

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to the Gospel of John, chapter 14

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the gospel of John –

BTW – I was looking through my notes this past week and we actually started this study back at the beginning of August of last year – so it's almost been an entire year.

Praise God!!!

One morning, 4 year old Kevin and his grandpa went out to get donuts.

As they got in the car and grandpa drove to the donut shop – he decided to take this time make sure that Kevin's parents were being responsible Christians and instructing their son about God, so he decided to quiz Kevin.

“Kevin, do you know which way heaven is?”

And Kevin nodded and pointed up

“Kevin, do you know where hell is?”

And Kevin nodded and pointed down

“Kevin, where are you going?”

And Kevin responded, “To go get donuts”

Now, we may laugh at Kevin's response

But the thing is church –

Kevin's response gives us a good handle on where the majority of people's heads are today.

You see, to most people – the question whether heaven or hell are real – isn't important

What is important to them is the here and now.

We become like Kevin and the only thought in our head is – what type of donut am I going to get today –

It's all about the here and now

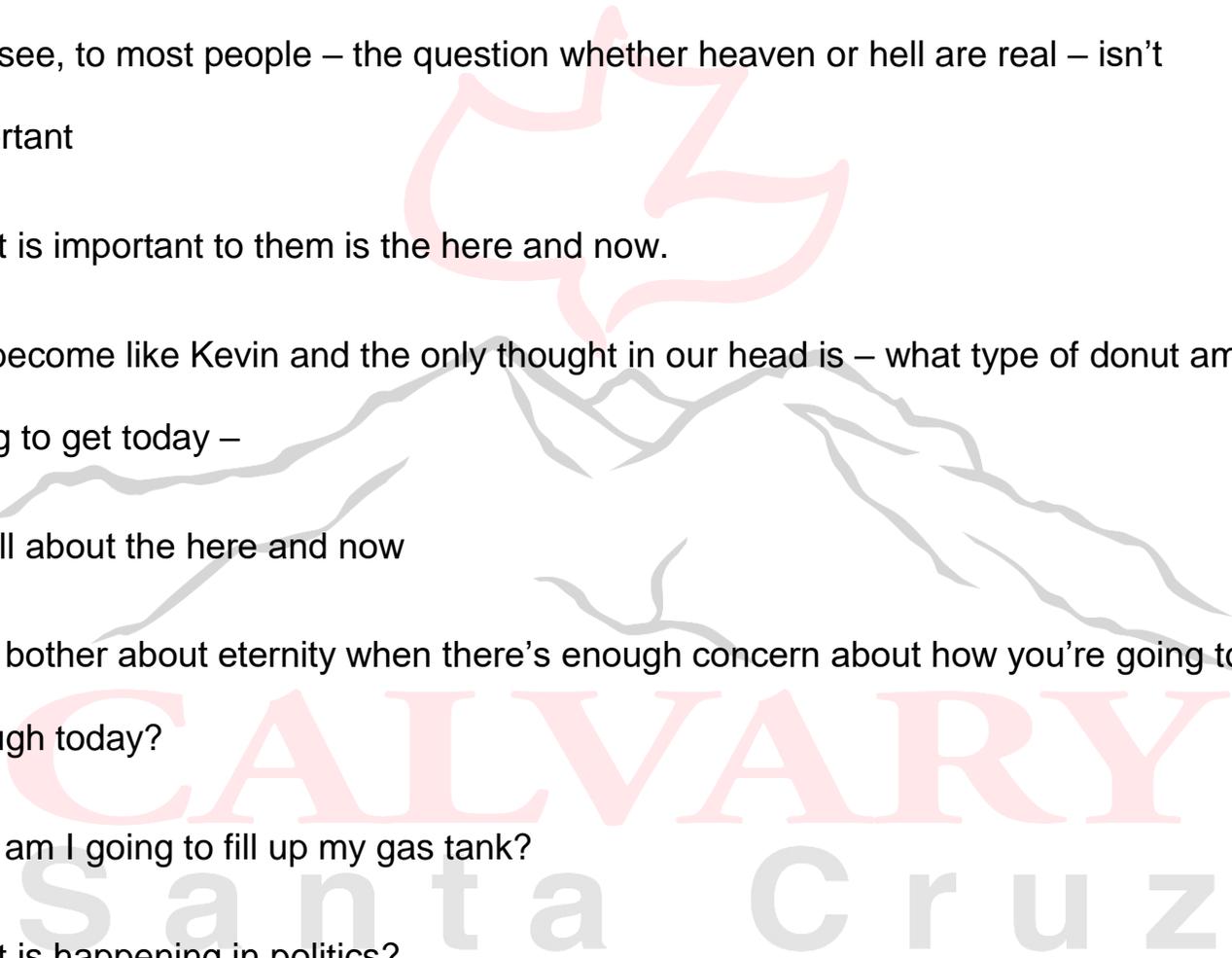
Why bother about eternity when there's enough concern about how you're going to get through today?

