

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

John 14: 27

Read that very short sentence immediately above. Jesus says that. He says that to his closest disciples on the night before he died. If ever there was a person who was adept at reading his audience, it was Jesus of Nazareth. You know how you are always assaying the situation in which you find yourself? You read people. Their demeanor. The stance of their body. You read their faces and the look in their eyes. There is so much that is communicated non-verbally but really in the way we interact with people. And we all do this. And we all know how to do this. And we are all pretty good at doing this. Most times we are right on.

Jesus excelled at this in his own interactions with those he encountered or those who walked with him. He could “read the room” so to speak. Jesus knew what was going on in their hearts because it was written on their faces. Ours too—for those who know how to see. So, when Jesus says: “Do not let your hearts be troubled” there are several things it tells us. First, he knows when our hearts really are troubled. So there is this sensitivity by the Lord to us. The Lord can read what is going on in your heart and in my heart. There is no reason to be afraid. He did not come to condemn us. He came to transform us, to forgive us, to elevate us and re-create us.

More. He knows that somewhere way back in our lives we made some pretty important decisions about life and what we would allow into our innermost selves and what we would not. What we would accept and cooperate with and what we would put up a hand of opposition. What we would allow to bring pain and discomfort and trouble into our lives and what we would not. So, when Jesus says: Do not let your hearts be troubled” He knows that we often actually make a decision to allow what is said or what is happening to enter into us—and cause us inner turmoil and trouble. His counsel is: “Do not do this.” There is another way. I can, right in the moment put the difficult situation or the hurtful conversation into the hands of Our Lord. I need not hold onto any of it. I need not let it in. Hear that again. I need not let in that which will trouble my soul. If it tries to enter I can give it right in that moment into the hands of Our Lord. And then it is no longer mine, no longer troubling. Now it is his and I am free. Did you know you could do that? The question of the week.