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“Having a ‘Bad Hair Day’?”
(John 14: 1-14)

Have you ever had one of those days when everything went wrong, or as you ladies would say, a ‘Bad Hair Day’? It doesn’t make any difference how hard you try, it just seems that everything backfires on you? The harder you try, the worse it gets. I’m convinced all of us have had days just like that. There are times, I suspect, when things really start to go wrong. Your whole world seems to be crumbling around you and you wonder what’s going on.

That is kind of the way the apostles are feeling as we come to the 14th chapter of John. They have been on a roller-coaster of emotions. Their week had begun glorious with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, with people waving palm branches and shouting, “Hosanna to the King!” Even the chief priests who had been plotting against Jesus cried out in despair, “What can we do? The whole world has gone out after him!”

But Jesus had not come to establish an earthly kingdom, and he refused the crown. Disappointed and thwarted in their dreams of a Jewish kingdom with Jesus as their miracle-working king, the fickle crowd began to change. And soon priests were once again seeking someone to betray Jesus into their hands.

So as the 14th chapter of John opens, we see Jesus and his apostles in the upper room where they had eaten the Passover meal together. Jesus knew exactly what the next few hours would bring. He knew that Judas would betray him. He knew about the illegal trials of the night and how troubled the apostles would be. He knew of the cross and the borrowed tomb and he tried to prepare the apostles for all that. So he begins to comfort them.

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Is there anyone who needs comfort this morning? I know there are. We lose loved ones. People lose jobs. Some have physical problems. Others are lonely and depressed. We experience all kinds of troubles. But Jesus says that part of the solution to a troubled heart is trust and he tells his apostles to trust in three things. “First of all, trust in my presence. Secondly, trust in my promises. Thirdly, trust in my person.

Let me read again and listen to vs. 1, “*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.*”

What is Jesus saying? Is He saying, “You believe in God, now it’s time to believe also in me?” Or, is He saying, “I know you believe in God and you also believe in me. But remember, when you can no longer see me, don’t stop believing in me.”

You see, we have always found it easier to trust in things that we can see and touch. Is it safe to say that we have a little bit of Thomas in us? Remember, Thomas said, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my fingers where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it” (John 20:25). So Jesus shows him and he believes. Jesus then said, “Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

The Bible teaches us that the things we can see are only temporary. The automobile I drove to church today, if it’s still in the parking lot, is temporary. This building, the pews on which you are sitting, this pulpit, all are temporary. All are subject to decay. We look in the mirror and see our aging bodies, and realize that they are temporary. All the things you can touch or see, are only here for a little while and then are gone. But the things you can’t see last forever.

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This is a hard lesson for us to learn, human nature being what it is. Yet, it is an important lesson, because when we face troubles and difficulties in life, we need to remember as Christians that Jesus has promised, “Lo, I am with you always, I will never leave you or forsake you. Trust in my presence.”

Then beginning with vs. 2 we find some of the most beautiful verses in the Bible. Jesus says, “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.”

God gave many promises, both in the Old and the New Testaments. He promised the children of Israel a land where there would be milk and honey. It took a while for the promise to be fulfilled, but it was fulfilled. He promised a Messiah and that took a long time, but it, too was fulfilled.

Now God promises that he is coming back for us. Someday, we’ll be with him forever. Sometimes we grow impatient, but the Scripture says, “You can trust in the promise of God. This promise will be fulfilled too.”

The Bible uses a lot of different words to describe heaven. In one place it is called “a country” indicating a vastness of heaven. In another it is called “a city” indicating the number of inhabitants. It is called “a kingdom” indicating that there is a governmental structure to it. It is called “paradise” indicating its desirability and beauty. But here it is called “My Father’s house,” and that is another way of saying, “It is home,”

Home is a place where you can be yourself. Home is where you can take off your coat, kick off your shoes, open a can of “Bud Lite

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and watch the Lakers' game. Home is where you can say what you are thinking. Home is where you're always accepted and loved. You're not just a guest. You are a resident. You live there. That is home.

Jesus is saying, "I'm going to take you to my Father's house and it will be your home, too. You'll be a part of the family. You'll be home where you belong."

He says, "My Father's house has many rooms." This has been translated in various versions as "mansions," but probably it is more accurate to say, "dwelling place" or "rooms." Commentators say this because the word that Jesus used comes from the eastern custom that when a son grows up and gets married, he brings his bride back home with him, and the father adds another room onto the house for them. Then when another son grows up and gets married, they add another room. The house just keeps getting bigger and bigger, as the family stays together.

Marian Anderson, the great singer, was once asked, "What is the most memorable moment in your life." When she answered, she didn't mention the time she sang before the president. She didn't mention the time she was commanded to sing before the king and queen of England. She didn't mention when she sang before 75,000 people on Easter morning in our nation's capital.

She said, "The most memorable moment of my life was when I came home to my mother and said, 'Mama, you don't have to take in laundry anymore.' That's the most memorable moment of my life."

Stop and think about it. Most of me is already there. My name is written there. My citizenship is there. My God is there. My Savior is there. My inheritance is there. My parents are there. So

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much of me is already there. Soon it will all be fulfilled and we'll be in our Father's house. We'll get new bodies and we won't have to worry about getting old and sick and all the other things that plague us here. "Trust my promises," Jesus says.

In vs. 4-6 Jesus says, "You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

What a wonderful promise! Jesus is saying, "I'm not just going to show you the way, or tell you the way, or write out the instructions on how to get there. I'm going to come and take you by the hand to my Father's house. Then you'll be home."

Do you have burdens this morning that you think you cannot bear? Are you troubled? Are you worried or anxious? Do you feel empty inside? Do you feel lonely? Do you feel lost? Confused?

Whatever your burdens are this morning, the solution to a troubled heart is still the same, to trust...to trust in his presence. "I'll never leave you," Jesus said. "I'll always be beside you. Don't forget my presence."

"Trust my promises. When everything seems dark and gloomy, when everything seems to be falling apart, remember my promises."

"Then trust my person. You won't get lost. You won't go astray. I'm the way, and I'll take you by the hand and lead you to my Father's house."

To God be the glory! Amen.

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