

John 14: v. 5 – v. 31. – Sunday 23rd August 2015.

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. ¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴ If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*. ¹⁵ “If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

¹⁹ “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

²⁰ At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?”

²³ Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸ You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming *back* to you.’

If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I.

²⁹ “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.

³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. ³¹ But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Introduction

Last week we began a series of teaching by Jesus to His disciples. The purpose of His teaching was to prepare His disciples for His departure. Jesus had announced that He was leaving to go to a place where His disciples couldn't follow immediately. Jesus wanted to encourage His disciples to be faithful to God's word when He had gone. Jesus also wanted His disciples to glorify God in their lives, just as Jesus was going to glorify God in His life.

Jesus would glorify God by willingly giving up His life in order to die on a cross to take the punishment for the sins of the world. He wanted His disciples to glorify God by showing the same love to each other as Jesus had showed to them.

John 13: v. 34-35.

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

We learnt last week that we glorify God by obeying His word in the Bible. Nothing brings God more glory than by our obedience to the Bible and the declaration of the "Gospel Message".

We also learnt that we have an enemy, called Satan or the devil. He wants to have God's Glory, but he can't have it. Therefore he tries to persuade people to follow him by disobeying the Bible and going their own way in life. Satan promises so much but delivers so little.

In the end following our own way always leads to disappointment in our soul. Satan can never deliver what God promises to those who believe in Him.

We also learnt last week that Jesus was going to prepare a place in Heaven for His disciples.

Finally the only disappointment last week was the prophecy by Jesus that one of His disciples, Peter was going to deny Jesus 3 times before the rooster crowed in the morning.

Peter was not quite ready to face the challenges of true discipleship. He had not yet been filled with God's Holy Spirit and empowered for ministry.

Yes Peter was about to fail, but His failure was an opportunity for God to show him what could be done when he fully trusted in His power through the Holy Spirit.

We continue the conversation between Jesus and His disciples in the "Upper Room".

In the study today we are going to look at a question by Thomas – 14:v. 5 and the answer that Jesus gave him. We are also going to study a request by Philip made in 14: v. 8.

The answer that Jesus gave Thomas was quite brief, yet nevertheless very important.

However the answer Jesus gave Philip was very long and it is important that we fully cover His answer, so that section will be a little longer than the first.

Let us first focus our attention on Chapter 14 v. 5-7.

1. How can we know the way? – v. 5-7.

Jesus has already answered Peter's question about His departure. Jesus tells His disciples that He is going away in order to prepare a place for them in His Father's House.

The question that Thomas asks Jesus makes it clear that he doesn't really understand where Jesus is going. Thomas definitely wants to follow Jesus and wants to know the way in which to follow Him.

Jesus replied to Thomas's question with these words "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

The answer to Thomas was very short, but very important in Christian theology.

There are three strands to the answer Jesus gave.

a) Firstly Jesus tells Thomas that He is the only way to God.

Jesus doesn't simply point the way or teach the way – He is the way. In fact “The Way” was one of the early names for the Christian faith. (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 23)

By saying this Jesus clearly tells His disciples that there is NO other way to God except through Him. These words destroy any concept of good works, religion or any sort of religious activity that someone might do to get to Heaven.

There is only one way and that is Jesus Christ.

It is interesting to go back through the material we have already covered in John's Gospel to discover that Jesus has now packaged His teaching into a few words.

Let us turn to John 1: v. 51 –

⁵¹ And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

The opening up of Heaven was going to come through the lifting up of the Son of Man.

Let us now turn to John 3: v. 14

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Jesus later says that He is giving up his life, His flesh for us.

Let us turn to John 6: v. 51,

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.

Then in Chapter 12: v. 32 Jesus anticipates the statement that He would make to Peter about following Him later to Heaven.

So all through John's Gospel the disciples were being prepared for this moment and Jesus put it all together in one long sentence.

Jesus is always preparing US for what He is preparing for US. Life is a journey where Jesus is constantly teaching us about Himself, and preparing us, not just for ministry here and now but for Heaven later on.

The important thing to realize is that “JESUS” is the ONLY way.

Therefore if you are trusting in anybody else or any other thing apart from Jesus, then your life's journey will end in disappointment and eventually death, hell and eternal punishment.

b) Secondly Jesus teaches us that He is the ONLY TRUTH.

It was right at the beginning of John's Gospel that it was revealed that “Truth” came through Jesus Christ.

Quote John 1:17 – N.K.J.

¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

We were told in John 7:16 and John 12:49 that Jesus is the “TRUTH” because His words are the Father’s words.

What Jesus teaches us is what God teaches us, there is no difference.

Jesus is the “Truth” about God’s rescue plan for the world.

Quote John 3: v. 16 in the N.K.J.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

c) Thirdly Jesus says that “Life” is in Him.

John 11: v. 25- 26.

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

John 10: v. 15, and v. 28 – N.K.J.

¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand

The life that Jesus is talking about is eternal life. So when Jesus said “I am the Life” He is talking about eternal life. It is a personal relationship with God that has its source in Jesus Christ.

