

Find the Comfort You Need in Jesus John 14:1-6

Slide 1

In those final hours, before Jesus was arrested, John, in his 14th chapter, shares what Jesus spoke about with His disciples.

In that meeting, Jesus told them some important things like, how they should love one another, how the Holy Spirit would help them, how they should continue to serve the Lord, and more.

Because Jesus knew His disciples were troubled, He took special care to give His disciples the comfort they needed.

This same Jesus who loved them to the end, loves us to the end, and He wants to give us the comfort we'll surely need in life.

During this week of Vacation Bible School, the children learned how life could be difficult, but they also learned how God comforts His people.

This is why, in John 14:1, Jesus told us that we're not to let our hearts be troubled, but to trust God.

John 14:1-4, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

It's in this verse that the children learned that Jesus not only cares for the world, but He cares for us, too.

Slide 2 – Jesus Cares for Us

Over the years, I've known many people who needed comfort. Husbands and wives who had to say goodbye to their spouses; brothers, sisters and friends who had to say goodbye to people closest to them.

Then there are those bigger events that affect our whole city, state, or nation. Everybody in this world goes through times when they need comfort, and the wonderful truth is that we can find the comfort we need in Jesus.

What the children learned and what we must understand is that Jesus truly cares for all of us.

This is made plain in scripture, where Jesus and the writers of the New Testament tell us time and again to trust in Him, *“to cast our worries on him.”*

In fact, John 14:1 tells us: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”* But we do get troubled, just like those disciples who were troubled that night that Jesus trying to comfort them.

Jesus tried to explain what was happening since He only had a little time left before he would be crucified. The disciples were frightened because they didn't know the ending.

They were troubled because things weren't working out like they expected. They had been with Jesus for almost 3 years and had seen the most amazing things anyone has ever seen.

They saw raging storms calmed with a word. They saw 5,000 people fed with a little boy's lunch.

They had seen thousands of people instantly, miraculously, and completely healed with a word or a touch from Jesus. They had even seen people raised from the dead!

Yet, the disciples were troubled. They were troubled because things weren't working out the way they expected.

They were troubled because Jesus was going to die. They didn't know Jesus would come back to life; they just knew He would be gone. They were troubled because they had to face their own weaknesses.

Has that ever happened to you? It's happened to all of us. Sometimes God has to point out our failures. He loves us, yes! He's forgiven us, yes! But it's still a time of trouble.

These things that troubled the disciples are troubles we'll never know, because we're living on the resurrection side of the cross!

We know that Jesus rose from the dead! We know that the Holy Spirit was sent in a new way on the Day of Pentecost, and we know that by the Holy Spirit, Jesus will always live in our hearts.

We also know that death is different for Christians. It's the difference between hopelessness and hope. It's the difference between Heaven and Hell.

It's the difference between everlasting life and everlasting death. It's the difference between everlasting forgiveness and everlasting punishment for our sins.

Donald Phillips saw a picture of this difference when his daughter was 4 years old. She had a cyst on her throat that had to be removed.

Donald said, *"I'll never forget that morning in the hospital when they came to carry her away to surgery. She left crying and pleading for us not to let them take her."*

A couple of years later they had moved to a little town in Georgia, and Donald's daughter had to have her tonsils removed.

"This time," he said, *"instead of sending a stretcher, the doctor came himself. He picked her up in his arms and carried her calmly to surgery."*

Donald then made this comparison: *"Death for the non-Christian is a frightening experience, going off with strangers to an unknown place. But for the Christian, Christ comes, lifts us and carries us to spend eternity with Him."*

That's why John Hamby could say, *"Death is not death if you know the Lord. It's merely a change of place, a change of state, a transfer from one realm to another. Death is not death, if it kills no part of us, except that which kept us from the perfect life. Death is not death, if it raises us in a moment from darkness to light, from weakness to strength, from sinfulness to perfection. Death is not death, if it transforms our faith into sight, and lets us behold Him in whom we have believed. Death is not death, if it rids us of doubt and fear, sickness and disease, sorrow and sadness. Death is not death, for Christ has conquered death for all those who trust in Him."*

Regardless that death is different for a believer, it's still hard on the loved ones left behind, so our hearts get troubled.

But Jesus cares for us more than anybody else possibly could, and it helps to know that He knows exactly what we are going through.

Slide 3

Jesus also knows what it means to have a troubled heart. John's Gospel makes this truth clear three different times.

