

Jesus is our Perfect House Keeper

May 14, 2017 | 5th Sunday of Easter (Mothers' Day)

John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. 2 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? 3 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. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

"Home is where the heart is," we say. A little saying that shows us that "home" isn't as much about a place, as much as it is the people who fill it. The people who not just fill a physical space, but fill our hearts. And though we can miss a place, and we can miss the people who used to be in that place, we have a special comfort today that we will be reunited with our loved ones and family in heaven. Jesus speaks these words of comfort to His disciples shortly before his own departure from this world:

I. He keeps a house prepared for us

Mothers' day is a special holiday where we simply pause to appreciate our moms. We send flowers, cards, or even just a phone call to mom to let her know how we feel. Being a mom doesn't just mean raising kids, it means keeping a home in order. Every home has a constant never ending list of to do's. Get one thing done and ten other take its place... Clean the house once, and how long does it last? Laundry, dishes, grocery shopping, meal planning... all fixes are only temporary. Because of this, its nice to give mom a break on Mothers' day; give her the day off and say, "I'll take care of that."

Keeping the house together can be a daunting task; yet, kitchens can be cleaned, floors can be mopped. Other messes aren't as easy to clean up. Some wounds go too deep. Some stains can't be removed. What are mom's really looking for on Mothers' day? Well mother's day is really all about guilt and forgiveness. Mothers are always wondering, "have I always been the best mom?" They are concerned with family reconciliation: "will we ever be able to get everyone together again?" Validation: "did I make the right decisions for my house?" On the other end of Mother's day you have all the sons, daughters, and husbands who, behind all the cards, phone calls, and flowers are really saying, "Mom, I'm sorry." "I'm sorry I only show appreciation for you one day out of the year... if that." You cannot find redemption in a card. You cannot pay for mistakes with flowers...

Knowing exactly how confusing, messy, and guilt infused family life is for us, Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." His voice is so full of compassion, because whereas sometimes we forget, Jesus knows exactly what family life is like; after all, he had a mom that had once left him as a small boy in the city Jerusalem. I'm sure she felt guilty about that her whole life! But speaking to all the guilty, Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled!" When you see the guilt and failures, mistakes and problems, understand washing away the stain of sin is something only Jesus can do. It takes His perfect

application of divine blood, sweat, and tears that wash away any stain we create. Jesus alone gives peace and forgiveness. His card to you says, "Don't let your heart be troubled, see I've taken care of this for you. Your sins are forgiven."

And then He lifts our eyes off of our earthly homes and fixes them on our home above: "In My Father's house are many mansions." Some of you may have grown up hearing "mansions" and that is a wonderful translation. Because Jesus wants to fill our hearts with a yearning for our real home in heaven. The Bible only ever talks about our dwelling here on earth as simply living in a tent—like a camping trip. And camping you just expect to be a messy affair. There will be mosquitos! But when Jesus talks about your heavenly dwelling that He has personally prepared for you, He is intentionally contrasting what is only temporary with what will be eternal; He's comparing a tent to a castle. He contrasts the stained torn ragged flimsy temporary homes and lives with the eternal unblemished, imperishable dwellings waiting for you in heaven.

And this one is for you moms: He says, "I go there to prepare a place for you." Jesus has done all the house work there. It's been done once and it stays done forever. The Laundry has been done once and its done forever. The cleaning has been done once, and its done forever—No more meal prep either! That's His gift to you!

II. He keeps our homes centered on Him

Once Jesus paints this picture of Heaven for us, the disciples asked two questions: "Where is it and how do we get there?" Jesus answers their second question first: "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life. No one comes to the Father accept through Me." From a young age, kids learn the proper order to address their parents. They know exactly who to turn to for what request. If dad is the one they have to convince, who do they go through? Mom. They'll always go to Mom first because they know her softer heart is the way to their Father's heart. Here Jesus promises us He is the only way to the Father's heart.

With His statement, Jesus is excluding every other believe, every other expression of faith. "There is a proper order," He says, "and there is no way to the Father, no way into your heavenly mansions apart from me." He brushes all thoughts and feelings aside—"Well, I'm a pretty good person; I try hard; I haven't done anything bad; as long as I believe in something I'm safe" These are all lies that lead to eternal death. Jesus alone is eternal life. His heart is already soft for you because He has worked so hard for you. He selflessly endured the pains of the cross to make us God's children forever.

But then there is the second question: "Where is the Father's dwelling place?" Haven't we wondered where heaven is—and though it is a real place, we cannot point to a map and say, there it is! But notice what Jesus does, He doesn't tell us "I *will be* the way... to the Father." He says, "I *am* the Way." We have full access to the Father and all of God's wonderful love right now, and the Holy Spirit has a special way of showing us this. That word for "mansions" or permanent dwelling place is only used twice in the Bible. The first time is when Jesus promised "In my Father's House are many mansions." But the second time is only a few verses later, Jesus says, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our *home* (or mansion) with

them” (John 14:23).

You see, God considers your home, your life right now *His* mansion. Though God is everywhere in the universe, the one place He wants to be, is with you. In your home. Jesus *is* the Way, the Truth, and the Life right now. He prepares you for your mansion above by living with you below. As you and your family continue to grow in His Word, He will continue to be a blessing for you—He is strengthening your faith, He is blessing you with His forgiveness, and assuring you of your eternal life through Him. Amen.