How am I going to fill up my gas tank?

What is happening in politics?

What is happening concerning my finances?

What is happening concerning my health, concerning the health of my loved ones?



And it gets to the point that we become so consumed with the here and now – that we lose sight of why we are here and where we are going.

Why do I bring this up?

In our text this morning, Jesus knows the hearts of His disciples and our hearts – He knows His disciples, just like us are focused on the donuts.

So Jesus brings comfort to them and to us.

Let's pray...

[Jhn 14:1-6 NKJV] 1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "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. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, [there] you may be also. 4 "And where I go you know, and the way you know." 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

One of my favorite old dead guys is, George Mueller —

And one of my favorite quotes of his

'The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.'

This is so true church

Part of the battle that you and I face, as believers and followers of Jesus, is this ongoing battle between the flesh and the spirit.

That is how the scriptures explain it to us.

It is the human side in all of us fighting against God's desire for our lives.

And one of the tools that our human side uses – is fear and anxiety.

Fear and anxiety undermine our faith, they undermine our trust in the Lord.

So our spiritual battle becomes a battle between

Fear versus faith

Anxiety versus assurance

And for many of us – this is an intense battle in our lives because worry, anxiety and fear are real, true emotions that so many of us face on a regular basis.

We all have to learn to bring our cares upon the Lord – this is something we need to do daily, continually, constantly

If we don't, fear and anxiety begin to eat away at our faith and trust in the Lord

The good thing church – is that God, doesn't leave it up to ourselves to try to figure it out – He gives us His word where we He gives us insight and an answer to anxiety and worry.

He gives us the antidote to them.

Turn with me to Phil 4

[Phi 4:6-9 NKJV] 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things [are] noble, whatever things [are] just, whatever things [are] pure, whatever things [are] lovely, whatever things [are] of good report, if [there is] any virtue and if [there is] anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

So as we see here church, God has a word for anxiety.

And even though anxiety and worry are normal emotions for the believer – they can very easily consume us and become a sin in our lives – we stop trusting the Lord.

It is possible to allow the circumstances of life to so take our eyes off the Lord that we are not in the place that He desires.

So Paul tells us here the very first thing we must do – be anxious for nothing

Stop it!!!!

We recognize it – and we stop it.

The word anxious comes to us from two Greek words – one word meaning “the mind” the other word meaning “divide”

To be pulled in different directions – that is what anxiety means

As James puts it in his epistle – to be double minded - A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Part of the person’s mind is on the Lord and part of the person’s mind in his/her circumstances

So Paul tells us that we must seek the Lord in prayer and supplication

We ask the Lord to meet us where we are at

We are to surrender the situation, surrender the person, surrender whatever has caused us to be double minded and pray. That is where we spend our time – in prayer.

Paul then tells us to be thankful – with thanksgiving –

Some smart guy somewhere figured out that our brains are wired where the part of the brain that controls our emotions such as fear – cannot function at the same time as the part of the brain that controls thanksgiving.

