

Jesus is the Way

John 14:1-31

KV 6 “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Thank God for blessing our summer Bible conference. We heard so many powerful testimonies, messages, world mission reports, songs and dramas. We learned from Msn Abraham Lee’s message about Jesus, the light of the world who opened the eyes of the man born blind. The man had been blind from his birth and spent his life as a beggar but when he obeyed Jesus’ almighty words he was healed and did the amazing work of testifying about Jesus before the powerful Pharisees. He wants to open our eyes and the eyes of campus students so that we too may testify. We learned through Msn Tunde’s message, when he declared “It is finished” on the cross, Jesus declared victory over sin and death. The reign of sin ended as Jesus paid the price for sin once and for all.

In today’s final passage, we learn Jesus is the Way, the truth and the Life to the Father’s House. Like the disciples we too may have been very troubled before coming here but I believe we’ve all been blessed to feast on the word of God and enjoy fellowship with our brothers and sisters. We’ve enjoyed 9 meals and 3 nights stay in a 5 star dormitory with the coolest rooms ever. But does anyone remember how they got in here? There was a way to get here? There weren’t many ways. Either you paid the conference fee or someone paid for you? Right? Likewise there is a clear way to the kingdom of God and a clear way for spiritual growth and maturity. May God help you to see Jesus as the way, truth and life.

Part 1

Jesus comforts his disciples (1-4)

Let’s read verse 1a together. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Some people say this is the hardest commandment in the Bible. Things seem to come up left and right that trouble us. In our passage today, the disciples’ hearts were full of trouble. The disciples had left everything to follow Jesus. But in chapter 12 Jesus predicted his own death and in the previous passage Jesus assured them he would only be with them a little while longer. He would only be 33 years old surely none of the disciples would have ever expected that. They expected great things and great benefits from Jesus but now he’s going to be killed by his enemies. They too may have feared for their own life. Furthermore, in chapter 13, Jesus predicted his betrayal by a trusted disciple Judas and Peter’s denial of Jesus. When they saw the reality of who they are and what they will do they must be sick to their stomach. In a great time of need they would all fall away.

Though we may have forgotten about our troubles these past 3 days here at James Madison we will head back shortly to a world full of troubled hearts. Our own troubles will resurface. Things will happen that we can never expect. We or our loved ones become sick, we lose our

jobs or fall into financial turmoil. When we look at ourselves we can feel even more troubled. We want to do great things for God like Peter but just like him we even end up denying him before our classmates, friends or colleagues.

As the cross came near Jesus was the one who was supposed to be troubled. Instead he comforted his disciples. Jesus is the true comforter because he alone gives real hope and promise. When my wife is troubled I try my best to give her comfort but I find all my best efforts that are not based in the hope and promise of God are in vain. The only thing I find that can bring her comfort are the truthful words written in the Bible. We must go to truth to find comfort for truth is real comfort. C.S. Lewis once said “If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end; if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin, and in the end, despair.”

Jesus says in verse 1b “trust in God, trust also in me.” Trust in God! Trust also in me! (some other versions say “Believe in God, believe also in me.” Numbers 23:19 says ¹⁹ God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? When God spoke the heavens and earth were formed. He said let there be light and there was light. When Jesus spoke “Lazarus, come out” a man who had been dead for 3 days came out of his grave. God is all powerful and doesn’t lie. We must trust in him and trust in Jesus.

In verses 2-4 we see why his disciples should not let their hearts be troubled. Let’s read verses 2-4 together “My father’s house has plenty of room; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go there 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. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

First, Jesus is going to the Father to prepare a place for you. Jesus doesn’t try to comfort them like the world comforts “You guys will be ok without me” or “be thankful that things could be worse”. These words though well intending are ultimately meaningless. Instead our Lord Jesus who is trustworthy and does not lie gives the disciples a promise. Verse 2 says, “In my father’s house are many rooms; if that were not so I would have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you”. Jesus gives us a promise of an eternal home. A home brings a sense of security and significance. For Jesus, the place he was referring to was a place which he knows well, for that is where he came from and where he was going back to. It is a place of love, joy and eternal happiness where his Father lives. Jesus was moments away from being betrayed with the dark shadow of the cross of crucifixion which meant immense pain and suffering for him. But Jesus carried in his mind a vivid image of his Father’s house in all its majesty and brilliance. In fact, the King James version says “In my father’s house there are many mansions”. When Jesus thought about his father’s house he saw an image of his Father smiling down on him, welcoming him home with open arms. This picture of his Father’s house gave him courage and strength to face the cross with all its suffering and shame.

