

## **A Few Thoughts On Encouragement**

**Shortly before He went to the cross, Jesus met in the upper room with His disciples to celebrate the Passover. It was a traditional meal and Jesus used the occasion to encourage his confused followers. After the foot washing in the Book of John, chapter 13, Jesus zeroes in on a devoted but over confident Peter, who has proclaimed he would lay down his life for Him, and Jesus said, “The rooster shall not crow till you have denied me three times.” Chapter 14 opens, still speaking to Peter, I believe, “Let not your heart be troubled; 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...”**

**It occurs to me, this day before Christmas, that if Jesus is anything in addition to our Lord and Savior, He is most certainly our encourager. All through chapter 14, Jesus answers questions. “I go to prepare a place for you...” He says, “And where I go you know, and the way you know.” Thomas says, Lord we don’t know where You’re going, and how can we know the way? Jesus answers, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also...” Phillip says, Lord, show us the Father and it is sufficient for us. To which Jesus answers, “Have I been with you so long and you have not known Me, Phillip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”**

**Jesus goes on and tells them that the words that He speaks are the Father’s words, not His. And the works that He does are of the Father, and greater works the disciples shall do because Jesus goes to His Father. “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do so that My Father may be glorified in the Son.” Encouraging them further, Jesus says although He is going away, He’ll ask the Father to send another Helper who will be with them forever, the Spirit of truth, “whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”**

**It seems to me, as I sit here this Christmas Eve afternoon, that the questions and answers, asked and received in the upper room so long ago are even more encouraging to us as it was to Jesus’ straggly band of followers. When our hearts become troubled, as they often do in our world today, Jesus assures us that we have a Comforter who is with us through it all. “Because I live,” He says, “you will live also.” Now that to me is good news. Maranatha!**

**Harvill here...1-03-03**