So if we are fearful – we can't be thankful

And if we are thankful – we can't be fearful

Isn't that amazing?

To be thankful draws me to closer to trusting the Lord

And as we trust he Lord - the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The circumstances will still be there – craziness will still be around us – but we will have the peace of God in us.

That is when people will take notice and say to you

Why are you not freaking out?

Why aren't you losing sleep?

Why aren't you not drinking?

And our response -

"I don't know – I can't explain it. I just trust God"

And the last thing Paul tells us is to fill our mind and heart with good things – and Paul gives us a bunch of examples.

Things that are true, just, lovely, pure – just to name a few.

And he tells us to meditate on those things – to chew them over and over again – that is what the word meditates means.

Be anxious for nothing

Some of you might be thinking – I can't – that is impossible.

But the word of God tells us that it is possible to be less anxious, it is possible to not worry, it is possible to trust in the Lord with all your heart and not lean on our own understanding

But it is not done by us trying to resolve the circumstances on our own – it is done by surrendering our lives to the will of God, to the sovereignty of God, and to the power of God.

Turn back to John 14

The eleven remaining disciples that are in the upper room with Jesus

They have followed Him for 3.5 years

They abandoned their careers to follow Jesus – we know that at least 7 of them were fishermen.

They saw the signs, they heard His sermons, they broke bread with Him time and time again.

But a few days earlier – their world was turned upside down when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the donkey

A few hours earlier, their Rabbi – washed their feet

He had announced to them that one of them was going to betray Him

He had announced to them His death on the cross and His Resurrection

[Jhn 13:31-32 NKJV] 31 So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. 32 "If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately.

He had announced to them "I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,'

And later on Jesus tells them "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward."

Let's put ourselves in the disciples sandals -

They don't know what's going on

Much in the same way that there are time in our lives where we have no idea of the work of the Lord in our lives.

And we may cry out...

I don't understand

Why am I here?

What going on?

Why don't You explain it to me?

I don't know what to do

I can't take it anymore

And the same word that Jesus had for His disciples – He has for you and me.

[Jhn 14:1 NKJV] 1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

I had you make a note of the word troubled.

Because we have seen this before

This is the same word that John used to describe Jesus - He was troubled in spirit, when Mary of Bethany came and fell to His feet and we He was about to announce to the disciples that one of them was going to deceive Him.

It means agitated –

Jesus knows their hearts (now) – he knows that they are stressing out and worrying over what has just occurred in the upper room.

One of the things that I want to make sure that we understand is that this is a command.

Let not your heart be troubled!!!

Paul echoed what Jesus said here in Phil right?

Church, we may not be able to control the situation, but we can control how we deal with the situation.

That is what Jesus is doing here.

He isn't trying to condemn them for their worry.

