

Bethel

Pulpit

Comfort for Troubled Hearts

Sermon Number 471

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Lord's day evening, 20th May, 2012**

Text: *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14. 1).*

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was on His way to Calvary, and His heart overflowed with love to His immediate disciples and to His beloved people to the end of time. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." And He knew just how troubled they were. Their hearts were full of trouble. They were overwhelmed with trouble. He had said a few things to them that had troubled them, especially that He was going to leave them and that He was going to go back to heaven, and here they were, a little company. They feared they were going to be left alone and their Lord and Master was going out to die, and what would become of them, and how could they manage, and what could they do? O but the loving, sympathising heart of their Lord and Saviour! He knew their troubles. And beloved friends, He knows every single troubled heart in this congregation this evening, whatever your trouble is, and if you are one of those who know and love and fear His name, He says this to you: "Let not *your* heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." It is a simple word, but if the Holy Spirit applies it to your heart this evening, then you will "enjoy a gospel day, and heaven begun below."

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." As if the Lord Jesus said to them, Leave everything in My hands, yourself and all your concerns; trust entirely in Me; trust completely to Me, and all will be well. I will help you along; I will bring you safely through. So, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." And O what a claim to Godhead there is here in this, a dear Man sitting with them at a table and claiming equality with the Most High God! "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." And then followed these three wonderful chapters, 14, 15 and 16. They have been described as "the inner sanctuary." All through them the Lord Jesus is speaking to the troubled hearts of His disciples and is giving them reason after reason why they should not be troubled.

Just to pause here a moment, it has been remarked how differently the Lord Jesus comforts His people from how often we seek to comfort one another. You know the kind of things we say. But there are so many deep, weighty doctrines that the Lord Jesus brought forth for the comfort of His troubled people. I will just mention one or two of them. First of all, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” And the Lord Jesus gave them that sweet assurance that He would bring them safely through and He would bring them to heaven at last. Now what a promise that! “In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” O what a word of comfort: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.”

And then He speaks a very beautiful word like this: “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” Do not forget that these blessed words that He spoke here immediately to His disciples are spoken to His beloved people right down to the end of time. “I will not leave you comfortless.”

“Though afflicted, tempest-tossed,
Comfortless awhile thou art,
Do not think thou canst be lost,
Thou art graven on My heart.”

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” And especially does the Lord Jesus speak to them of the promise of the Holy Ghost, the divine Comforter. The Lord was going to leave them in a bodily sense to ascend to heaven, but He makes that gracious promise that He would send the Comforter. What a beautiful word that for the Holy Spirit: the Comforter! He “breathes comfort where distress abounds.” He reveals the consolations of God. “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Without going on into the next two chapters, 15 and 16, the Lord Jesus seals it at the end of this chapter and He repeats this beautiful word,

“Let not your heart be troubled.” He says, “Peace I leave with you” – His dying legacy to His beloved people, that peace He was going forth to Calvary to make by the blood of His cross. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” The world cannot give peace, but if the Lord gives it, the world cannot take it away. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” And then He repeats it; He seals it: Then, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” One thing is very clear. When the Lord comes to His beloved people and when He says, “Let not your heart be troubled,” it means He is going to deal with their troubles. It means there is no need for them to be troubled. Now that is so different from the world. There is still quite a lot of kindness and fellow-feeling in the world, and sometimes people are very troubled and sad and cast down, and others will say, “Don’t be troubled”; but perhaps you know there is every reason for you to be troubled. During the last war some of you remember it. It almost seemed we were in a hopeless case, and yet we were continually told not to be troubled. Mercifully the Lord appeared and delivered us and brought us through. But what a difference when the Lord speaks! And those of you who are troubled about various things tonight, if the Queen came from her throne and journeyed specially out of kindness to speak to you, that would not answer your troubles, but if the Lord dropped this word into your heart, that would do the deed.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” How does the Lord deal with His troubled people? Well, let me put it like this: how did the Lord deal with His troubled people when that dark night they were in the midst of the stormy sea of Galilee and they were “toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them”? They were making no headway. It seemed they were going to be wrecked. It seemed there was no way of deliverance. No-one could come to them. We read they were full of trouble. How did the Lord Jesus deal with their troubles? They did not know that He knew anything about them. He had gone up to the top of the mountain to pray. But we read this: “He saw them.” That was more than natural sight. There is Godhead here. “He saw them.” And our hymnwriter says,

“He sees us when we see not Him,
And always hears our cry.”