You cannot come to God and go to Heaven without a personal relationship with Jesus.

None comes to the Father except through Jesus.

We may ask the question, how would the assurance of Heaven with Jesus help to calm the disciple’s hearts?

Dr. James Gray, who was once president of the Moody Bible College wrote a hymn with these words “Who would mind the journey when the road leads home.”

The assurance of a Heavenly Home at the end of life’s journey helps us to bear the difficulties and battles along the way.

It was this assurance that even encouraged Jesus.

Hebrews 12: v. 2.

² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Paul also had this truth in mind when he wrote Romans 8: v. 18

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

If you know and love Jesus as your personal savior, you have an awesome future in store for you. Therefore press on with that thing that God has given you to do, whatever it may be.

Many of you who travelled to America to see family and friends this summer didn’t mind the jet lag because you were going home. We shouldn’t mind a few problems along the way in life if heaven is our home and our ultimate destination.

2. The second question came as a request from Philip who asked Jesus to show Him the Father – v. 8.

It seems that Philip's question was prompted by Jesus remark in v. 7.

Jesus was telling His disciples that He was the exactly the same as God and if they had seen Him then they have seen God.

Philip was obviously not very convinced by the statement Jesus made. Therefore he requested some sort of personal appearance of God in order to give him some assurance about Heaven and where Jesus was going.

Philip said "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." – v. 8.

I don't know what Philip was expecting Jesus to do, but the answer Jesus gave is very revealing.

I will divide the answer Jesus gave in various parts.

- a) Verses 9-11 – Jesus rebukes Philip by explaining that for 3 years they have been together, and for 3 years Philip has witnessed the miracles of Jesus and the words of Jesus. For three years Jesus has been trying to explain to Philip that He is God in human form. Jesus said that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him.

In other words Jesus was saying to Philip, you need to have "Faith" in Me and my WORDS. Jesus says to Philip, I am the only evidence you will see, is that not good enough?

- b) Verses 12-14 - These verses have been widely misinterpreted for at least the last 35 years. This miss – application has led to false expectations and disappointments among Christians.

Wrongly interpreted these verses give expectations to believers that they can do the same miracles as Jesus and in fact when Jesus goes to the Father, we can even do greater miracles than Jesus.

There must be something wrong about this and there is.

Firstly the Greek word that the NIV translates as miracles is the Greek word "erga" which means works. (Wrongly translated in the N.I.V.)

Secondly we need to look at the context of "Greater works" in John's Gospel.

Everything we read in the Bible must be seen in the context of the writer's intentions.

Let us turn to John chapter 5 : v. 20.

²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

Jesus goes on to define these greater works. They are the giving of life v. 21, and judgment v. 22. It says in v. 23 that this is done so all may honor the Son.

Then we must turn to chapter 6 and read v. 28.

²⁸ Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

The answer comes in v. 29 , to Believe in Jesus. The same Greek word "egra" is used in v. 28.

Now we need to turn to Chapter 9: v. 3 and v. 39

³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."

The work of Jesus in John's Gospel is Salvation and Judgment.

So these "Greater Works" we read in Chapter 14 verse 12 do not point to greater physical signs, but to the preaching of the words of the Father which accomplish the work of the Father. (v. 10b)

The proclamation of the Gospel produces "Salvation" and "Judgment"(9:3,39)

When the Gospel is preached there are two results. Either people will believe and receive Salvation or they will refuse the gospel and eventually get judgment.

Anyone who has "Faith in Jesus" and believes the Gospel message will in fact do greater works.

We have discovered through John that these greater works refer to Salvation and Judgment, but how will they be achieved?

Firstly today there are many Christians throughout the world preaching the gospel every day and thousands of people are getting Salvation. Jesus was confined to one place when He was on this earth, but the Holy Spirit is working "World – Wide" saving people who believe.

Secondly verses 13-14 gives us a promise that God is going to be glorified through our prayers. Whatever we pray in the name of Jesus that will bring glory to His name those are the prayers that God answers. Not everything we pray is going to glorify God. In fact we don't really know the purposes God has for certain believers.

Therefore God decides to answer prayers and requests based upon the things that are going to glorify Jesus.

Example

Story of Joni Erickson Tada

On the 30th July 1967 a young Christian teenager was involved in a diving accident. As a result she became a quadriplegic. (Paralyzed from the shoulders down)

She went through two years of rehabilitation where she experienced anger, depression and doubts about her Christian faith. However she learnt to paint with a brush between her teeth and began selling her art work.

To date she has written over 40 books, recorded several musical albums, starred in a film about her life, married Ken in 1982 and has spoken at conferences all over the world. Her testimony and life has resulted in helping many disabled people and leading hundreds of people to faith in Christ.

I am sure that many people prayed for her physical healing in the early stages of her disability. It didn't happen. God had other plans to use Joni's disability to reach millions of people worldwide.

About 9 years ago I taught a children's series in Church on the life of Joni. As a result of this series a young boy became a Christian. He is a young man now and still going on with God. Even stories about her life have resulted in the Salvation of precious souls.

