

Series: **Power and Passion of Jesus** – week 2

CDOBC – beginning on 3/26/17

Today's Title: **"Politically Incorrect Jesus"**

April 2, 2017 - John 14:1-11

OBJECTIVE: To help people know Jesus is the only Savior - the only way to Heaven.

Turn in your Bibles to **John 14**

Opening Prayer

When your daughter is graduating H.S. and then leaving on a medical mission trip to the mountains of Guatemala - and she will be out of phone contact for most of that time...this produces some anxiety.

When your son, who has 1 more year in H.S., is spending 2 months of his summer in Zambia, Africa - this produces some anxiety.

As we turn to **John 14**, we see Jesus and His disciples in the upper room - and there is a great deal of anxiety and fear in the room. Jesus senses this...and He says:

1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me."

There are many things in life which cause us to have anxiety and as we dwell on these things, we often become fearful of what's waiting around the next corner of life.

- As my kids reach adulthood, will they be faithful to Christ?
- My parent's health is declining...
- The car has 150K miles on it...

- My marriage is not what is used to be...
- There are rumors at work that the company will be laying off people by summer...
- Am I really saved?
- Do I know for sure that I'll be in heaven when I die?
- I still sin a lot...and I still have sinful thoughts...does that mean I'm not really saved?

Life is full of concerns - concerns cause anxiety - and anxiety leads to fears about the future.

vs. 1 - “Let not your hearts be troubled.”

This is actually a command in the Greek, although you can be sure when Jesus said these words they were comforting and soothing.

The reason for the troubled hearts - Jesus was leaving them (13:33a) and they couldn't go with Him (13:33b).

Peter's plea in **13:36-37** is probably representative of the entire group of disciples.

Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you will follow afterward.”

37 Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for You.”

The word “troubled” in our Bible is a Greek word which means *to shake, to shudder, to agitate, to stir up trouble, to be disturbed.*

In 13:21, as Jesus tells His disciples one of them will betray Him, this same word is used to describe Jesus' heart. Judas' betrayal was not simply part of the plan of God - it was personal to Jesus - and it caused deep pain and agony in His heart.

The fear and anxiety the disciples were feeling was due to the uncertainty of the moment. They could sense the time was close where Jesus would be gone. All the times Jesus talked about it in the past 3 years, all of a sudden it was a reality - not just a concept of some future possibility.

In large part this is the fear Jesus is addressing.

He's telling everyone who wants to be with Him - "Let not your hearts be troubled."

But He's also talking about the fears of life - the fears and anxieties which are a natural part of life in a world marred by sin. It's not only a statement about issues of faith...it's a statement about all matters in life!

The solution to your anxiety and fears is belief vs. 1

The solution to our troubled hearts?

Jesus says: "Believe in God, believe also in Me."

Notice He says "...believe also in Me."

It's not just a belief in God - but belief in the God-Man - Jesus Christ - God incarnate.

Belief in 'God' is not so unusual in today's world. I think 'God' has become a general term in today's world for *whatever deity or force you believe in*.

Being a theist is not what the Gospel is about - Theism is not what Christianity is about.

James tells us "Even the demons believe (God exists) --and shudder!" (2:19)

Jesus Christ - belief in Jesus Christ is the central point of the Christian faith.

The remedy which will sooth our anxiety and fears is belief in God and belief in Jesus.

Why? How? How does belief affect the problems of life?

Because God (and Jesus) is sovereign over all things. He is kind, loving, and gracious. He is truth, perfectly holy and all-powerful and providential over history. He cares for the birds of the field and knows the number of hairs on your head. **Matthew 6:25-34**

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?"

28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,

29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

The comforting and motivating promises of Jesus vs. 2-3

2 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?

3 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.”

vs. 2 - “In My Father’s house are many rooms.” - meaning there is plenty of room for you!

There is a limit to how many people we can have at our home. There is a limit to how many people can stay at a hotel. But no follower of Christ will be turned away at Heaven’s gate because there is no vacancy.

