

Tusculum Hills
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Jesus Is the Way
John 14:1-14
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INTRODUCTION

Jesus and his disciples had been together for quite some time. Jesus had washed his disciples' feet to illustrate his servanthood. Then he predicted his betrayal by Judas. He predicted Peter's denial. Jesus then gave words of comfort to his disciples. After hearing Jesus talk about what was about to happen, they could have been discouraged; they could have been just scared.

SCRIPTURE John 14:1-14

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.”

⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know^[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

⁹ Jesus answered: “Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the

evidence of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

1-THE WAY

EXPLANATION

Today, I want to concentrate on verse 6. ⁶ *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

No doubt these words gave comfort to the disciples. Jesus said first that he is the way. Why would you not want this Jesus who is the way? Why would you not want him in our culture? The question frequently arises, "Why do you say Jesus is the only way, or who are you to say Jesus is the only way?" We can expect our culture to ask those questions, but do you know in recent years, the Christian Church is asking that question. Is Jesus the only way?

We've all heard similar statements, that all roads lead to the same God, and all religions worship the same God in different ways. In world religions, we know that man seeks his own way and creates his own god, a god he's comfortable with. He may call the thing that he worships a god, but that does not make it God.

The reason we need we need to know that Jesus is the way is because an Old Testament prophecy tells us that we need to know the way.

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

The Lord has laid on Jesus the iniquity or sin of us all. It's the Bible, not Christians, that exclude other paths. Jesus said that he is the door and that if anybody attempts to get on the path any other way that person is a thief or a robber (John 10). The

Bible spells out that thieves and robbers will not enter the kingdom of God. The only way is through Jesus Christ. If there's another way to salvation, it would have not been necessary for God to be made manifest in the flesh and the person of Jesus Christ. It would not have been necessary for him to die in our place. Why should God humble himself for you if any way will do or if there is any other way possible whatsoever?

Why would you not want this Jesus who is the way? The message of the gospel is that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. The way of salvation is that our iniquities were laid upon him. The scripture says in Colossians chapter 2 that we are dead in our sins, but we have been made alive together with him. He has healed our broken spirit by his sacrifice on the cross.

ILLUSTRATION

If you want to get from point A to point B, you want good directions. Growing up in the country, I became accustomed to how country people give directions, and I thought it was normal for the rest of the world. For example, where I grew up, we had Johnny Cash curve. There was no sign that said it was Johnny Cash curve. There was no evidence that Johnny Cash had ever driven on Johnny Cash curve. I have no idea why it was called Johnny Cash curve. I remember somebody giving directions one time, and the person said, "Well, you go past Johnny Cash Curve to the third blacktop on the right. If you see the red barn, you've gone too far, and you'll have to turn around. Then, you'll look for the first blacktop on your left; the gravel roads don't count."

Sometimes we may have a good sense of direction, but sometimes a good sense of direction does not work. A good sense of direction is not good enough spiritually. Spiritually speaking, we have a lot of religious groups that give details but not what we need to hear. We have a lot of people in this world that think they know the way, but they really don't, and they won't stop and ask for directions. They'd rather keep wandering than ask for the right way. Have you ever heard someone honest enough to say, "I can't tell you how to get there because I'm just terrible with directions." You surely wouldn't want to get directions from that person. With all the people and all the voices out there giving directions, it's a wonder that spiritually speaking we can get anywhere in this world, but thank goodness that we do have a road map. John chapter 14 tells us the way.

EXPLANATION

If you are just an average person in this world, and you're hearing spiritual directions from many sources, which one would you believe? Why would you not want to know that Jesus is the way? I could stand here and talk about the various groups and what they believe will connect a person with God, but I think that all of us have a general idea of what these different groups believe. Among Christians and non-Christians, it seems to me that the most common heresy is that good works is the way and that good works will connect us with God and will get a person to heaven. Even among those who believe in Jesus Christ, we tend to lean toward yet one more work that will put us over the top.

Good works are the result of God's work in us but not a means for us to get to God. Our good works are not the way. We know that works will not save us. The Bible says that even Abraham, with all of his good works, could not boast before God. Abraham's faith is what saved him.

Jesus is the way to forgiveness. He is the way to a meaningful life or, as the scripture says 'an abundant life,' which means to live life to its fullest. Jesus is the way to the Father. The only way to God is through Jesus.

I've noticed in my journey that there are many ways to Jesus, but there's only one way to God, and that's through Jesus. If I asked you how you came to faith in Christ, all of us will have a different story, a different journey. Some may be similar; some may be starkly different, but ultimately, Jesus is the gate keeper. He is the door, and while he may draw us in different ways, he is the one solitary door.

Why would you not want to know this Jesus who is the way?

2-THE TRUTH

EXPLANATION

Jesus is the truth. Why would you not want to know this Jesus who is the truth? Most people today have put together a hodgepodge of clever quotes, sayings, and ideas that they believe represent truth. People see truth as ever-changing, like a

blowing wind. They believe what's true today may not be true tomorrow. There are constant changes in our society. In the world, we have wars; we have rumors of war. We have periods of peace. We have periods of hostilities. We have growing economies. We have collapsing economies. The weather is always changing. Nothing is constant. We have droughts, floods, freezing cold, sweltering heat. Fashions change. Friends come and go. Close friends today may not be close friends tomorrow. People come and go; we constantly meet new people. We constantly say, "hello," and we constantly say, "goodbye."

There is only one truth that never changes. The ultimate truth is that Jesus is the truth. There's an old Russian philosopher who said that what sets Jesus apart from other religious leaders is that he claims to embody truth while other religious leaders say they know truth or they know the source of truth. Only Jesus says, "I am the truth, and when you see me, you see the truth."

