

Devotions for Friday, July 3, 2020  
*Bread for the Journey*  
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### *A Way for Living*

*Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."* (John 14: 1-7, English Standard Version)

I cannot imagine that any pastor will finish her or his ministry without using today's verses to proclaim the promise of faith at the funeral of a saint. Indeed, for this pastor it has almost always been funeral thoughts that have been framed by these comforting words. *Let not your hearts be troubled! I go to prepare a place for you! I will come again and will take you to myself! I am the way, and the truth, and the life!*

Yet it was not a funeral Jesus had in mind when he spoke these words to the disciples in the upper room. Indeed, immediately before he said these things he had warned Peter of that disciple's looming failure.

*Jesus answered (Peter), "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times. Jn. 13:38.* Peter and the other disciples must have been dazed and crestfallen, for immediately Jesus said, *"Let not your hearts be troubled."*

There are many causes for our hearts to be "troubled". Some are personal, others are vocational, many are societal and even global in scope. Troubles, in other words, are not in short supply. It is always tempting to give in to them, and to give up.

*Let not your hearts be troubled.* With that word Jesus reminds us that the work he has done, the work he invites us to take up, is more resilient than our troubles, and it will be accomplished. In other words faith will win over doubt, hope will triumph over despair, and life will vanquish death. Jesus has prepared the road for us and given us a map for the journey.

*I am the way, and the truth, and the life.*" There is our map. The Way Jesus outlined is to fully love God with all your heart, and to selflessly love your neighbor. The Truth is that "God so loved the world (and you) that he gave His only Son" for the life of the world (and you). The Life, which we so often translate "eternal life", I believe is better rendered by British New Testament scholar and former Anglican bishop N.T. Wright as "the life of the ages". It is certainly life that is not limited by the experience of death, but Wright's translation also makes clear that it is a life that begins now. A life that is rich, purposeful and compelling. It is the life of Jesus born within you. This is a life defined by freedom which allows you step forward with courage to face the demands of the day and of discipleship. It is a life that will see you through any trouble of the present. So the word for you today is, *"Let not your heart be troubled."*