

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

WEEK TWENTY-NINE: JESUS COMFORTS HIS FRIENDS

READING

1 “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. 2 There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” John 14 (NLT)

TEACHING

At this point in the story, Jesus’ disciples were very concerned and anxious about what was happening. Jesus was talking about one of his friends betraying him and he had just predicted that Peter would deny him before the next sunrise! Nothing was making sense and their hearts must have been filled with confusion and fear. Jesus knew this was the case so he comforts his friends with some wonderful words. What makes these words wonderful is not just that they are positive and uplifting, but that they are true!

Jesus reminds them to trust in God and to trust in Him. Our hearts will always trust in something or someone in difficult times. When things around us are confusing and scary, we need to remember to trust that God is great and that God is good. This means he is in control as the all-powerful ruler of the universe and also that he is caring as our loving King.

Jesus also promises that he is preparing a place for his friends. The phrase “my Father’s home” refers to heaven. Jesus is preparing a home in heaven for those who love him and serve him. Someday we will live forever with Jesus in heaven, a place that he has prepared for us – a place that is beyond our wildest dreams and imaginations. He will bring us to that place as we follow after him. Jesus prepares the place, but he also prepared the way for us to be with him. In order for us to experience the hope of heaven, Jesus knew that he would have to go to the cross and accomplish for us what we could not accomplish for ourselves. His work on the cross would provide payment for sin and defeat the great enemies of Satan, sin and the grave. These truths should always provide us great comfort.

RESPONSE

OPENING QUESTION(S):

- Has anyone ever comforted you when you were sad? What did they say or do?

TODDLERS/PRE-K-K:

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

- Who did Jesus tell his disciples to trust in?
- What kind of place is Jesus preparing for his friends?

CHILDREN:

- Who did Jesus tell his disciples to trust in?
- What kind of place is Jesus preparing for his friends?
- How does believing in heaven give us comfort when we go through a tough time?

TEENAGERS:

- What does it mean to trust God? What other things do people tend to trust in instead of Jesus?
- How does the hope of heaven comfort our hearts in hard times?

ADULTS:

- Where do you turn in hard times and when you face real challenges? What does that reveal about who or what you trust most in?
- Do you think about heaven often? Why or why not?

PRAYER

God, thank you that you comfort me when I am sad and upset. Thank you that you are near to those who are brokenhearted. Thank you that in your comfort, you also challenge me to trust in You. Help me to believe that there can be no real lasting comfort apart from trust. Thank you that Jesus is preparing a place in heaven for me and that he made a way for me to be welcomed in. Help me to encourage myself and others with the hope of heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

Read these words that Paul wrote and let them comfort your heart today:

13 And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. 15 We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the Christians who have died will rise from their graves. 17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. 18 So encourage each other with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4 (NLT)