

The Way, The Truth, The Life

John 14:1-14

Good morning church. And welcome to any first time guests or those of you watching online. I hope you are ready today because we are going to read about one of the most well known, and I think one of the most controversial "I AM" statements. But before we do, let's do a quick recap.

Jesus and his disciples are having THE last supper. Jesus in all his grace and humbleness washes his disciples feet. And after they are full and relaxed he decides to hit them with some "wham bam, no thank man" truths. What started as a seemingly peaceful dinner is starting to unravel quickly. He tells his disciples that someone at the table will betray him, he's "leaving" without a return date and that the disciples will scatter, Peter will deny the Lord and Judas has already gone out to betray Him. I mean talk about the drama. Which leads us to pick up in chapter 14.

Let's pray

Now here in the midst of all this internal chaos, Jesus starts with these words

1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled."

Bam stop right there... what Jesus? Don't let my heart be troubled when you tell me you're leaving? Or don't let my heart be troubled when you tell me someone at this table, who could very well be me, is going to betray you? Don't let my heart be troubled when you tell me I'm going to deny you three times, even though I've been by your side all this time? Don't let my heart be troubled when I didn't get that job, and the numbers in my bank account keep going down? Or when my children and family are lost in the world, or the walls are closing in... how can my heart NOT be troubled?

But notice He doesn't say, "You have no reason to be troubled." The disciples' concerns are real. Your concerns are real. Instead, He redirects their hearts from their circumstances to Himself. Again we see Jesus teaching the disciples and us, over and over again to fix our eyes on him. Why? Because he is peace. Jesus acts either as the peace that calms the storm around us or the peace that carries us through it. Jesus gives peace before He gives explanations which is backwards from how we usually operate. We say: "If you explain it... then I'll trust."

Jesus says: "Trust Me... then peace will come." Faith isn't understanding first. Faith is trusting first.

1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God^[a]; believe also in me.

By claiming equality with the Father, Jesus placed Himself on the exact same footing as God. This was a statement the religious leaders absolutely loathed. While every Jewish disciple already possessed a deep-rooted belief in God, hearing a man born on this earth declare that He Himself is God changed everything. Faced with this claim, we are left with only two possibilities: it is either pure blasphemy or absolute deity. There simply is no middle ground.

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 so that you also may be where I am.

In first-century Jewish culture, a son would often build an additional room onto his father's house after becoming betrothed. Betrothal was much more serious than modern engagement.

Once a couple was betrothed, they were legally committed to one another, even though they had not yet begun living together as husband and wife. When the father determined everything was ready, he would send the son to retrieve his bride. The bride never knew the exact day. She simply stayed ready.

And so we see Jesus talking and using language to the disciples in a way that they would understand. Jesus knows He's going to the cross, he's going to resurrect, and ultimately return to the Father. But He's also alluding to His return. Jesus repeatedly tells His followers to be ready. Matthew 24:44: "Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Let's go back to verse 3

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me...

Then He gives the reason why: "So that where I am, there you may be also."

That's the heart of heaven. Not streets of gold. Not mansions. Not crowns. Not even the absence of pain. **Jesus**. Heaven is being where Jesus is.

Jesus continues...

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?”

Fun fact: Did you know that the book of John is the only gospel to mention Thomas’ statements, the other three gospels only list his attendance. Makes you wonder why John would take the time to include these statements that usually don't get appreciated. I think John included these statements because Thomas is always speaking what everyone is thinking but doesn't have the guts to say.

John is showing you that real people who knew and walked alongside Jesus still had questions. Questions asked in faith often become opportunities for revelation.

The man who asks, "How can we know the way?" is the same man who eventually declares, "My Lord and my God." in John 20. Thomas didn't have everything figured out—but he kept following Jesus long enough to discover who Jesus really was.

And while religion tries to offer countless answers, Jesus offered one.

⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know^[a] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

We notice that Jesus isn't saying "I know the way." "I'll teach the way." "I'll show you the way." He says, "I AM the way." This is the sixth of Jesus' "I Am" statements in John's Gospel with every one of them pointing back to Exodus 3, where God revealed Himself to Moses as: "I AM WHO I AM."

