

- ***READ John 14:1-7*** John chapters 13 through 17 is a truly fascinating portion of Scripture and particularly of John's Gospel because it is an extended discussion between the Lord and His Apostles. One preacher once described this discussion as a pep talk from Jesus to these hand picked disciples. We can understand why it is that Jesus felt that this would be an important thing for him to do. We are able to look back and see that Jesus is about to be arrested and eventually crucified, and these Apostles would soon find themselves on their own for a little while before His resurrection and ascension. Things were about to get rough, and Jesus wanted these men prepared for what they would soon face without Him.
- So what would Jesus say to these Apostles to help strengthen them for the difficulties ahead?
 - He begins by washing their feet to show them their need for humility. (**John 13:1-17**)
 - In **chapter 15**, we see Jesus emphasizing His love for them, and shows how they ought to have the same type of love for one another. (**John 15:1-17**)
 - Sprinkled throughout these chapters we find Jesus's promises to the Apostles concerning the coming Helper, the Holy Spirit. (**John 14:16-26; 16:1-15**)
 - And then we skipped over His words that we read just a few minutes to go from **John 14:1-7**, where Jesus really focuses on their troubled hearts by reassuring them that even if He goes away, that He was going away to their benefit to prepare a place for them to come and join Him.
- Because of His words about going away, Thomas asked, "*Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?*" (**John 14:5**) Jesus's answer to this question is one of His most well known "I Am" statements of John's Gospels, "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.*" (**John 14:7**) What is Jesus meaning when He claims to be these three all important things? Why the necessity for Jesus to state such things? Let's use our time this morning to consider how Jesus is the way, truth, and life, and why these things matter so much to us.

I. The world claims there are many ways, many truths, and many lives.

A. Political correctness demands that all people allow for many ways, truths, and lives.

1. We live in a society where willingness to acknowledge the all perspectives are correct or at the very least are valid and allowable is the greatest of traits that one can possess. This is true of society from a general sense, but it is just as true from a religious standpoint.
2. How often do we hear individuals claim that there are many different ways to heaven? How often do we hear, "Well, that is just your truth, but I believe something else to be true?" How often do we see people living lives that are in direct contradiction to one another, yet both claim that the other is just as righteous in their life as they themselves are? This ecumenical mindset is very pervasive, and has even seeped into the thinking of some within the Lord's church where they don't see the problem with others who hold to fundamental differences of faith.
3. This isn't to say that we must all hold to every single issue of faith the same way. Paul shows that those of different opinions on doubtful things can still be in fellowship with one another through patience and love. (**Romans 14**) However, there is a vast difference between issues in that realm and the issues that often divide us that are akin to the things mentioned by Paul in **Ephesians 4:4,5**, where Paul says, "*There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*" We must recognize that while the world claims that many ways, truths, and lives are permissible, Jesus's statement in **John 14:6** shows that not to be true.

B. Jesus is making an absolute statement in **John 14:6**.

1. The world might claim there are many, but Jesus declares with authority that He alone is the way. He alone is the truth. He alone is the life. There are not many, but He is the one alone.

2. Think about this from the Apostle's perspective. They were about to be left alone without Jesus for He is telling them that He is about to leave. Of course their reaction is, "we want to go with You!", but we know this was impossible at the moment. So instead, we see Thomas asking where Jesus is going and how it is that they could get there, "**how do we know the way?**" (**John 14:5**) There would be many people who might claim to know the way, but Jesus seems to want to really impress upon them that He alone truly knows the way. What does it mean, though, that Jesus is the way, truth, and the life? Let's consider what Jesus meant by this "I Am" statement for the remainder of our study, this morning.

II. Jesus is the only way to God the Father.

A. Jesus was just previously stating that He was going to be with His Father.

1. "**In My Father's house are many dwelling places.**" (**John 14:2**) This statement might lead our minds to imagine what heaven will be like, but I don't believe this to be the point of Jesus's words. I don't believe He is trying to teach them that heaven will be a nice big resort, but He is instead trying to teach them that there is plenty of room for all people to be with their God.
2. Furthermore, Jesus is saying that this place, His Father's house, is where He is going, and after some time He says He would come back so that He could take them back to His Father's house where He had been. (**14:3**) He would be with the Father for some time, and if anyone else wanted to come be with the Father then they had to go through Jesus.

B. Jesus is the way because He provides us access to God the Father.

1. "*I am the way to the Father*" is in essence what Jesus is saying when He says, "*I am the way.*" So in what ways is Jesus the way to the Father. How does He give us this sort of access?
 - a) Back in **12:44,45**, Jesus says that one can come to see the Father by first believing in Jesus Himself. If one will not believe in Jesus then that same one cannot truly believe in the Father. This was the same thought that Jesus left His Apostles with where we began in **John 14:8-13**.
 - b) We have this type of access to the Father through the shedding of Jesus's blood, "*Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.*" (**Hebrews 10:19,20**)
 - c) Having allowed us access to God through our belief in Him and the shedding of His blood, Jesus now intercedes for us as our Advocate (**I John 2:1**) and our Mediator (**I Timothy 2:5**), as He sits at the right hand of God in glory. (**Romans 8:34**)
2. Access to God isn't determined based upon our good deeds, belief in man, or the arbitrary choosing of God Himself. Instead, any and every man can come to know the Father if they will allow for Jesus to play His part as the way.

