

The Innkeeper: John 14:1-4 (April 21, 2024)

Message Summary:

John 14:1-4 “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.”

We need to understand:

1. Heaven is a real place
2. God is there in a way we can’t experience here on earth
3. I am invited AND I belong
4. We are eternal beings headed to eternity where there will be eternal rewards. What you do on earth matters, there are eternal reward waiting for you in heaven for what you have done, sacrifices here on earth.

But what do we do until Christ comes back?

Remember, the ***most important commandment.***

Luke 10:25 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?” 27 The man answered, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” 28 “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!” 29 The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

30 Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

31 “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

33 “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. 34 Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged

them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.' 36 "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. 37 The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

The priest and the temple assistant were important in that day, we would have thought they would have helped. Instead it was the despised Samaritan who helped. The one who is rejected is the one who helps—we need to line our lives up with the teachings of Jesus—how will we walk out our faith as we see in the Bible. We walk out the stories we read in the Bible.

Are you the lawyer seeking to justify myself? The lawyer came to justify his behavior, tell me who I need to care about and take care of—help me feel good about the behavior that I exhibit.

Paul tells us this though:

Romans 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. 21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.

Well, but then I might be the priest, seeking to judge others. "Thank goodness that's not my life?!" "Thank goodness I am not like that sinner over there!" "I am better than they are." We start creating "the others" so we can see we are better!

But the Bible tell us:

Romans 3:22b There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

The person who is irritating us, or that political group we dislike, well- none of us Measure up! We all fall short of his glory!

When we move beyond those, we see that we are the man in the ditch, in need of a savior, and Jesus is the Good Samaritan, savior of all ditch dwellers.

Because Jesus is the Good Samaritan, we get to be Samaritans too. We get to see people with compassion, to help people move from the area of brokenness to full

Healing, health, introduce them to the salvation message. Notice the good Samaritan did not ask "how did this happen? How did you get here? What role do you play?" They need a savior, not a lecture. We need to keep our humility.

We don't deserve Jesus intervention/salvation, we can only accept it. We are completely dependent on the grace of Christ.

And note that the Bible does not say the Good Samaritan, instead it is a despised Samaritan. We need to know that we will be despised by the very people we are sent to rescue, a world that does not understand and does not want to understand. Remember though Christ gave his life for us while we were still his enemy. Who is that person you want to see in the ditch, that's who we need to care about the most.

We know we "get to be" despised because:

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. 19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.

Finally, the church gets to be the inn at the crossroads of life. We get to be the innkeeper—we can welcome everyone in, meet their needs, we exist so Jesus can drop people off at our doorsteps and we will not charge them a thing. We get to decide to be innkeepers for life—we don't look at their response as the outcome- we get to be the kind of person who allows Jesus to bring people in and care for them—knowing He is coming back and we are entrusted with each other.

Don't forget who we were (are) and how we got here to our identity in Christ, and what our job is while we wait for Christ's return- be an Innkeeper.

Questions:

1. Jesus was a famous teacher. Many people asked him questions. If you could ask him one question, what would the question be?
2. What is your profession? How do you serve God every day in your profession? Do you consider your profession a ministry- how/why (whether yes or no)? As you look at your daily work, give an example of how God has used you in the "ordinary life" we live?
3. Have you ever thought of yourself as an innkeeper? Explain and give examples- good/bad/indifferent. How does it feel when someone has mercy on you? Who do you know that is hurting and has no one to call on? What are you to do?
4. Are there "others" (groups of people/specific people) you struggle to interact with? In what ways do we justify our lack of love for them? What makes them difficult for you to communicate with/care for them? Are there scriptures that speak to how to treat others- share some of those and how we can live them out. How can we express more compassion and care for others?