Only those with faith in Jesus Christ will enter Heaven - and there will be plenty of room for each believer!

Not only is there room for you, but this is personal for Jesus. You're not simply a number - you are loved by God and He is intimately aware of your life and He promised to come back again to bring you to where He is.

Jesus is saying you have a personal and permanent home in Heaven with Him!

One commentator points out: *“In the New Testament there are 318 allusions or direct references to the fact that the Lord is going to return to take us to be with Him personally.”* (Preaching the Word, John, by R. Kent Hughes, p. 339)

The return of Christ is not a small Biblical or theological detail...it's the primary motivation for us to stay strong and remain faithful in the midst of life's difficulties and pain!

Paul's vision of Heaven in **2 Cor. 12:2-4** was a motivating factor in his ministry to not give up or give in to the pressures of his critics or the persecution he endured.

Peter encourages the persecuted believers in **1 Peter 1:3-6**

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials...

The writer of **Hebrews** encourages believers to remain faithful by reminding them they have already received the certainty of Heaven in the person of Christ!

“Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.” (12:28-29)

In **Philippians 3** Paul says:

“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (3:20)

And in **Romans 8**, Paul gives a resounding crescendo of praise to God filled with our certain hope of Heaven and the motivation to the Christian to forge through the troubling realities of this life.

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” (vs. 20)

“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (vs. 31b)

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(vs. 38-39)

The reality of Christ - and the reality of Heaven don't make life's problems go away - but they do make them bearable - they do make them smaller in comparison to the future God has in store for us!

Only one way to God: Jesus vs. 4-6

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.”

Thomas...gotta love Thomas. Have you ever been in a class and everyone was afraid to tell the teacher they didn’t have a clue what the teacher was talking about? How many times have you been talking with someone and as they were talking about something you didn’t know anything about, but you nodded your head and pretended to understand everything?

Thomas was unable to do this.

If Thomas didn’t understand something, he was going to call ‘*time-out*’ and ask for another explanation.

We often think less of Thomas for this - we refer to him as “*doubting Thomas*” because he wanted to see the resurrected Christ for himself!

But we should be thankful for Thomas’ honesty and his unashamed and genuine nature to raise his hand and ask a question when he didn’t understand what was being said. We need to thank Thomas for without his question, we might not have one of the most specific and clear verses about salvation in all the Scriptures!

What Jesus was saying that night in the upper-room was not something new. He had been telling His disciples

for years that He would go back to Heaven - back to the One who sent Him.

John 7:33

Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to Him who sent Me."

But this night...in the upper room...the reality of Jesus' departure from them became clear and imminent. Jesus tells them: "You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas pops up: *No we don't! We're confused...we don't know where you're going Jesus...how can you say we know the way?*

This is not an issue of geography or a question to be answered by reading a map. It was for Thomas...but not for Jesus.

This is a spiritual question...a spiritual reality.

It's a question still being asked today by many people.

It is phrased a bit different...but it's the same question.

- What is the purpose of my life?
- How do I get to Heaven?
- How should I live my life so God will accept me?
- I've done more good than bad in my life...isn't that good enough?
- God loves everyone and so everyone will go to Heaven.
- All religions are the same - they all lead to the same God.

When you boil it all down, these are really the same question / statement.

How do I get to God? How do I go where Jesus is?

How do I get to Heaven?

Jesus makes it crystal clear:

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

The problem with this clear statement from Jesus is it's too clear!

Like I said last Sunday - it's not due to a lack of evidence that people reject Jesus.

It's also not due to a lack of clarity.

This couldn't be more simple or specific.

But because it's so clear and specific, it doesn't leave any '*wiggle room*'. It doesn't allow for any other path to God. It's Jesus...or nothing. It's Jesus in Heaven...or Hell.

The greatest sin you can commit in our culture is to be exclusive - to be 'narrow' and by implication tell those who believe differently they are dead wrong.

The politically correct thing is to admire everyone's sincerity and desire to better themselves and to improve society.

But politically correct thinking and belief is not Biblically correct thinking and belief.