III. Jesus only spoke that which is true.

A. For a long time, men have had a problem determining what truth is.

1. Pilate asked this question of Jesus as He stood before him to be judged as to whether or not He should be put to death in **John 18:33-38**. Pilate asks Jesus if He is the King of the Jews. Jesus eventually responds by stating that yes, He is a king, and He had been sent into this world "*to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.*"
2. Jesus had been sent into this world to tell the truth concerning God, man, sin, and salvation. He had not been sent to tell some subjective opinion, but He had been sent to speak of objective truth. He was sent by God to speak of reality. He even says as much in **John 14:10**, "*Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.*" Jesus couldn't come and speak whatever He wanted, but He had to speak that which the Father will Him to speak. We know that the words of God are truth. ("*What the Lord says is right and true. He is faithful in everything he does.*" **Psalm 33:4**)

B. Subjective truth might give us the answers we want, but it is only in the truth that we can truly be set free

1. Some would argue for subjective truth being acceptable because no one can actually determine what is objective true, right? That just isn't so. Jesus says in **John 8:31,32**, *"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* It isn't only possible to know truth, but we find out in these verses that it is to our benefit that we put in great effort to come to know that which is true.
2. We could walk the streets and ask ten different people the truth concerning religion and the will of God, and more than likely we'd get eleven different answers. So who is right? Which of them actually speaks the truth? If any of them are speaking the truth, then they are speaking it simply because they have read or heard the words of Jesus and His inspired writers and they have believed and are willing to tell it to others.
3. Truth is found only in Jesus. Truth as determined by Jesus is only that which He tells us can set us free from sin. If we are willing to take up God's Word, to read it, understand it, and obey it, then we can have confidence that we will be set from from the bondage of sin through our belief and obedience. **(Romans 6:17,18)** That objective truth that frees us is only found in Jesus.

IV. Jesus provides the way to eternal life.

A. Time and time throughout His ministry, Jesus speaks of the better and more abundant life that He was able to offer.

1. Those who were His sheep would come to have abundant life. **(John 10:9-11)** As their door and shepherd, He would care and provide for them in a way that no one else could.
2. While speaking to His Apostles in **John 14:27 & 16:33**, He sought to reassure them that though they might suffer for His name and face tribulation, they would still have peace through Him and the Helper that was going to be coming to them.
3. Through Him we come to know His love for us that leads us to being able to find true joy in this life. **(John 15:10,11)** Peace, love, and joy are key components to the abundant life that Jesus makes available to those who seek to follow Him. This life, even with its struggles and tribulations, is better with Jesus.

B. Just as He often spoke of a better way of life here on earth, Jesus focused all the more on obtaining the eternal life that could be found in Him.

1. Jesus said in **John 3:15,16**, *"whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."* Who is the Him? The Him is Jesus Himself. He was the Son of Man who was to be lifted up.
2. Jesus also said in **John 4:14**, *"whoever drinks of the water that I will give Him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water spring up to eternal life."* Who possess the living water that could lead to life? Jesus was the giver of such water.
3. Jesus told the multitudes in **John 6:50,51**, *"This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."* Jesus alone offers His flesh as that which will give one the ability to live forever. Sure life can be better here with Jesus, but the true benefit of our faith and trust in Jesus is His desire to have us live forever in that place that He has gone to prepare for us where His Father abides.

They didn't know it, but the Apostles were about to endure some very difficult days thinking that their Master was gone forever and they were left all alone. However, Jesus didn't want for their hearts to be troubled. He wanted them to believe in Him for He was the way, the truth, and the life. We, too, will face difficult times in our lives, but encouragement can be found in these same claims by Jesus. When we feel lost, He is the way to the Father. When we don't have the answers, we can look to Him for truth. When we feel as only death awaits us, He is there to give us life. May we always be thankful for these truths of our Lord, and may they ever strengthen us to be all the more faithful to Him everyday of our lives. So what is the main take away from Jesus's statement of being the way, truth, and life? I think it is simply, but powerfully the fact that we must put our full trust in Him if we want to be with God forever. Jesus Christ...He alone is the way, the truth, and the life.

PRAYER *Our loving Father in heaven...we are so very thankful that our Savior has gone on to prepare a place there for us. We are so thankful that He has prepared the way for us to be with you forever. We are so thankful that He is truth in a world that is full of lies. We are so thankful that He gives life when death surrounds us. May we ever gain strength from these statements made our Lord Jesus, and we pray that all people will put their faith and trust in Him so that they may take up residence with You in heaven for we know that there is much room. May You ever be with us as we seek to serve You in all things and may it all be done to Your glory alone. In Jesus...the way, the truth, and the life we pray...amen.*