

The Way to the Father

Series: His Last Day

John 14:1-14

March 20, 2022

This year during Lent, our series comes from a meme:

Sometimes I joke about what I'd do if I had one day left to live. Eat junk food, go crazy, etc. Today it hit me: Jesus knew. And He washed feet.

In this series "His Last Day," we are looking at some very important chapters in the Gospel of John, chapters 13-16. They are often called the Upper Room Discourse, for Jesus taught His disciples in the Upper Room the night before He was crucified.

So, turn to page 4 in your bulletin, or if you are online, grab your spiritual journal and turn in your Bible to John 14.

Now, when you read John 13-16, you will find some incredible verses of Scripture, ones that should be underlined in your Bible. Of all of them, this section is possibly the most important. From John 14:1-14, hear these words:

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going." "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!" Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus replied, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"

On Jesus' Last Day, Jesus gave His disciples, and us, things we would need on our Christian journey.

First, Jesus gives us a command: Trust Me.

In a very short time, the disciples' worlds will become upside down. Their worlds are going to collapse in chaos, and fear will be all around them. So, Jesus starts out this section with this key: trust God. Verse 1:

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.²

I cannot think of more comforting words from Jesus than trust Me. When your child is sick unto death: trust Me. When your job fails you: trust Me. When you are at a crossroads: trust Me.

¹ John 14:1-14 (NLT2)

² John 14:1 (NLT2)

There comes a time when we have to believe where we cannot prove and to accept where we cannot understand. If, in the darkest hour, we believe that somehow, God has a purpose in this, and that purpose is His glory and our good, even the unbearable becomes bearable, and even in the darkness, there is a glimmer of light.

“Trust me,” Jesus said on His Last Day.

Second, Jesus gives us confidence: Here’s why you can trust Me.

Verses 2-3:

*There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.*³

HOUSES IN HEAVEN.

Christ’s picture of heaven here is the most precious one that we possess. It is our heavenly home with the Father and with Jesus.

He said, “There is more than enough room in my Father’s home.” This implies that in heaven, there is room for all. An earthly house becomes overcrowded; an earthly inn must sometimes turn away the weary traveler, because its accommodation is exhausted. When Jesus came into this world, there was no room in the inn.

But it will not be that way when we go to heaven, into our Father’s house, for heaven is as wide as the heart of God and there is room for all. Jesus is saying to His friends: “Don’t be afraid. People may shut their doors to you because you are different, because of where you are from, but God has a different kind of vacancy requirement.”

Something else here. Jesus said He was going to prepare a place. It was customary to send someone forward for such a purpose.⁴ John the Baptist had gone ahead of Jesus to “prepare the way of the Lord.”⁵ Jesus sent Peter and John to make ready for the Passover meal in the Upper Room.⁶ Now, Jesus is preparing the way for us. He is our forerunner in heaven. Hebrews 6:20 reads:

*Jesus has already gone in there for us...*⁷

Jesus tells His disciples they can have confidence because He is leaving to prepare a place for them. Jesus is heading to our Father’s house.

Third, Jesus gives us the path: Me.

Here is one of the most important verses in all of the Bible. From verses 4-6:

*“And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”*⁸

Jesus told the disciples that they knew where He was going, but they obviously missed it. Despite His foretelling of what was going to happen in the next 24 hours, despite Him just saying He was going to prepare their way to heaven for them, they don’t know. Peter didn’t know in the previous chapter.⁹ But he wasn’t going to open his

³ John 14:2-3 (NLT2)

⁴ See Numbers 10:33

⁵ See Matthew 3:1-3

⁶ See Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12

⁷ Hebrews 6:20a (NLT2)

⁸ John 14:4-6 (NLT2)

⁹ See John 13:36-37

mouth again after the prediction of his denial. Instead, it was Thomas, who renews the doubt about the destination of Jesus including the path or way.

“No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”¹⁰

The world is looking for the way. It thinks it finds it in money, prestige, works, sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll. I was once asked in this very sanctuary about the way, and when I told them, they said, “You really don’t believe that, do you?”

My friends, I put my whole trust – of my life and its purpose, of my eternity and its destiny – into this verse:

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”¹¹

Peter said to the religious leaders after Pentecost:

There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”¹²

Jesus is the way of salvation. There is no room for other ways in that statement. All religions do not lead to the Father; only one.

Jesus is the truth. He is the great essential truth to know. He is the One Truth we must know to be saved. Failure to know this truth will lead to eternity in hell. Pilate lost it all because of his failure to know the truth. He asked Christ, “What is truth?”¹³ when Truth stood right before him.

Jesus is the life. Sin has brought death to humanity,¹⁴ but Christ brought life. Many people look for life in a bottle, in partying, in drugs. But life is in Christ.

... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.¹⁵

Christ is the only way, the only truth, and the only life. He is the path.

Fourth, Jesus gives us a glimpse: I and the Father are one.

When Jesus said, “No one can come to the Father except through me,” it prompts Philip. Verses 7-11:

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.”¹⁶

Like Thomas earlier, Philip did not speak well here. He spoke the typical language of those who want more evidence before they will believe, though they have ample evidence to believe. Much unbelief is disguised as a lack of facts, when in truth it is simply a lack of faith. “Show us” is not a bad request in itself, for in anything, we need to be shown the proof. But to say “show us” when you have already been shown

¹⁰ John 14:5 (NLT2)

¹¹ John 14:6 (NLT2)

¹² Acts 4:12 (NLT2)

¹³ John 18:38

¹⁴ See Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1

¹⁵ John 10:10 (NRSV)

¹⁶ John 14:8-11 (NLT2)

adequately and abundantly, as it was in Philip's case, is the snarl of persistent unbelief that refuses to accept the facts.¹⁷

Jesus was hurt and disappointed in Philip, so He rebukes him. "Are you kidding?" is what He is saying to him. Jesus brought the full revelation of the Father in everything He did, so that the disciples, as do we, have a real knowledge of God. Every characteristic, every mannerism, every response, every decision, every teaching, every miracle, pointed to God.

Actually, that is the requirement of every Christian: point to the Father. Your life and my life should reflect the character, heart, and will of God. The saying goes, "You may be the only Jesus someone ever reads" is absolutely true. Our lives should point to the Father because we have seen the Father through His Son, for they are one.

The American politician William Jennings Bryan wrote in his book "In His Image:" "The fact of Christ cannot be denied. Christ lived; that is admitted. He taught; we have His words. He died upon the Cross, that we know. We can trace His blood by its cleansing power as it flows through the centuries. Judged by His life, His teachings, and His death, and the impression they have made upon the human race, we conclude that He was Divine, and that He has justified the titles bestowed upon Him. No other explanations can account for Him."¹⁸

Jesus and the Father are One.

Finally, during His Last Day, Jesus gives us power: Greater than these.

Verses 12-14:

*I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!*¹⁹

There are two great promises here, but by their nature, they are somewhat difficult to understand.

First of all, Jesus said that one day His disciples would do what He did, and even greater works. Anyone in this room healed a blind man, or fed 5,000, or raised someone from the dead? So, what did Jesus mean?

Well, certainly, in the early days, the Early Church demonstrated miracles. Paul wrote about the spiritual gift of healing.²⁰ James urged that when any Christian was sick, the elders should pray over him and anoint him with oil.²¹

But the fact is that Peter converted more people in one day than Jesus did in 3 years: 3,000 people were saved.

So, it's not always about the signs, nor the power in the signs. It is about the Holy Spirit working in the lives of Christians and through the Church to preach salvation to the lost, bring help to the poor, offer comfort to the downtrodden.

He promises that we will reach places He did not, and we do.

Second, Jesus says that prayer offered in His name will be granted. But "in Jesus' name" is not some magic word.

¹⁷ Analytical Bible Expositor – John 14:7

¹⁸ "Acts and Facts", Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations: Signs of the Times, John 14:11

¹⁹ John 14:12-14 (NLT2)

²⁰ See 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30

²¹ See James 5:14

When we were in the Harry Potter section of Universal Studios theme park in Florida last October, we saw a lady wearing a shirt that Myra loved. It said, "Accio Coffee." In Harry Potter, Accio is a summoning charm. So, the lady's shirt was saying, "Bring me coffee."

"In Jesus' name" is not some magic word. It is a reminder to the one praying that we are asking for something that is in alignment with the will of Christ, in the heart of Christ. You can't pray for revenge or calamity upon someone "in Jesus' name."

We get the erroneous idea that prayer is telling God our will, instead of asking for His, and using Jesus' name as a blackmail. Then we blame God if He doesn't answer a prayer that goes against His will, since our will supersedes His will.

Instead, praying "in Jesus' name" is saying, "Lord, I only want Your will in my prayer. Only Your glory in my requests. Only what You want in my pleadings." That's praying "in Jesus' name."

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart, and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art."

The young man held out the package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home, he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

The first item on the platform was the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?"

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one."

But the auctioneer persisted. "Will somebody bid for this painting. Who will start the bidding? \$100? \$200?"

Another voice yelled angrily, "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs and Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids."

But still the auctioneer continued. "The son. The son. Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

"We have \$10, who will bid \$20?"

"Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters."

"\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?"

The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections.

The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10."

A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection."

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over."

"What about the paintings?"

"I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything."

God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on the cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is: "The son, the son, who'll take the son?" Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.