

**Theme: Know Jesus, Know God. No Jesus, No God.**

**John 14:1-12**

"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. 7 " If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 "Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. 12 " Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

These words of Jesus in our text are part of what Luther called "the best and most comforting sermon given by Christ, our Lord, on earth" (Ylvisaker, *The Gospels*, p. 673). I would agree. I think that these are the most comforting words Jesus ever spoke (and that's saying something!). I have used these words a number of times with people who are on their death bed, and at many funerals to give the comfort and "peace" (John 14:27) that only Jesus can give to the family and friends of a loved one who has passed away. These words are the words of everlasting hope, comfort, and peace; they are the very words of life!

But do you realize that these words of incredible comfort for us are, to many people, some of Jesus' most "controversial" words? Why? Well, most people wouldn't have a problem with Jesus or with His followers claiming that He is a Savior, or that He is a God, or that He's one of the ways to heaven. Have you ever heard thoughts like this expressed before:

"There are many paths to God, but ultimately they all lead to the same destination."

"It doesn't really matter what religion you are since we all worshipping the same God anyway."

It is very common to hear these types of religious opinions expressed today. Those are nice thoughts. They sound good. But are they true. Never mind what I say or what you say, or what the rest of the world says. What does Jesus say? Notice, Jesus did not say "I am one of the ways, I am one of the truths, and I am one of the givers of life." No, Jesus states very clearly in our text that He is the only way to the Father and the only way to heaven: "**I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me**" (John 14:6). As Jesus' followers—as believers in Christ—we say and believe the same thing.

Jesus' purpose in saying these words was not to "pick a fight" with all the other world religions. No, when He spoke these words to His disciples the night before He was crucified for the world's sins He did so for their comfort and the comfort of all believers.

The problem is most people can't see past the controversy of Jesus' claim to being the only way to heaven, and they completely miss the comfort that these words give to our hearts. Listen again to Jesus' words from the first half of our sermon text, "**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. I go to prepare a place for you. 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. And where I go you know, and the way you know...I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:1-4, 6).**

Jesus makes it very clear in our text that He is not only equal with God the Father, but as He said earlier in the Gospel of John, **“I and My Father are one” (John 10:30)**. He spends at least four verses in our text explaining this fact to Philip and the rest of His disciples, who apparently hadn’t completely understood the oneness of Jesus and God the Father yet either. And can we blame them? This mystery of the oneness of God the Father, Jesus, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is not something the disciples, or we, or any other person could ever completely understand with our minds. It is something that God Himself must lead our hearts to believe through His Word. That’s exactly what Jesus does for His disciples, and us, in the last half of our text, **“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves” (v. 7-11).**

If Jesus and God the Father are one as Jesus says, then it follows that if you **know Jesus** then you **know God** and one day you will “know” heaven. However, if Jesus and God the Father are one, then it also follows that if your faith has **no Jesus** then you have **no God**—at least not the true God.

Ever since the fall into sin mankind has been searching for the **“way”** to God. By nature we human beings would like to believe the ideas our own hearts come up with to find that **“way.”** Such as, if we work hard enough to please God, we will one day see God; or the one that we mentioned near the beginning of our sermon that “all ways eventually lead to God.” We were reminded of the prophet Isaiah’s words concerning the ways of man in last week’s sermon, **“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6)**. Left to ourselves our life is like a maze that has no solution. Our own ways do not lead to God, or to heaven. The prophet Jeremiah reminds us of this truth, **“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23)**. Jesus tells us where the many **“ways”** of man lead us. He tells us that they literally lead to a “dead end.” He says in Matthew, **“For wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it” (Matthew 7:13).**

That is why He also encourages us to **“Enter by the narrow gate...which leads to life” (Matthew 7:13a, 14)**. Jesus is that **“gate.”** He is the way—the only way—to **know God** and the only **“way”** to heaven. **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me,” (v. 6)** Jesus tells us very plainly in our text.

- † He is the **“Way”** because by His sacrifice on the cross He bridged the unbridgeable gap of sin between man and God and by the forgiveness He earned for all of us paved the **“way”** to heaven for all people.
- † Jesus is the **“Truth,”** not just because as the sinless Son of God He only speaks the **“truth;”** He is **“truth”!** He is the very embodiment of **“truth”** itself! He is, as John puts it, **“the Word [made] flesh...full of grace and truth” (John 1:14)**. He is the **“truth”** of God’s Word that tells us about Himself, the **“Way”** to heaven. (Example: Using a map or a GPS to find your way home).
- † Jesus is the **“Life”** because He is the originator of all life, as John again tells us in the first chapter of his gospel, **“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” (John 1:3-4)**. Through Him true **“life”** is given as we heard Jesus say in last week’s sermon, **“I have come that they may have**

**life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly” (John 10:10).** Jesus’ death on Calvary’s cross and His resurrection from the dead promises us unending “**life**” even after death. We read again Jesus’ familiar words from John, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (John 11:25-26).**

Jesus has entrusted each one of us with the very way to God the Father, and has blessed us with faith to believe in Him and His words. He has given us His “**truth**” in His Word that we might have “**life**” everlasting and know the “**way**” to heaven’s mansions. He wants us to share that “**way**” that “**truth**” and that “**life**” with others that they might share heaven with us.

May this thought always be our comfort, our strength, and our motivation: we **know Jesus**, therefore we **know God**, and one day we will “know” heaven! Jesus Himself tells us so, **“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. 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” (v. 2-3).** Amen.