Let's go back to elementary school. Anyone know what a definite article is... it's defined as “a **determiner** (**the** in English) that introduces a noun phrase and implies that the thing mentioned has already been mentioned, or is common knowledge, or **is about to be defined**”

By using the definite article "the" in the Greek translation, Jesus signals a profound distinction. He is clarifying that He is not merely one potential path or one version of truth out of many options. He is defining those words, *way, truth and life*.

Let's break down each part starting with...

The Way: The Greek word for “way” is **hodos** which literally means: road, journey, pathway.

Sin created a barrier no human being could cross, but Jesus became the bridge we needed so that we could have access to the father. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 2:5, "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Only one.

When Jesus says in verse 6 "No one comes to the Father except through me." He's not just talking about excluding other paths; but in actuality giving you one sure path to God the father, that anyone may receive by faith.

Not because God is unwilling to save. But because Jesus dealt with sin.

Fun fact: Did you know before the followers of Jesus were ever known as "Christians," they were known as **"the Way."** (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14). Acts uses that phrase several times, and I don't think that's accidental. The early believers didn't see following Jesus as simply adopting a religious label or joining a particular group.

They understood it as a journey. They had been given a direction, a destination, and a reason to keep moving. They weren't just people who believed something about Jesus—they were people who had decided to **follow Jesus wherever He led them.** Their faith wasn't something they simply wore; **it was a road they walked.**

The Truth: The Greek word is **alētheia**.

It means reality as God sees it. Truth isn't determined by majority vote or by what culture says.

Culture said it was acceptable to own slaves. Culture says it's not acceptable to own slaves.

Culture said women shouldn't be allowed to vote. Culture says it's a democratic right.

Culture said smoking was fashionable. Culture says smoking is bad for you and causes cancer.

Culture said it was not acceptable to abort a baby after it had a heartbeat. Culture says it's acceptable to abort a baby up until 9 months.

Culture said marriage was between a man and a women. Culture says marry who you want.

Culture said if you struggle mentally or psychologically you need to "get over it" or "get a grip". Culture says go seek professional help and talk about it.

Look at how quickly culture can change its mind. What one generation calls acceptable, another generation can call unacceptable. What society once condemned, society can eventually celebrate. What was once celebrated can eventually be condemned. Culture keeps moving the line. Culture keeps redefining the standard.

But Jesus didn't say, 'I will show you what truth is.' He said, 'I am the Truth.'

Truth isn't supposed to move because culture moves. Truth isn't supposed to change because opinions change. **And if Jesus is the Truth, then our job isn't to bend Jesus to fit the culture. Our job is to allow the Truth to confront the culture—including us.**

If truth changes every time culture changes its mind, then truth isn't truth—it's just opinion with enough people agreeing with it.

That's why Jesus doesn't say, 'I have the truth.' He says, 'I AM the Truth.' Because truth isn't ultimately a philosophy, a political position, a moral standing or a cultural consensus. **Truth has a name—and His name is Jesus.**

The Life: John uses two different words for life. **Bios:** physical life. **Zōē:** eternal life that comes from God.

Jesus isn't simply talking about physical existence. You can be physically alive and still be spiritually dead. Ephesians 2:1 says we were “dead in trespasses and sins.”

That's why Jesus didn't come simply to make our lives better. He came to make dead people alive. He says, “I am the life.”, not “I can give you life”.

Life isn't something we find apart from Him. It's found in Him. John 1:4 says, “In Him was life. And that life isn't just something we receive after we die. Jesus gives us new life now, and He promises eternal life forever.

So when Jesus says, “I am the life,” He's reminding us that everything we're searching for—purpose, hope, peace, and ultimately eternity—it's found in Him.

Jesus doesn't just improve the life you have; He gives you the life you were created for.

⁷ If you really know me, you will know^[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Jesus is not only revealing the Father but is talking about part of the Trinity. The Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Holy Spirit. But the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one triune God.

Jesus is the perfect revelation of God's nature and character. Hebrews 1:3 says Jesus is: "the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature." Colossians 1:15 calls Jesus: "the image of the invisible God."