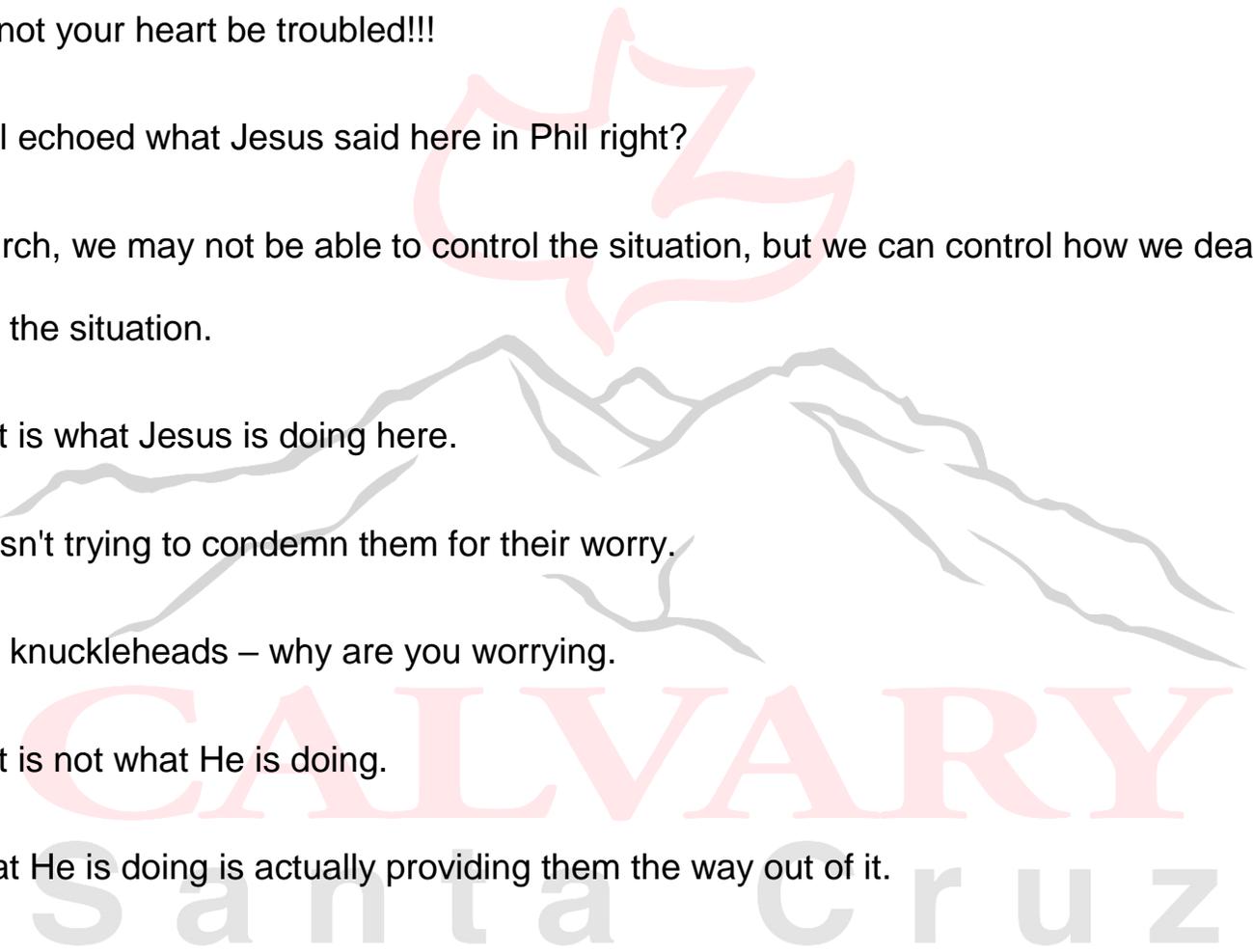
You knuckleheads – why are you worrying.

That is not what He is doing.

What He is doing is actually providing them the way out of it.

You believe in God, believe also in Me.

By the way, both of these are also commands.



He's saying, "You who find yourself worried, distressed, anxious about the trouble coming down – your solace, your comfort lies in trusting God, Who is revealed in Me."

Jesus is reminding us here in verse 1 –

Trust Me sons, trust Me daughters – trust Me, I am in control

Corrie ten Boom –

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength."

Think about everything we worried about last week, last month, over the last year, ten years ago, twenty years ago

A good portion of what we worried about – we forgot what it was in the first place.

But God came through and by the grace of God, we are still here.

God's faithfulness is still shining brightly in our life

For some of us, the pain might still be there, the difficulty still might be there – we become like Jacob, where God gives us a limp to remind us of the wrestling with God, to remind us of the situation.

But we are standing in the grace of God and we are here today

And I pray that God would teach us not to worry.

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

[Jhn 14:2-3 NKJV] 2 "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. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, [there] you may be also.

Jesus is doing a couple of things here.

The first thing He is doing, He is reminding the disciples that there is more to life than this life.

Eternity awaits us

Stop worrying about the donuts Kevin

Jesus is talking to them about heaven.

