

# **Bible Study August 9, 2023**

## **JOHN 14 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)**

### **I Am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life**

***<sup>1</sup> “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.***

The disciples were obviously worried about death and what happens afterward. Jesus' words still comfort us today. We know from what Jesus said that the way to eternal life, though unseen, is secure for us if we trust him with the future. He has already prepared the way to eternal life. The only issue that may still be unsettled is our willingness to believe him.

Few verses in Scripture describe eternal life in detail, but these few verses are rich with promises. Here Jesus says, “I am going to prepare a place for you” and “I will come and get you.” We can look forward to eternal life because Jesus has promised it to all who believe in him. Although many specifics about eternity are unknown, we need not fear, because Jesus is preparing for us and will spend eternity with us.

***<sup>4</sup> And you know the way to where I am going.” <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***

This most basic and important passage in Scripture opens the door for doubters to come to Jesus. Thomas asked, in effect, “How can we know the way to God?” And Jesus essentially answered, “The way is open through me.” Because Jesus is both God and man, he gives us the invitation to heaven. He himself is the entry point, and he paid the full price for us to get there with his own life. By uniting our lives with Jesus' and becoming his followers, we are united with God. Trust Jesus to take you to the Father, and all the benefits of being God's child will be yours.

Jesus says that he is the only way to God the Father. Some people resent Christianity because they think it is too exclusive and too narrow. In reality, the way is wide enough for the whole world if everyone would accept Jesus. But some people want to go their own way. Instead of worrying about how limited it sounds to have only one way to eternal life, we should be saying, Thank you, God, for providing a sure way to get to you!

As the Way, Jesus is our path to the Father. He provides clear direction to God. As the Truth, he is the reality of all God's promises. He provides certainty to people whose lives seem confused and unstable. As the Life, he joins his divine life to ours, both now and eternally. Jesus offers full and complete satisfaction to those who follow him. He is, in truth, the only living way to the Father.

***<sup>7</sup> If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”***

***<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?***

Jesus is the visible, tangible image of the invisible God. He is the complete revelation of what God is like. Jesus explained to Philip, who wanted to see the Father, that to know Jesus is to know God. The search for God, for truth, and for reality, ends in Jesus Christ. (Also see Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-4.)

***<sup>10</sup> 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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.***

***<sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.***

***<sup>12</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.***

Raising the dead is about as amazing as anyone can get; how could the disciples do anything greater than that? The “even greater works” would come because the disciples, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, would carry the Good News of God’s Kingdom out of Palestine and into the whole world.

***<sup>14</sup> If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.***

When Jesus says we can ask for anything, we must remember that our asking must be in his name—that is, according to God’s character and will. God will not grant requests contrary to his nature or his will, and we cannot use his name as a magic formula to fulfill our selfish desires. If we are sincerely following God and seeking to do his will, then our requests will be in line with what he wants, and he will grant them. (Also see 15:16; 16:23.)

## **Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit**

***<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,***

Soon Jesus would be leaving the disciples, yet he would remain with them. How could this be? The Advocate—the Spirit of God himself—would come after Jesus was gone to comfort, encourage, guide, and intercede for the disciples. The regenerating power of the Spirit came on the disciples just before Jesus’ ascension (20:22), and the Spirit was poured out on all the believers at Pentecost (Acts 2), shortly after Jesus ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit is the very presence of God within us and all believers, helping us live as God wants and building Christ’s church on earth. By faith we can have access to the Spirit’s power each day.

The word translated “Advocate” combines the ideas of comfort and counsel. The word could also be translated “Comforter,” “Encourager,” or “Counselor.” The Holy Spirit is the very power of God in us working for and with us.

***<sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.***

The following chapters teach these truths about the Holy Spirit: He will never leave us (14:16); the world at large cannot receive him (14:17); he lives with us and in us (14:17); he teaches us (14:26); he reminds us of Jesus’ words (14:26; 15:26); he convicts us of sin, shows us God’s righteousness, and announces God’s judgment on evil (16:8); he guides us into truth and gives insight into future events (16:13); and he

brings glory to Jesus (16:14). The Holy Spirit has been active among people from the beginning of time, but after Pentecost (Acts 2), he came to live in all believers. Many people are unaware of the Holy Spirit's activities, but to those who understand Jesus' words and the Spirit's power, the Spirit gives a whole new way to look at life.

***18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.***

When Jesus said, "I will come to you," he meant it. Although Jesus ascended into heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit to live in believers, and to have the Holy Spirit is to have Jesus himself.

***19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."***

Sometimes people wish they knew the future so they could prepare for it. God has chosen not to give us this knowledge. He alone knows what will happen, but he tells us all we need to know to prepare for the future. When we obey his words and live by his standards, we show that we are his true followers. For his followers, he promises he will not leave us; he will come to us, he will be in us, and he will show himself to us. God knows what will happen, and because he will be with us through it all, we need not fear. We don't have to know the future to have faith in God; we must have faith in God to be secure about the future. If you have not yet become a follower of Jesus, or still have real questions about him, ask God to reveal Jesus to you. He could come to you through a friend, an insight from the Bible, an inner prompting in your spirit, or some other way. But he will come and reveal himself to you if you ask.

Jesus said that his followers show their love for him by obeying him. Love is more than lovely words; it is commitment and conduct. If you love Jesus, then prove it by obeying what he says in his Word.

***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 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.***

Because the disciples were still expecting Jesus to establish an earthly kingdom and overthrow Rome, they found it difficult to understand why he did not tell the world at large that he was the Messiah. Jesus confronted Judas by saying that those who truly loved him would know who he was. Not everyone, however, could or was willing to understand Jesus' message. Ever since Pentecost, the Good News of the Kingdom has been proclaimed in the whole world, and yet not everyone is receptive to it. Jesus saves the deepest revelations of himself for those who want to truly know him, love him, and obey him.

***24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.***

***25 "These things I have spoken to you while I am still 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 that I have said to you.***

Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would help them remember what he had been teaching them. This promise ensures the validity of the New Testament. The disciples were eyewitnesses of Jesus' life and teachings, and the Holy Spirit helped them remember without taking away their individual perspectives. Therefore, we can be confident that the Gospels are accurate records of what Jesus taught

and did (see 1 Corinthians 2:10-14). Also, the Holy Spirit can help us in the same way he helped the disciples. As we study the Bible, we can trust him to plant truth in our minds, convince us of God's will, and remind us when we stray from it.

***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 hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.***

The Holy Spirit's work brings deep and lasting peace to our hearts and minds. Unlike worldly peace, which is usually defined as the absence of conflict, Jesus' peace gives us confident assurance in any circumstance. With his peace, we have no need to fear the present or the future. Sin, fear, uncertainty, doubt, and despair are at war within us, but the peace of God restrains these hostile forces and offers comfort in place of conflict. Jesus says he will give us that peace if we are willing to accept it from him. When you feel the stress of life, allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with Jesus' peace (see Philippians 4:6-7 for more on experiencing God's peace).

***28 You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.***

As God the Son, Jesus willingly submits to God the Father. On earth, Jesus also submitted to many of the physical limitations of his humanity (Philippians 2:6).

***29 And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, 31 but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.***

Although Satan, the ruler of this world, was unable to overpower Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11), he still had the arrogance to try. Satan's power exists only because God allows him to act. But because Jesus is sinless, Satan has no power over him. If we obey Jesus and align ourselves closely with God's purposes, Satan can have no power over us, either.

"Come, let's be going" suggests that John 15 through 17 may have been spoken en route to the garden of Gethsemane. Another view is that Jesus was asking the disciples to get ready to leave the upper room, but they did not actually do so until later (18:1)