After Lazarus died, John 11:33 tells us that Jesus saw Lazarus' family and friends weeping. When He saw their sorrow, *"He groaned in the spirit and was troubled."*

That's the same word Jesus used when He spoke to His troubled disciples here in verse 1, where He tells them not to be troubled.

Then about a week before the cross, in John 12:27-28, Jesus said, *"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name."*

On that night before the cross, John 13:21 tells us that Jesus was *"troubled in spirit."* Jesus, Who said, *"Let not your hearts be troubled"* certainly understands all of our troubles.

David DeWitt explained, *"When I think of the sufferings of Christ, I almost always think of the cross and the pain of enduring the crucifixion. However, it's helpful to remember that Jesus suffered in many ways during His life and was no stranger to sorrow and grief. He lost His father, Joseph, sometime before His ministry began. He lost His friend, cousin, and partner in ministry, John the Baptist. Jesus also lost His close personal friend, Lazarus. It's there we find the shortest verse in the entire Bible: 'Jesus wept.'"*

This is why I can tell you today that God not only knows our pain, He understands our pain, because He's experienced it through His only begotten Son.

Jesus didn't have to go through all that trouble and pain, but He did, and He did it for us because He cares for us!

This is why we can always count on Jesus. He's absolutely dependable all the time.

Looking back over the three years Jesus had been with His disciples, He could've said, *"Haven't I been good to you? Haven't I taken care of you? Haven't I told you the truth? Haven't I gotten you through every storm?"*

We can look back like that too. It's been over 78 years for me, and I know that I've failed God many times, but Jesus has never failed me!

God's faithfulness means that everything He says and does is certain. He's 100% reliable, 100% of the time. He does not fail, forget, falter, change, or disappoint.

He says what He means and means what He says. Therefore, He does everything He says He will do.

You may have never heard of Armenia, it's a small Christian nation on the northeast border of Turkey. It's about one fourth the size of Louisiana with a population of less than 3 million people.

On December 7, 1988, two terrible earthquakes hit Armenia killing 60,000 people and destroying nearly half a million buildings.

One father rushed to his son's school and found the building flat as a pancake. Standing there in tears, he remembered a promise he had made to his son, *"No matter what, I'll always be there for you!"*

It looked absolutely hopeless, but the father got as close as he could to his son's classroom and started digging in the pile of rubble.

The other grieving parents tried to pull him back, saying, *"It's too late! They're dead!"* But he just kept digging, stone by stone. He dug for 8 hours, then 12 hours, 24 hours, 36 hours without stopping!

Finally, in the 38th hour, as he pulled back a boulder, he heard his son's voice. He screamed his son's name, "*Armand!*," and a voice answered him, "*Dad?*"

The boy added these priceless words, "*I told the other kids not to worry. I told them that if you were alive, you'd save me, and when you saved me, they'd be saved too.*"

Armand remembered his father's promise: "*No matter what, I'll always be there for you!*" Fourteen children were saved that day because one father was faithful to his promise.

As faithful as that father was to his son, how much more faithful is our Heavenly Father! Our God is faithful, and He'll never fail us!

All of us will face troubling times. But over and over God proves to us that we can always trust in Him!

That's why Jesus said, "*You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.*"

Slide 4

Conclusion

This week, the children learned many truths about God. They learned that when life is at its darkest, Jesus' light shines brightest.

They learned about living in harmony with one another. They learned that we're all in this troubled world together.

They learned that when people don't get along we just need to just shine Jesus' light to show them the way.

Then they learned that, when good things happen, we need to give God the praise.

This was contrasted the next evening when they learned that troubles are a part of the world, but Jesus gives them comfort.

And on Friday, they learned about helping people through the example of Philip when he was sent by God to help an Ethiopian understand the Scriptures.

Above all, Vacation Bible School gives us the chance to teach our children that Jesus wants us to have the comfort of His cross.

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me."*

All of us need help going to heaven. None of us are good enough to get there on our own. Jesus is the only person in the universe who can help us.

When Jesus died on the cross, it was for our sins, and when He rose again from the dead, He proved that He could help us.

If we believe in Jesus and receive Him as our Lord and Savior, He'll pardon our sins and give us an everlasting home in Heaven.

Thank God for the cross of Jesus and thank God that Jesus rose again from the dead because there wouldn't be any good news without the resurrection.

We know that we can live forever because Jesus conquered death forever!

Do you know that? Do you know Him? Jesus wants us to have the comfort we can only find in Him.