[Psa 23:4-6 NKJV] 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You [are] with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Not only does Jesus remind them of eternity and heaven, He also answers their question.

Remember, Jesus has been talking about going away to a place where the disciples couldn't come.

And this was one of the sources of their anxiety.

This was one of the reasons that their hearts were agitated.

He now clarifies that He's going to His Father's house.

And He's not just going to be by Himself, to get away from them.

He's going to prepare places for all of them.

It was John Lennon in his song, Imagine

Imagine there's no Heaven - It's easy if you try.

No hell below us - Above us only sky.

Imagine all the people -- Living for today.

Let's imagine it?

What would a society that didn't believe in heaven look like?

If there's no heaven, and this life is all there is, people would simply go through life doing what they want, when they want, how they want, to whom they want;

Thank goodness this doesn't describe our society, huh?

But heaven IS real.

How do we know that? Because of what Jesus says, & because He rose from the dead to prove the fact that He is God & what He said is absolutely trust-worthy.

If He goes to prepare a place for us (and He has!), then He will definitely come again to take us home with Him.

The whole point of His going was not to leave us, but to get things ready for us, so we could be with Him forever.

I don't want us to miss the picture that Jesus is giving His disciples here.

It's not about inheriting a beautiful house / mansion but rather, He is telling them that He is going to heaven and He is going to prepare a place for them.

He is telling them that they are going to make it.

Everything in their life in the next few days, their faith, everything that they believed in will be radically challenged.

They will wonder if there were really saved

If all of this was really worth it

They will have all these thoughts – and Jesus is preparing them by telling them – you are going to make it.

We are going to make it church – the bible says that we are kept by the power of God

1 Peter 1:5

There is going to be a place for us in heaven by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

Even when we doubt

Even when we are anxious

Even when we don't know what is going on

Jesus says there is a place for us

[Jhn 14:4 NKJV] 4 "And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Jesus ends His answer by simply saying that the disciples know where He's going and the way to get there.

They might not realize it yet, but they do actually know.

Why did Jesus say they know?

Because, He's already told them.

Where is He going?

Heaven

[Jhn 7:33 NKJV] 33 Then Jesus said to them, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and [then] I go to Him who sent Me.

What is the way to get there?

Through the cross

[Jhn 1:29 NKJV] 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

[Jhn 12:24 NKJV] 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

They just haven't put it all together yet.

[Jhn 14:5 NKJV] 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"

I am thankful that we have Thomas as an example.

Thomas truly didn't understand what Jesus was saying – and he raised his hands and pretty much said – we don't know what you are talking about.

We don't know where you are going

We don't know the way

You said we couldn't find You but then we are going to find You

We don't understand what You are doing.

[Jhn 14:6 NKJV] 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6 is one of those bible verses that we sometimes use – when we refer to One path to salvation.

There are not many roads that lead to heaven – there is only one

It doesn't matter what Tom Cruise or Oprah or anyone else says

We all know that it is only by grace through faith that we are saved.

By recognizing the need for a Savior and believing that we are redeemed by the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

Not one person is going to inhabit heaven that hasn't come through the blood of Jesus Christ

So we use John 14:6 to stress that point – however, in the context that Jesus is sharing this with his disciples – He is not giving them a theological study

He is telling them this – for one reason.

He is comforting them.

This verse is a verse of comfort

Remember, they have troubled hearts, Thomas is saying, we're lost right now – and Jesus tells them

“Look guys – I am the way, the truth and the life”

You made the right decision in following Me

You are in good hands

Follow Me and trust Me

Follow Me and trust Me

And as we read Jesus' words in context we see that these are words of comfort, strength and hope.

