

Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled! Remain in My Love!

TODAY'S READING: JOHN 14 AND 15

Even though Jesus knows that he—and not the disciples—will soon face the suffering of the cross, he is the one comforting his disciples in these chapters, telling them, “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (14:1). He is not concerned about himself but fully focused on his disciples’ spiritual and emotional well-being, comforting them in their distress. Later in the passage he says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (14:27).

The world news does not give us hope or peace at this time; instead, it can make us feel anxious and afraid as we hear about the spread of a pandemic across every region of the world. But Jesus gives us a peace that the world cannot give. In chapter 15, he uses the image of the vine and the branches and says, “Remain in my love!” Remaining in him—spending time in the Word of God and in prayer—is necessary so that we can bear fruit. What fruit? Galatians 5:22–23 says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**” All these appear increasingly in our lives as we rely on Jesus Christ and spend time in God’s Word, the Bible. Not only does the fruit of the Spirit show up despite difficult circumstances, but it is especially revealed in our lives at times like these.



Happening Now:

People in more developed regions of the world are implementing “social distancing” measures and isolating themselves at home. But in many parts of the world, such as the slums of large Global South cities or refugee camps in Africa and the Middle East, social distancing is impossible and water for washing hands is not readily available. Churches and Christian relief organizations are among those reaching out to these struggling areas. Would you offer a prayer for them right now, asking God to give them comfort, strength and hope today?

Have You Thought About...

- It is important to stay informed and know how the current situation is developing, but following the news constantly may increase our anxiety. Do you spend as much time reading the Bible and in prayer as you spend reading the news?
- Are you seeing the fruit of the Spirit in your life? Do others see it as well? The more time you spend reading in the Bible, the more you will grow in love, joy, peace and all the expressions of the fruit of the Spirit.
- Whom could you reach out to today to give comfort and assurance? Even small words of encouragement or simply a listening ear can strengthen someone in such a time as this.