

## Parting Words: Hope in a Promise

John 14:1-7

Small Group Discussion

**Intro Questions** (try to get everyone involved in discussion):

- What is one part of the world that you haven't yet seen but would be on your bucket list to see? Examples: a natural feature, such as the Grand Canyon; a country, region, or city; or a famed venue, such as Carnegie Hall.
  - In Sunday's sermon, Justin Varughese likened the biblical concept of hope to the experience of going to see the Northern Lights or the Grand Canyon. Before going there, he believed it to be real, and in the case of the Grand Canyon, the closer he got, the more real it became.
- To what degree do your present circumstances (e.g., job, relationships, health, finance, politics) determine the meaning of your life?
- In today's passage, we see that our meaning can be defined through the very real hope that Jesus offers us in his call, his promise, and his provision.

**Pray:** Invite the Holy Spirit to be present and to guide your study and discussion of God's word.

**Read** John 14:1-7, then discuss the following.

- What is the setting for these verses? Look back at chapter 13 if necessary to get a sense for what was happening when Jesus spoke these words.
  - What must the disciples' inner thoughts and emotions have been experiencing in this moment?
- In v. 1, Jesus tells his disciples, "Do not let your heart be troubled," and calls his disciples (including us) to believe in him, just as we believe in God the Father.
  - Justin explained the word "troubled" as meaning something like "agitation of heart," similar to the ripples caused on a still lake, which disturb the stillness. To what degree does this agitation of heart describe your life these days? Is it ever-present, or sometimes-present, or are you completely at peace? What causes this agitation?
  - Jesus' **call** is to put our confidence in him in a way that enables the agitation to be replaced with the stillness that he brings. Can you think of a time when the stillness that Jesus brings has been true of you?
  - What stands in the way of your putting your confidence in him to this degree today?
- In vv. 2-3, Jesus makes a **promise**, which should enable his disciples (us included) to be confident in him, in a way that brings us deep rest. What is the essence of his promise?
  - When you travel, how do you feel about coming home to your place of residence? Are you typically sad that your trip is over, happy to be back at home, or something else? Can you think of a recent example?
  - Based on John's word choice, Justin explained that Jesus' promise here is that he will bring us "home" in a way that gives us true rest. And looking forward

to v. 23, we see that Jesus and his Father offer to come make their “home” in us now!

- What does it look like to find your *home* in Christ now, even while looking hopefully toward your future home with him?
- In vv. 4-7, Jesus shows us that he is, himself, the **provision** which enables his promise to become a reality.
  - In what way is Jesus this provision?
  - What is the ultimate destination to which he is the way, according to the end of v. 6?
  - Jesus’ claim in v. 7 would have been radical in the ears of 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Jews. Why? If you let it strike you in a fresh way today, what does it mean?
  - In the beginning of v. 6, Jesus says something that sets him apart from every other religious leader in the world: that he does not *show* the way to God, but he is, himself, the way, the truth, and the life. Our faith revolves around a person.
    - Reflect on those three nouns that Jesus uses to describe himself: way, truth, and life. Which of those speaks to your current situation the most? Why?
    - Which of these have you, perhaps, ignored, to your own detriment?
- Returning to where we started, how can Jesus’ words in this passage help you to embrace a hope that is greater than your circumstances?

**PRAYER:**

- If you haven’t already shared about other particular needs in your life, be sure to do that, and pray for one another.
- Pray in response to what God has revealed to you in this discussion of his word.