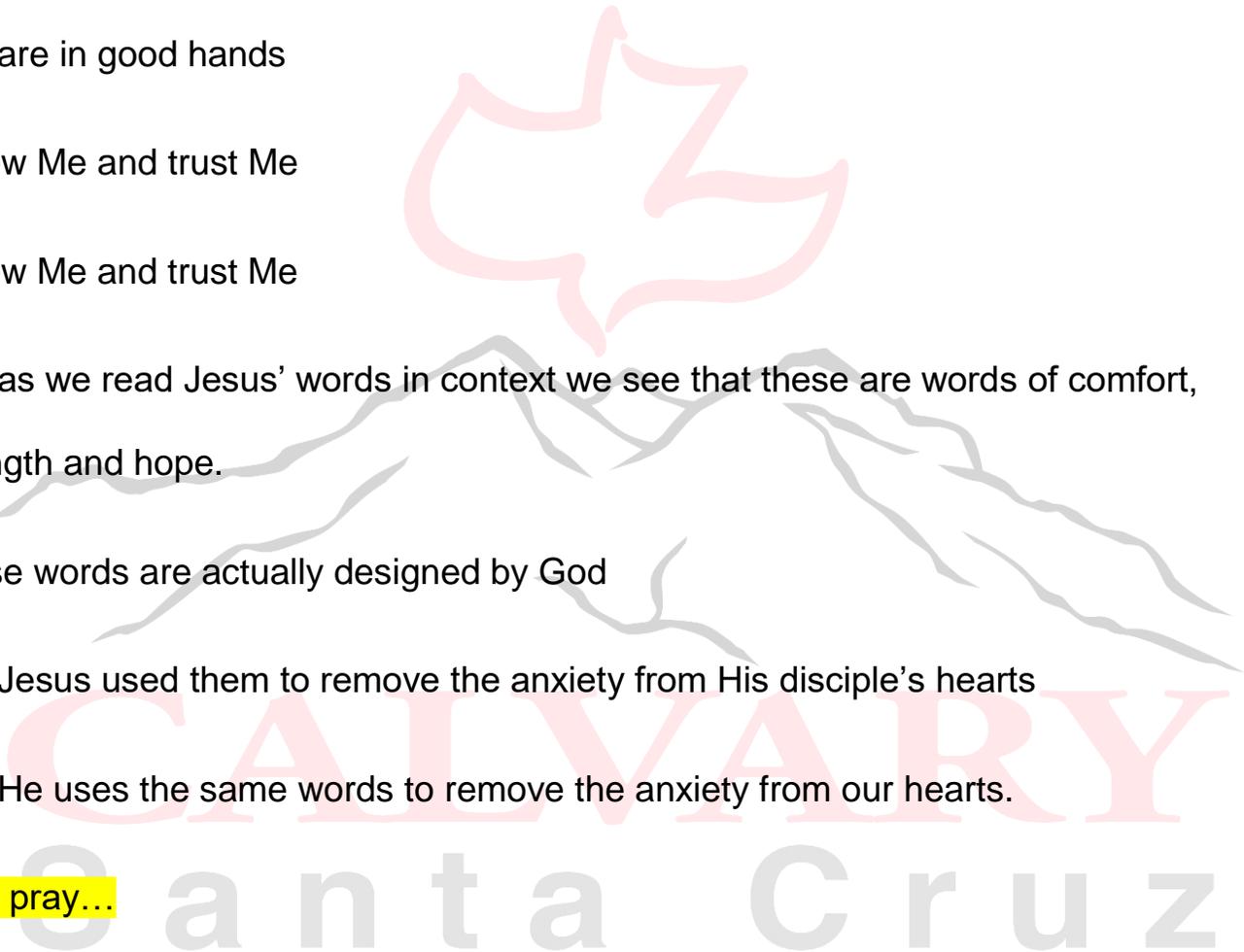
These words are actually designed by God

And Jesus used them to remove the anxiety from His disciple's hearts

And He uses the same words to remove the anxiety from our hearts.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:



Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

God never commands us to do something unless He provides us with the power to do it.

We saw that in our study last week with the commandment to love one another and He did it again this week in the command to "Don't let your heart be troubled"

Follow Me and trust Me – that is the key.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

