

I Am: Part 13

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Pastor James Bell

John 14:1–9 NLT

1 “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. 2 There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” 6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. 7 If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!” 8 Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” 9 Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you?”

So much to unpack within these few verses but before we do we need some context to what just took place. From John 13 - John 17 is known as the upper room discourse. It begins with Jesus washing the disciples feet, a showing of a position of serving instead of being served. And while they are eating together Jesus continues His teachings. Jesus speaks the prophetic words of His betrayer and all of a sudden the 12 are in an uproar. They begin jockeying for position with claims that it could not be them.

Then Jesus begins to speak of His leaving and reminds the disciples that the same is true for them as He had told the Jewish leaders, “you will search for me, but you can’t come where I Am going”. Then Peter begins to declare his loyalty by stating that he would die for Jesus and then Jesus drops a bombshell on Peter and prophesies the denial of Peter. The first opportunity the Peter had to die but denied Jesus instead.

But Jesus gives them comfort by telling them to not let your hearts be troubled. Let me ask you a question. Have you ever tried to calm someone down when they are upset? Or on the other end of the spectrum has someone tried to calm you down while you are upset?

Jesus comforts them with the assurance of their trust in God and also in Him. The shifting of their mindset is what would have caused their hearts to follow. If we could grasp this simple concept. Our hearts will follow once we make up our mind. This was the game changer for my fellowship with I Am. Having a made up mind to follow despite my surroundings.

And Jesus was painting a picture of God's heart for the disciples but they were so thrown off by what had just happened. They were dishearten by a truth but failed to see that the truth spoken was purposed for liberation. Spoken so that their hearts could be turned towards God. How many of us have failed or continue to fail to let the truth turn our hearts back to God? Last week we referenced the position of the Pharisee's blindness simply because then had hardened hearts.

John 14:4-5 NLT

4 And you know the way to where I am going." 5 "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

As we know the outcome because we have read scripture but Thomas was in the position of the unknown. His uncertainty of what was to come. And we can all relate to this! We don't know the outcome but we know what we are currently facing. And we may even make the statement that if I were Thomas we would have so much faith because he saw the miracles a head the every word that Jesus spoke. But if we recall throughout scripture that Jesus only ever referred to 2 separate people about having great faith. Often times Jesus referred to the disciples faith as "no faith or little faith".

What makes us different. Do we think just because we know the story from this scripture that we have it figured out? Then why do we still operate with little to no faith?

The Way:

Jesus said that I Am the Way! What is the way? It is the how we get somewhere. Where is the somewhere we are trying to get to? The Fathers house! And Jesus declares that there is no other way there except through Him. It's not by being a good person. It's not based off of your good deeds. It's not by works. It's not by repenting one time. It's not when you got saved when you were 12 years old. It's not because your parents have a relationship with God. It's not because you come to church. It's not because you give to the church. The only way is through JESUS! Everything else that we just mentioned is the byproduct of having fellowship with Jesus.

Accepting by faith the high price that Jesus paid for our sins so that we could be in right standings with the Father. 1 Timothy 2:5

1 Timothy 2:5 NLT

5 For, There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus.

But yet Thomas could not understand because Jesus had not yet been crucified and resurrected. Jesus was not a myth that is made up. Jesus is the Son of God and is one with God. Jesus preached repentance of sin and to turn to God. He died for our sins and resurrected just like the old testament prophesied. Jesus made the same proclamation and fulfilled it and it was witnessed.

1 Corinthians 15:3–9 NLT

3 I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. 4 He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5 He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. 9 For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church.

The Truth:

The declaration of being Truth is not a separate ingredient, it's a continuation of how to get to the Father. Within the four gospels Jesus used the phrase "I tell you the truth, Amen, Amen, and truly, truly" is used within 76 instances when Jesus spoke to either individuals, crowds of people, or just His disciples. When Jesus used this phrase He is essentially saying, "Pay attention. What follows matters eternally". It wasn't casual conversation - it was a summons to spiritual seriousness.

If we look at the simplicity of the meaning of truth we understand that is truth is not partial and truth does not involve false information. And if we view the vitality of truth in the appropriate lens we will find that truth is not always welcomed, especially if it rubs us the wrong way. And Jesus made this crystal clear but yet rejected because it wasn't what people wanted to hear. Have you ever been totally honest with someone and they look at you and get angry with you? But when you spoke truth you were shedding light to what was in darkness. But how about on the flip side? Someone being totally honest with you and then you think to yourself...the audacity of them to speak to me in such a way. Truth hurts when it's not what we want to hear.

John 8:31 NLT

31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.

Remaining faithful to my teaching is the way to the Father. What does remaining look like? The continuation of being faithful. But how do we define faithful?

Matthew 25:14–27 NLT

14 “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. 15 He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. 16 “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. 17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. 18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money. 19 “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. 20 The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ 21 “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’ 22 “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ 23 “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’ 24 “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’ 26 “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, 27 why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’

What is the common denominator? The increase that took place with what they were entrusted with. But notice it was a multiplication that took place. The one who sat on the gift was referred to as wicked and lazy.

John 8:31–36 NLT

31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. 32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” 33 “But we are descendants of Abraham,” they said. “We have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean, ‘You will be set free’?” 34 Jesus replied, “I tell

you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. 35 A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.

So who are the ones that will know the truth? Yes the ones that continue to multiply. The ones remaining in faithfulness are the only ones that know the truth. And remember that truth is not partial and it is absent of false information. And freedom doesn't happen without this knowledge. Freedom happens when we have the understanding that we are bound. And to be bound means we are not free.

So since the ones who believed in Jesus could not see the forest from the trees, he spoke a little simpler so they could digest it. And notice how He prefaces the simpler saying with "I tell you the truth". Everyone who sins (operates outside of God's character) is a slave to sin. And a slave is not a permanent member of the family but a son is a part of the family forever. It was common for people to adopt their slaves and they in turn became heirs. Those that were not son(huioi)(not teknon) are slaves and only stick around for a little while.

This is why John stated in John 8:31

John 8:31 NLT

31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.

They believed in Jesus, not on Jesus. They believed His works but not his word. This is what separates the sheep from the goat.

The Life:

If we recall back to John 1:1-4

John 1:1-4 NLT

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He existed in the beginning with God. 3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. 4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

John 1:14 NLT

14 So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

So since Jesus is the word of God then the word of God is the only way to the Father. So now let me ask you a question: Do you have a Bible? Do you read your Bible? Do you study your Bible?

Psalm 119:9–16 NLT

9 How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word. 10 I have tried hard to find you— don't let me wander from your commands. 11 I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. 12 I praise you, O LORD; teach me your decrees. 13 I have recited aloud all the regulations you have given us. 14 I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches. 15 I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways. 16 I will delight in your decrees and not forget your word.

David had an understanding that aligned with God's heart. If we would follow suite with accepting the deity of Jesus, remain faithful to His teachings, and align our life to the purpose of the Father then eternity will forever be in the presence of God.

Let me pray with you today!