



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- June 1, 2023

The Lord be with you.

Are you ever fearful about things happening in your life or in the lives of those whom you love may be fearful about things going on in our country. And believe me, I, I know fear as fear is after all, a natural reaction to things that we sense, threaten us that threaten our sense of safety, our sense of well being and you know, trying to just ignore fear. It, it doesn't help. In fact, not dealing with fear can only make things worse. I mean, we might try to eat our way through fear, drink our way through fear shop our way through fear and there will always be people to tell us, hey, get over it.

But you know, I, I've learned that if I do not face up to my fear, if I do not own my fear, that fear has a strange way of going underground and actually gaining more power over me. And that's one reason why we're seeing a lot of depression today. Psychologists tell us that fear is masquerading as depression. The depression can be fear that's trying to mask itself that is denied that is going into hiding today. I'm looking at John chapter 14 verse one, as our Lord Jesus Christ is speaking on what was the most frightening, the most horrific, darkest night in human history.

The night before the crucifixion as all the forces of hell are running loose. And there in the upper room, Jesus is talking to his closest friends who are afraid, they're totally confused by what seemed to them, a world that is spinning out of control. And yet Jesus says to them in John 14:1, do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God believe also in me.

Maybe you've seen this Bible verse as a plaque hanging in someone's home. But I, I tell you what I'd like to do. I, I would like to go into business making context plaques. What I mean by that is that for every Bible verse that we so love, I, I'd like to have a context plaque that shows the context of that Bible verse because you know, as, as it said that a Bible text without a context becomes a pretext. So do you remember the context of John 14:1 where Jesus says, don't let your hearts be troubled.

OK. The context is this that Jesus has just told his disciples that he's leaving them and he's told them that one of them is going to betray him. And then on top of that, he tells them that Simon Peter is going to deny him not just once, not just twice but three times. I mean, it must have felt to those men like Jesus has pulled the rug out from under their feet. That is the context.

Now, I'm going to read John 14:1 with this context. OK. So ignore the chapter division. It's our chapter divisions in our Bibles were not put there until the 16th century and sometimes they can get in the way of our reading, they interrupt the flow of thought.

So let me, let me read it just as the Apostle John records it, Jesus words as John heard them that night there at the end of John 13, it says Simon Peter said to Jesus Lord, where are you going? Jesus answered, where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow me



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afterwards. Peter said to Jesus Lord, why cannot I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you. Jesus answered, will you lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. That's the context and text. I love how the message version translates this John 14:1. It says, don't let this throw you. You trust in God; don't you trust in me? That is the calm assuring voice of the Shepherd in the midst of trouble. It reminds me of a t-shirt that I saw recently. It said relax, I've got this God.

But notice that Jesus doesn't just stop there in John 14:1. Let's continue on in the context as Jesus says, do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God believe also in me, in my father's house. There are many dwelling places if we were not. So would I have told you that I go and prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself. So that where I am there, you may be also OK?

Tell me where, where is Jesus right now, Jesus is with the father and Jesus through his life, his death and resurrection. And ascension has prepared a place for you and me with the father. That is our spiritual position right now that we are with the father, love by the father as Jesus is love by the Father. The Apostle Paul explains it like this in Acts chapter three verse one, as he says, we are raised with Christ and seated with Christ at the right hand of the father.

That is the security of our position with the father that nothing can ever harm or sever our relationship with the Father. I don't, I don't know what you're going through right now, but Jesus says, don't let us throw you, you trust in God, trust in me.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.