At the darkest hour of the night, after they had waited long, this is how He dealt with their trouble. He came right where they were. It was not possible, but He came, and He came walking over the stormy billows that were threatening their destruction, and He came in divine, almighty power, and He came in love and mercy, and He came saying, “Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.” This is how He came then and this is how He comes now. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Now what of your troubles tonight, you troubled ones here? Have you got troubles concerning your health, or those that you love? Have you got troubles in your family? Have you got troubles in your business? Are you troubled about tomorrow and the future and the unknown way? Are you troubled about what is going to happen, what is going to take place? You remember after the resurrection the disciples were troubled again, and the risen Saviour appeared to them and He said, “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” Now you cannot control your thoughts, and sometimes thoughts do arise in your heart. But the blessed point is the Lord knows and He understands. Mind you, there is a very solemn side to that, that the Lord knows every thought. He sees the things which you think, those sinful thoughts, those wrong thoughts, those evil thoughts, those God-dishonouring thoughts. There is a sad, solemn side to it. But this blessed side: “Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” And the Lord knows those thoughts that arise. He also knows His own thoughts. He says, “I know the thoughts that I think toward *you*.” He knows the thoughts you have, but He says, “I know the thoughts that I think toward *you*.” What are they? “Thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” The Lord has promised to deliver His people in six troubles and in seven no evil shall come nigh them. In love and mercy He has appointed the throne of grace, the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, so, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

Leaving these providential troubles, every sinner saved by grace has many things that trouble him. “Let not your heart be troubled.” You will

be troubled about your sin and your soul and a never-ending eternity. O where shall I spend eternity? And you will be troubled because of your sin and guilt. When the Lord Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled," He says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." He speaks as an almighty Saviour. He speaks as the One willing and able to save even to the uttermost. He speaks as a sin-pardoning God. He speaks as the One who on the cross shed His precious blood that sin might be forgiven and that it might be washed away. So as the Lord in love and mercy says, "Let not your heart be troubled," He looks in tender pity and compassion on the malady and here He applies the remedy: "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." May the Holy Spirit grant the obedience of faith to be able to rest on the words of the Saviour, to rest on Him as a sure foundation, to rest upon His precious, sin-atoning blood and His glorious righteousness, and then that will be the answer to the trouble over your sin and your soul and eternity.

But I would say this in love and tenderness: it is a solemn thing, eternally solemn thing, if there are any here this evening who never have been troubled about your souls and your sins and eternity. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me," but we do need to be troubled.

But some of you are troubled because you cannot get what you want. The Lord you have long sought after, you cannot find Him. Your cry is, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" and it is a trouble with you that you cannot, as it was a trouble with Job. But Job did find Him, and so will you. As you are seeking after Him and longing to find Him, the Lord Jesus kindly knows your case and compassionates your case and says, "Let not your heart be troubled." May you be able to cast your all into My hands and leave it there. "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." And Job did find what He wanted, but until he did, he found a resting place, and it was this: "He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Are some of you troubled because of the darkness in which you walk? Well, the Lord foresaw this when He said, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and

hath no light?” He prescribes the same remedy there as He does here. “Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” I like that word *stay*. It really means resting the whole weight of your concerns. “Let him ... stay upon his God.”

“Stayed upon Jehovah,
Waiting souls are blessed,
Finding as He promised
Perfect peace and rest.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Are some of you troubled about the hardness of your heart? The blood of Christ can soften it. Are some of you troubled about that dreadful plague of unbelief? When the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings, then that will be dispelled. Are some of you troubled because of the severe temptations of Satan? Christ is greater than Satan and He “who conquered for you once will conquer in you too.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” So really it touches all the needs, everything that troubles the people of God, your small troubles and your great troubles. And what is a trouble to one is not a trouble to another, and sometimes a thing to others may seem to be small, but it is not to you. So you can go with all the concerns of your soul and all your concerns in providence, the losses and crosses, the bereavements, the trials and the smaller things. Young people troubled about exams – well, they do not seem small things. These disappointments – they are a trouble; they do not seem small things. A lonely pathway – it does not seem a small thing. O but the compassion, the tenderness of the Lord here, when He looks on His people in their troubles and kindly promises to comfort them, and to comfort them because He is going to be with them; He is going to supply their need; He is going to help them; He is going to give them strength equal to the day; He is going to bring them safely through; He is going to uphold them; He is going to help them.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” There was a word that rested on my spirit concerning the Lord’s loving, tender, sympathising heart here, and it is this; may it be a word in season to you: “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them.” It seems to be a reference to when the Lord went

before them in the wilderness – “the Angel of His presence.” “Let not your heart be troubled” if the journey is hard, for He hath said, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” “The Angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them.” That is what they want. “And He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” Now that is what the Lord is going to do for you. He is going to bear you and carry you like the Good Shepherd of the sheep, the lambs in His arms. He is not going to put you down till He puts you down in heaven.