This is significant because the disciples had known God through the Old Testament Scriptures. They knew God as Creator. They knew Him as Yahweh. They knew His law. They knew His promises. But now Jesus says: "You have seen Him." The revelation has become personal. **They aren't simply studying information about God. They're walking with God in the flesh.**

⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." ⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Sometimes we ask God for another sign when He's already given us enough revelation. We say: "God, show me that You're real." And God points us back to His Word.

We say: "God, show me that You love me." He points us to the cross. Romans 5:8: "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We want God to give us something new. But sometimes God is saying: "Look again at what I've already shown you."

⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

This also shows us that **you can know about God without knowing God.** And I think one of the most sobering examples of this in Scripture is the Pharisees.

These weren't people who didn't believe in God. They weren't atheists. They weren't people who had never opened a Bible. They studied Scripture. They memorized Scripture. They debated Scripture. They taught Scripture. They could probably quote passages that many of us struggle to remember. And yet, when Jesus—the very One the Scriptures were pointing toward—stood in front of them, they didn't recognize Him.

Think about how crazy that is. They were arguing with the Author of the Book using the Book He wrote. They were quoting Scripture to the One who inspired the Scripture. They

were correcting the One who gave the Law. They were standing face-to-face with the living Word of God while using the written Word of God to argue against Him.

John 5:39 is one of the clearest examples. Jesus says: "You search the Scriptures, for you think that in them you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

Think about what Jesus is saying. "You're searching the scriptures, but you're missing Me." They had the scriptures. But they missed the Savior the scriptures were revealing. They had the information. But they missed the person. They knew the text. But they didn't know the One the text was pointing to.

And that's a warning for us. Because it's possible to sit in church every Sunday and still not know Jesus. It's possible to own five Bibles and never surrender your life to the God those Bibles reveal.

It's possible to memorize verses and still live in rebellion. It's possible to know the language of Christianity without knowing Christ. You can know His name without knowing His voice. You can know His teachings without following Him. You can know His miracles without trusting Him. You can know His story without surrendering your life to Him.

You can know the songs. You can know the terminology. You can know when to stand and when to sit. You can know the books of the Bible. You can know theology. You can even know how to talk about Jesus... and still not know Jesus.

The Pharisees teach us a harsh reality that biblical knowledge without relationship can actually become a barrier to recognizing Jesus. Because if all you want is information, you can use scripture to prove your point. But if you want God, scripture is going to lead you to Him through Jesus.

That's why Jesus doesn't say in John 14, "Philip, if you had studied a little more." Or "If you had memorized more verses." He says: "If you had known Me..."

Because Christianity isn't ultimately about how much information you can collect about God. It's about whether you know God through Jesus Christ. The Pharisees knew the Scriptures that said the Messiah was coming, they knew where He would be born, the prophecies and promises. And then the Messiah showed up... and they missed Him.

That's why we have to be careful. Because we can become so familiar with Christianity that we stop being amazed by Christ. We can become so familiar with the Bible that we forget that every page is pointing us toward Jesus. We can become so familiar with

church that we forget why we're here. The goal isn't simply to know more Scripture. The goal is to let Scripture lead us into knowing Christ more deeply. **Because the Bible isn't merely trying to make us informed. It's trying to make us transformed.**

¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

Everything Jesus says is consistent with the Father's will. **Jesus' words and works both reveal the Father.** Jesus doesn't simply tell us what God is like. He demonstrates it.

Jesus reveals the Father through His words. What did Jesus teach?

- Love your enemies.
- Forgive.
- Serve.
- Repent.
- Believe.
- Love God.

Jesus reveals the Father through His works. What did Jesus do?

- He healed.
- He forgave.
- He restored.
- He delivered.
- He fed.
- He raised the dead.
- He ultimately gave His life.

His words reveal God's truth. His works reveal God's character.

¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

So what does Jesus mean in these “greater works”? Is He saying that Christians will perform greater miracles than Jesus? Will we heal more people than Jesus? Raise more people from the dead? Walk on water better than Jesus? Obviously, that's not the point.

Jesus' miracles were unique. He raised the dead. He controlled nature. He multiplied food. He healed the sick.

No disciple surpassed Jesus in the kind of miracles He performed.