There is certainly merit in bettering oneself and living in a way which helps to right the wrongs in society and to give help to those in need, and the church should be on the leading edge of these efforts.

But there is no merit in false theology - or trying to make up your own way to Heaven.

Either Jesus was God incarnate - the God-Man who was sinless and gave His life as a sacrifice for sin - was buried and rose from the grave, ascended to Heaven and is coming back to bring judgment, defeat evil and usher in the eternal glory of a new heaven and a new earth.

Or...Jesus was a delusional man with a God-complex, a con-man whose lies have blinded the world for 2,000 years, or He's the incarnation of evil giving false hope and teaching nothing but lies to millions of duped followers.

Which one is He? You must decide. This is the issue and decision of faith.

vs. 6b: “No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Once again...absolute clarity.

Jesus is the only way to the Father.

Can't get there through Mohammed.

Not through Joseph Smith.

or Buddha...

or Hinduism...

or Ghandi.

Not through Charles Taze Russell or his followers the Jehovah Witnesses...

Not in your church attendance...

Not in the money you give or the service you offer to the church...

Not through the family lineage you were blessed with...

Not through religion...

Not through moral and ethical improvement...

Nor the Pope...

Nor any of the Saints!

Only Jesus is “the way, the truth and the life”.

Only through Jesus can a person go to the Father.

This is hard for many in our culture to stomach.

The modern mind loves options - choices.

The modern mind loves to look at someone’s motive or their intent - and if their motive and intent is good, then why be a stickler for the details!

The modern mind likes to include all people - inclusivism - nobody excluded except those who don’t believe in inclusivism!

“All roads lead to Heaven!” is our societies bumper sticker slogan.

But this is not a statement of helpful direction. In reality, it’s nothing more than a destructive lie.

1 Timothy 2:5-6a

“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all...”

This is not a popular message in today’s relativistic society...it’s politically incorrect to be so specific and limit faith down to one option...but it is the truth.

How do we know it’s the truth? How do we know Jesus wasn’t a liar or a deranged and evil lunatic?

Seeing and Knowing God vs. 7-9

“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him.”

8 Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

9 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’?”

Once again, just as we talked about last Sunday at the end of chapter 12, Jesus speaks very clearly about the total uniformity between He and the Father.

“And whoever sees Me sees Him who sent Me.” (12:45)

If you’re a critic or a skeptic, you might say, *“Easy for anybody to say they are God.” Easy to say it...but just because He said it doesn’t mean it’s true.”*

And you would be absolutely correct. It is easy to say these words...but it’s not easy to back up the words with actions only God can do. Actions which prove the truth of His Words.

In fact, Jesus faced this exact criticism / protest in **Mark 2**.

Read vs. 1-12

The proof that Jesus wasn't blowing smoke - the proof that what He said was true is in the truth and consistency of His words - but also in His works.

10 "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.

11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me, or else believe on account of the works themselves."

Jesus' miracles prove He is the only way to Heaven. vs. 10-11

As the saying goes: *He can talk the talk...but can he walk the walk?*

Yes.

His words are proven by the miraculous works He performed throughout His ministry.

When John the Baptizer was in prison, he was hearing various reports about Jesus, so he sends some of his disciples to Jesus to ask Him point blank: Are you the Messiah?

"Are You the One who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

4 And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.

6 And blessed is the one who is not offended by Me."

Matthew 11:3-6

Are you offended by Jesus?

Are you offended by His politically incorrect message?

Apply it...

Do you believe Jesus is *the way, the truth, and the life*?

Are you offended by the narrow road of 'Jesus only' - or do you recognize the power of His Words and the power of His works?

Admit your sins...

Believe in Jesus as your Savior...

Commit each day to Christ...Come to Christ!

Christian...

Know Jesus - Take great confidence in His power and passion. He was / is God - His Words can be trusted.

Commit each day to Him - and be motivated in your life now - He is coming back...to take you with Him to Heaven! ("Let not your heart be troubled.")

Close in prayer