This is this glorious Person who in tenderness and love and mercy said to His disciples then and says to you this evening, “Let not *your* heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Trust completely in Me. “Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us.” As the Lord enables you, “Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Trust completely in Me. Leave everything in My hands. In a word it is this: “Commit thy way unto the Lord” – great and small, providence and grace, whatever it is. “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.” “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” This is that loving, tender-hearted, sympathising Saviour who says, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.”

Another word which has been on my spirit, the twenty-fifth Psalm where the psalmist said that he felt full of trouble. And what did he do as he was full of trouble? He says, “The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring Thou me out of my distresses.” Well, “Let not your heart be troubled.” How did David there as he believed in God, believe also in his greater Son, the Lord Jesus? “Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” How did he do it? Well, there is a very beautiful, threefold *remember*. “Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.” It is not irreverent to remind the Lord. It is not irreverent to ask Him to remember. I know He says, “Yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me.” But He is not displeased when a sinner ventures in the day of trouble and says, “Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses.” Well, I thought mercies were tender. Can you have

mercies which are not? David says, “Thy *tender* mercies.” He knew it by experience. “And Thy lovingkindnesses.” O what a resting place in the day of trouble! What a plea! The tender mercies of God in Christ, His loving-kindness that changes not.

And he says, “They have been ever of old.” They are not something there one day and not the next. They are from everlasting. And David says, In my soul’s experience, right from the beginning they have been ever of old. That is the first *remember*. The second *remember*: “Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.” There is an answer to that: “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” for ever. And the third *remember*: remember me. “Remember Thou me for Thy goodness’ sake, O Lord.” There once was a dying sinner in dreadful trouble, and I think of the dying thief. He lived a life of sin, and the Word makes it clear that just a few moments before, He had been reviling the dying Saviour, and suddenly in the midst of all his trouble, and it was great trouble, it was great trouble to him bodily, but now with the work of grace begun in his heart,

“What shall the dying sinner do,
That seeks relief for all his woe?”

What did he do? “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” That is just what the dying thief did. The Holy Ghost enabled him to do it. Who gave him that living faith to know that Jesus was Lord, to know He could forgive sin, to know He had a kingdom? “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” So that simple prayer, a prayer of faith, a sinner in his troubles trusting in the Lord, leaving everything in His hand. It took the dying thief to heaven, and,

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.”

“Remember Thou me for Thy goodness’ sake, O Lord.”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” Beloved friends, this is a very simple word. It is one of the simplest words in the New Testament. It is one of the simplest words our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ ever spoke. But if tonight it is brought with power into your heart, you will go home rejoicing.

Many years ago I was on my way to preach at the thanksgiving services at Matfield. If ever anyone was in trouble, I felt in trouble that day. For one thing, I felt really unwell, and I think I almost should have been in bed rather than travelling to preach. Then any day one of our babies was expected, and then I realised after I managed to get through at Matfield, the next day I was expected to take two baptisms up at Irthlingborough. I just sank under it. Suddenly it was just like a little whisper – that is the only way I can describe it – a whisper from heaven: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” And it came just like this: trust completely to Me. Leave everything in My hands and all will be well. And so I proved the faithfulness of God. Well, may the Holy Spirit with divine authority and power speak this word into someone’s heart this evening.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me.”

* * *

Pensive, doubting, fearful heart,
Hear what Christ the Saviour says;
Every word should joy impart,
Change thy mourning into praise.
Yes, He speaks, and speaks to thee,
May He help thee to believe;
Then thou presently wilt see
Thou hast little cause to grieve:

“Fear thou not, nor be ashamed;
All thy sorrows soon shall end,
I, who heaven and earth have framed,
Am thy Husband and thy Friend;
I, the High and Holy One,
Israel’s God, by all adored,
As thy Saviour will be known,
Thy Redeemer and thy Lord.

“For a moment I withdrew,
And thy heart was filled with pain;
But My mercies I’ll renew;
Thou shalt soon rejoice again;
Though I seem to hide My face,
Very soon My wrath shall cease;
’Tis but for a moment’s space,
Ending in eternal peace.

“Though afflicted, tempest-tossed,
Comfortless awhile thou art,
Do not think thou canst be lost,
Thou art graven on My heart;
All thy wastes I will repair;
Thou shalt be rebuilt anew;
And in thee it shall appear
What the God of love can do.”

John Newton