So what are the “**greater works**”? Jesus is talking about what will happen after His departure. He's going to die on the cross. He's going to rise in three days. He's going to ascend. And then the Holy Spirit will come upon His followers

Acts 1:8 says: “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me...”

And here are some examples of what we see happen... Jesus preached. Then Peter preaches at Pentecost. 3,000 people respond. Jesus ministered primarily within Israel. Now the Gospel begins moving: Jerusalem. Judea. Samaria. The ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

The greater works are not necessarily greater in quality. They are greater in scope and extent.

Jesus physically walked the roads of Galilee. But after Pentecost, His message travels through His people. Jesus ministered in one geographical region. Now His Gospel reaches the nations. Jesus preached for three years. The Church continues proclaiming Christ for generations.

Candlelight illustration: Jesus is the Light. We carry the light. Not because we are the source... but because He lives in us.

Now Jesus follows works with prayer in verse 13

¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

People get those words “in my name” a little twisted. People have the tendency to think that throwing a little “in Jesus name, amen” means we’ll get what we want. Jesus' name isn't a magical phrase. We see this messed up thinking in Acts 19.

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

¹³ Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." ¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵ One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?" ¹⁶ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

DON'T DO THIS!!!

That's why Paul can say in **Philippians 4:13**:

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

The power isn't coming from us. The work is Christ's. We are simply His instruments.

To pray **in Jesus' name** means to pray in agreement with His character, His purposes, and His will.

Prayer in Jesus' name means:

"Lord, I'm asking this as someone who belongs to You and wants Your will to be accomplished."

Look at the second half of verse 13:

"...that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

Prayer isn't primarily about getting God to give me what I want. Prayer is about asking God to accomplish what brings Him glory.

(Worship team call up)

This brings us back to verse 6.

Jesus says:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Then verses 7–11 essentially answer: "How can Jesus be the way to the Father?" Because Jesus reveals the Father. So when you're lost, follow Him.

How can Jesus be the truth? Because His words and works reveal God's truth. So when the world is confusing you, believe Him.

How can Jesus be the life? Because He possesses the life of God and gives eternal life to those who believe. So when you're afraid of death, trust Him.

So when you wonder what God is like, look at Jesus. Remember "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father."

And then Jesus says, "The works that I do, you will do also."

In other words:

"Now that you know Me, let Me work through you."

You don't have to be a pastor. You don't have to have a platform. You don't have to know every answer. You don't have to be perfect. You simply have to be willing. Because the same Jesus who called fishermen, tax collectors, ordinary men and women, is still using ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things in His name. He doesn't call the equipped He equips the called.

And when you don't know what to do? Pray.

When you don't know what to say? Pray.

When you're afraid? Pray.

When the assignment feels bigger than you? Pray.

Because Jesus says, "Ask in My name...That the Father may be glorified in the Son."

That's the mission. That's the purpose. That's why we're still here. Jesus has gone to the Father. But He's not finished working. He's working through His people. And one day, He's coming back.

What Is the Holy Spirit Saying to You?

As we've walked through this passage, the question isn't simply, "**What did Jesus say?**" The question is, "**What is Jesus saying to me?**"

Maybe He's reminding you:

"I am the Way" — Stop trying to find your own way. Trust Me.

“I am the Truth” — Stop allowing the world to define what is true. Stand on My Word.

“I am the Life” — Stop looking for fulfillment in things that can never satisfy. Find your life in Me.

Maybe you've been troubled like the disciples. Jesus is saying, **“Let not your heart be troubled. Trust Me.”**

Maybe you've known about Jesus but haven't truly surrendered to Jesus. He's inviting you into a deeper relationship with Him.

And maybe you've been waiting, wondering what God is doing. Remember His promise:

“I will come again.”

So take a moment and ask yourself:

What is Jesus asking me to surrender? What is He asking me to trust? Where is He asking me to follow?

Don't just leave knowing more about Jesus. Leave knowing Him more.

Prayer of surrender

Prayer for unbeliever

So until He comes...

we trust the Way,
we stand on the Truth,
we live in the Life,
and we make His name known.

Because the world doesn't need another way, another truth or another life. It needs Jesus, the way the truth and the life.