Why would you not want this Jesus who is the truth? Why would you not want to know this ultimate truth by which all other things are measured?

If you have no standard by which things are measured or compared, you'll vacillate, seeking only things (as the scripture says) that will tickle your ears. We have lots of roadblocks to truth. We have apathy—people who just don't care or try to make themselves believe they don't care. We have misinformation. Most people believe what they were raised to believe, and if they weren't raised to believe anything, they put together this hodgepodge of different truths to come up with what they say they believe. We also have ignorant people who don't know the truth because they've never heard it. We have speculation; some people do nothing but speculate. They're the armchair quarterbacks of religious talk. We have people who just give truth a secondary emphasis. Some people never get around to Jesus as the truth because they're just so busy with other things.

Why would you not want this Jesus who is the truth? His truth is everlasting. His truth has been recorded for us, and He invites us to partake in the truth. Most people would agree that the source of truth for human beings is outside a person rather than in a person. We know, as believers, that this person is Jesus. People who claim to be their own authority are misguided. You might say that truth is whatever you want it to be; however, that's not possible. Probably the most ignorant statement is to say that truth is whatever you want it to be.

What's the source of your truth? Another person? Maybe a book that you've read? People are flawed, and flawed people produce flawed truth. This Jesus and the truth that he holds, the truth that he embodies, is the most talked-about subject in human history. Why would you not want this Jesus who is the truth? Why would you not want him?

3-THE LIFE

EXPLANATION

Jesus is the way. Jesus is the truth. Jesus is the life. For the living, Jesus is the life. For the dying, Jesus is the life. For the dead, Jesus is the life.

For the living, Jesus offers us a 24/7 counselor, a friend, a Savior. Jesus offers us company so that we're never completely alone. Coming to faith in Christ is more than just saving a person for eternity; it's giving a person hope and a reason for living every day.

ILLUSTRATION

I saw a post on Facebook recently. A person wrote, "Do any of you wonder if this is all there is? I mean, is this it?" I know a man that struggles with his faith, and at one point, he said that he did not believe in God. A few months later he sent me an e-mail because he was honest and humble enough to admit it. He said, "I know there's a God because I just can't shake him. I know that he's there."

SCRIPTURE Psalm 139:7-10

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

I want to ask believers in Jesus this morning, "Do you feel secure in your Savior, the one who has life, the one who is the giver of life?" If you're not a believer, why would you not want this Jesus who is the life? Don't you like to be around life?

Jesus said that he came to give life to people so that they could have life to its fullest. I want to be around people who understand this.

I love hearing babies cry in church. I love hearing a child say something in church because it means we've got life. Don't you want to be around life?

ILLUSTRATION

For the dying, Jesus is the life. I visited an elderly woman recently who was dying. She had full-blown dementia. When I sat down next to her, she acknowledged my presence. Then, she started talking about things that made no sense, and she confused herself as she was talking. She got angry with herself. Eventually, she introduced herself and started over. I noticed her Bible on the floor next to her. Apparently, it had fallen. I picked it up and opened it. I saw lots of notes; it was a well-worn Bible. I said, "Ma'am, would you like for me to read the Bible to you?"

For a minute, all the dementia went away, and she looked at me and said, "Yes, I would." So, I read to her John chapter 3. She listened, and after I read Jesus's words of reassurance, I said, "Would you like for me to pray for you?"

She looked at me and said, "Yes, I would."

I said, "Ma'am, what would you like for me to pray for you about?"

She said these words; I wrote them down because I didn't want to forget them. Keep in mind that until now nothing she said had made any sense, but she said this. "I would like for you to pray. I'm having a hard time putting my words together but that God would help me live for him in this situation."

For the dying, Jesus is life.

After, I prayed for and stood up, the dementia set back in, and she started talking about things that didn't make sense, but she has a hope in Jesus.

SCRIPTURE Revelation 1:18

I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

EXPLANATION

If you're going somewhere, don't you want to be with a person who has the keys? Don't you want to be with the person at the end who has the keys to death? That's Jesus. For the dead, Jesus is the life. He's the life for the living. He's the life for the dying, and he's the life for the dead. On the cross, Jesus looked at a dying man on a cross next to him and said, "Today, you'll be with me in paradise," and after Jesus had died and resurrected, the scripture tells us that the dead in Christ came out of their graves and marched around.

A skeptic might say that only a crazy person would believe this, and I'll tell you to go get the straitjacket right now because I believe it! This one thing I know, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

Why would you not want this Jesus who is the life? If you know Jesus you know the one person who has the keys. He owns them. He owns life. He owns death; therefore, I can say, "If I live, okay. If I die, okay," because Jesus is the CEO of life Incorporated. He knows my name. Does Jesus have my best interest in mind? Yes, he does; therefore, I must trust him with everything.

Jesus doesn't just know the way; he is the way. Jesus doesn't just know the truth; he is the truth. Jesus doesn't just know about life; he is the life. Why wouldn't you want to know this Jesus? Has trying your own way worked? Why wouldn't you want this Jesus who is the truth? Has coming up with your own truth worked out for you? Why wouldn't you want to know this Jesus who is the life? Have you contemplated your life and figured it all out on your own? Without Jesus, has it worked for you?

APPLICATION

Sometimes, people ask me about those who've never heard the gospel. I read about a woman in India who heard the gospel for the first time in her life. Her response was, "I always knew there was a Savior, and now I know his name." I believe that God reveals himself to all people of all time and that it's up to each person to

respond accordingly. But for all of us today, we have no excuse. We can't stand before God and say we've never heard. God holds each of us accountable to respond to the amount of light that he's given to each of us. You've been given a lot of light. You've been given a lot of truth. You've been told that Jesus is the way. How are you going to respond today?

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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