepare a place for you."

He was going to make heaven *available* for His disciples, and for all believers.

And did you notice He was talking about the future?

It was something He was *going* to do, not something He had already done.

So then, *when* was He going to do it?

Now, I'm sure there must be different opinions concerning the timeframe, but, personally, I think Jesus was referring to the very next day.

You see, the hour had come for Jesus to fulfill His great commission as the Lamb of God.

The hour had come for Him to take away the sin of the world.

Before that all-important event, there was no place in heaven for His disciples, and for that matter, for anyone else.

God's Word tells us that.

Yes, Romans 3:23 makes it abundantly clear,
that---"**all have sinned and fall short of
the glory of God.**"

However, on that very next day, when Jesus
would cry out---"**It is finished,**" it
would be finished.

The work of salvation would be finished, and
a way into God's presence would be
available.

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Yes, Jesus has prepared a place for all who
will trust Him as their Saviour.

And oh, how different heaven would be if He
hadn't done that.

Certainly it would be filled with myriads of
angels, but for all its streets of gold,
the city of the redeemed would be a
virtual ghost town!

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And then, as we return to John 14:3, we hear some breaking news.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also."

That's right, Jesus is coming again!

And I believe I am correct in saying, this was the *first* time mankind had heard about this earthshaking event.

And when He returns, and it could be very soon, He will catch away every blood-bought believer out of sin cursed earth.

It's called the *rapture*, and it's the next *great event* in world history.