

John 14 – Very great and precious promises. (1) Preparing a place. (refs for Bible study 26/7/17).

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwellings; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. v1-2

Jesus tells his disciples (and us) '*Let not your heart be troubled*'. But he never says that without giving good solid grounds for it. He backs it up here with a string of '*very great and precious promises*', 2Pet.1v3-4. Literally '*let not your heart go on being troubled*', i.e. disturbed, agitated, stirred up. It's not hard to see why they were. Jesus words were ominous, 13v21, v33, v36, v38b. In the Bible '*heart*' does not mean 'emotions' but 'the very centre'. These promises are addressed to your mind, but are to affect your will, conscience, emotions, memory. Interestingly Jesus himself was troubled, 12v27, 13v21. He had something to be troubled about for he was about to have heaped upon him the sins of the world. His 'trouble' would ensure that we have *nothing* to be troubled about!

The place: '*my Father's house*' refers to heaven, Ps.33v13-14. It is his dwelling place, his home. We should not think of heaven as a museum, a temple, a cathedral, a hotel, etc. It is where he is 'at home'. This wonderful promise means that God's home is also our home. Few things evoke deeper feelings than 'home'. There are '*many dwellings*', same word used in v23. Not '*mansion*' but a dwelling place, a permanent residence. '*many*' means ample room, no over-crowding, a permanent dwelling place for each and every child of God. Rev.7v9.

The preparation: '*I go to prepare*', not create a place, but make ready one that already exists. We may think of this in human terms, eg preparing a banquet, or preparing for a visitor. But he spoke about '*going*' in 13v33,v36, referring to his death, resurrection & ascension. The essential preparation, Hb.9v24. The place is now prepared! Yet in a sense preparations continue as he prays, Hb.7v25, and as he rules over all things for us, Eph.1v22.

The people: '*for you*'. See v1: '*you *believe in God, *believe also in Me*'. It is for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ. Not a leap into the dark, but into the arms of one who has gone to extraordinary lengths to save you. (*translation note: '*believe*' is used twice and can be either statement, or imperative, or one of each. NKJV opts for statement, imperative. NIV & ESV opt for imperative, imperative.)

- For the believer there is a clear promise, with no 'ifs' or 'buts': "*I go to prepare a place for you.*" So put your trust in him, for whatever the obstacles or difficulties in your pathway the promise holds true.
- Finally: be aware that sometimes we may not feel quite right, yet can't put our finger on the reason. In the light of these verses one possible explanation is homesickness.