Yes we can ask anything in the name of Jesus, but it is up to God to decide how he answers that prayer. He will answer the prayers that glorify His name.

We will not understand all the complexities of life until we get to Heaven.

However when we get to Heaven it won't matter, because heaven will be such a beautiful place.

c) V. 15-18--The Promise of the Holy Spirit.

In v. 15-18 Jesus explains to Philip about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given two special names by Jesus.

The first is "another comforter/ helper" and the second is the "Spirit of truth."

The word comforter or helper is a Greek word which means “called alongside to assist.”

The Holy Spirit does work instead of us, or in spite of us, but in us and through us. Our English word “comfort” comes from two Latin words meaning “with strength”.

We usually think of “comfort” as something or someone consoling us or soothing us gently.

Babies and very young children often have comfort toys or small blankets that help them to feel supported. To some extent this is true, the Holy Spirit does comfort us.

However the comfort given by the Holy Spirit should strengthen us to face life with a positive attitude and keep going in the difficult times.

Some translations call the Holy Spirit the “Encourager”. This is translated “Advocate”. An Advocate is someone who represents you at court and stands at your side to plead your case.

(This is the translation of 1 John 2:1)

Jesus also calls the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of TRUTH. The Holy Spirit inspired the word of God and also illuminates the word of God so that we can understand it.

The Holy Spirit cannot lie or be associated with lies. He never leads us to do anything contrary to God’s word.

We must always check everything with God’s word first. God will never tell us to do anything that His word does not permit.

Story

When I was at Bible College in Edinburgh Scotland, there was a rule that you were not allowed to go to the shops during the lunch time break. You had to remain on campus.

One day when the principal of the college was driving home to collect something, he noticed a Bible College student walking up towards the shops. He wound down his window and reminded the student that it was against the rules to go to the shops in his lunch break.

The student replied, “don’t worry sir, I prayed about it and the Holy Spirit said it was O.K. to go to the shops”. The principal said to the student, “it is a pity that the Holy Spirit didn’t tell you that the shops closed at 12 noon today for their half day closing. Jump in the car and I will give you a lift back to the College.”

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and He never gets anything wrong, therefore we must listen to Him.

If we want the Holy Spirit to work in our lives we need to seek to glorify Jesus Christ. We must also seek to promote God’s word in all that we say and do.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be controlled by the word of God.

The Holy Spirit of truth, uses the word of truth (The Bible) to guide us into God’s will and work.

We are told that the Holy Spirit abides with believers forever.(v. 16)

The Holy Spirit is a gift from the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son.

During the earthly ministry of Jesus, He guided and guarded His disciples.

However now Jesus was going to leave them. The Holy Spirit would take the place of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is not different from Jesus. The word “another” in the text means the “same kind”. Yes the disciples were losing Jesus, but their replacement was exactly the same.

It is the same with us if we are believers in Jesus. We don’t have Jesus in person but we do have God the Holy Spirit living in our hearts.

v.19-24 – We move from the promise of the Holy Spirit to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

In v. 19 we are told that the world can’t receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is only given to believers in Jesus.

In v. 20 the disciples are told that they will know when it happens. Jesus is referring to the day of Pentecost.

In v. 21-24 Jesus makes it clear that obedience to God's word produces a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

²³ Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

Warren Wiersbe puts it like this in his commentary to try and explain these verses.

He says "When a sinner trusts Christ, he is born again and the Holy Spirit immediately enters his body and bears witness that he is a child of God. The Holy Spirit is resident and He will not depart. However as the believer yields to the Father, loves the word, prays and obeys, there is a deeper relationship with the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. "

In other words Salvation means we are going to Heaven, but submission to God means that heaven comes to us.

v. 25-31 – Jesus teaches us that the Holy Spirit will give us His Peace.

Shalom is the Hebrew word for "Peace". It is a precious word to the Jewish people. This word means much more than the absence of war or distress.

Shalom means wholeness, completeness, health, security and even prosperity in best sense of the word. When you are enjoying God's "Peace" there is "Joy" and "Contentment" in your heart.

The important thing here is that God's peace is not like the peace that the world offers.

The world bases its peace on its own resources. However God's peace depends on relationships. To be right with God means to enjoy the peace of God.

The world depends on personal ability, but the Christian depends upon Jesus Christ alone.

In the world, peace is something you hope for or work for; but to the Christian, peace is a wonderful gift, received by faith.

Christians can enjoy peace in spite of trials and problems because of the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit.

You too can enjoy peace with God today, if you don't know the Lord Jesus as your personal savior. What do you have to do.? The answer is "NOTHING". Jesus has already done the work for you. You just have to Realize, Repent and Receive the gift of His forgiveness.

Realize – You need to realize that you are born into this world with sin in your heart and you are separated from God because of it.

Repent - turn away from your sin and be willing to give up your life and follow Jesus.

Receive - you need to receive God's love into your heart by actually asking Jesus to forgive you personally. Jesus is here today. He is knocking at the door of your heart, but the handle is on your side. You must open the door and let Him in. Will you do this today?

AMEN.