One reason many of us are troubled is that we live like we don't know where we are going. Amidst all of our struggles in this life we lose sight of our end. Through Jesus' victory over sin and death on the cross our end is not death or shame or suffering but glory. My family was forced to suddenly leave China where we had built a stable life in 2015 due to visa and citizenship issues. My heart was so troubled because we had to start our life all over again from the bottom of society. Neither of us could find jobs in our fields and we couldn't sell our house. I took a job an entry level job in a field I knew nothing about (IT) with a mean and strict Korean boss with really long and terrible commute time of more than 3 hours a day in the car on 495. I felt like an animal migrating in search of food and water day after day. When thinking about my situation I despaired day after day and felt like the most pitiful man in the world. Gradually though through message writing God restored me to have a living hope in the kingdom of God. I realized despite all of my troubles in this life, I'm loved by the father and I know where I am going --- to my heavenly father's house.

Many people among us are suffering health problems but Praise be to God (through faith in Jesus Christ) this is not your body forever! Many others are suffering from deep depression due to various reasons. This pain is not yours forever! Some are facing stresses from work, raising children and rejection from the world. But this too will not last forever. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade away." Through our troubles in this world, God wants to plant a living hope in the kingdom of God. We can rejoice in many things but the greatest thing we can ever rejoice in is that our names are written in the book of heaven (Luke 10:20).

Second, Jesus will take them to be with him. He wants us to be where he is because he loves us so much. Jesus never wanted to leave his disciples but without leaving them he could never prepare our eternal dwelling place where we could be with him forever. Hebrews 13:5 says "I will never leave you nor forsake you." When Peter denied Jesus three times before a little girl he must have felt so troubled and crushed. He had been a top disciple of Jesus full of courage and zeal. But his courage and zeal failed him so miserably before a little girl. When the risen Jesus appeared to him in John 21, he asked Peter 3 times --- "Do you love me". Jesus didn't want Peter to just live in his human strengths which fail us but live in the love of Jesus and the promise that he is going to take us back to be with him. What a great comfort that Jesus' love for us so much greater than any of our failures. We are so unworthy, that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords would say I will take you to be with me. May God bless you to live in the love of Jesus Christ and love him back.

When Jesus says I'll take you to be with me, it means we don't have to depend on a map or GPS to get there. He is saying let me drive your car, you can sit in the passenger seat and trust me. Trust in God. Trust in Jesus. That is our struggle. Recently I made a decision to accept God's calling to serve as successor to Pastor Jacob in Washington ministry. When I was first asked I

felt so troubled in my heart. I lack so much to do this job. I still don't know how to do so many things. I don't know how to work with so many people with different opinions and backgrounds. I worried about my family. But when I prayed, God made it so simple – Trust in God and trust in Jesus. He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it. Like a little child who trusts his father or mother, we must come to Jesus and seek his counsel and guidance. That is my struggle and that is your struggle. Jesus says I will take you to be with me. May God bless you to trust in Jesus as the way to the Father and the Father's house.

Part 2 (Jesus, the way to the father)

As clear as Jesus sounded in verses 1-4, still there were those that didn't understand. Let's read verse 5 together. "Thomas said to him, Lord we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Though Thomas calls Jesus Lord, he still doesn't get it. His thinking is like that of man, that there is a way from point A (where he is now) to point B (where Jesus is going). However, he doesn't have the coordinates for point B because he's never been there and the Father's house was not on any map of that day. In short, Thomas is asking how can we get to where you are going, the Father's house? How does Jesus respond?

Let's read our key verse, verse 6. "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

First, Jesus is the way. Jesus doesn't say that I am a way but he says I am the way, emphasizing the only way. When our culture hears this verse, many people become upset and offended because they believe there must be many ways. One way sounds very arrogant and exclusivist. Our culture values freedom, which many people mistakenly believe is the right to decide for ourselves what to do and how to live. We dislike authority figures and think everyone should be equal. Due to our love of freedom, we don't like instruction or be corrected and told by someone what we should do. However, where does this lead us? The great novelist Franz Kafka once said "I am free and that is why I am lost." This is exactly how our post-modern generation may feel. We are lost, like in a desert with a lot of choices but no way out. We need to be saved. Thanks be to God beyond all of our human solutions God provides a way through his son Jesus.

We all know only the owner of the house decides the door for the guests to enter, normally the front door. The guest is not free to choose. Not the side door, back door, window. It's not a personal preference for the guests. Likewise, when it comes to the Heavenly Father's house, it is up to the Father the way to enter his house.

It is always God who determines the way one can be saved and get into his house. In Exodus, God told the Israelite slaves in Egypt to put lamb's blood on the door so that his angels saw this sign and passed over this house when they came to attack the Egyptians. This was the only way the Israelites were delivered. Later God revealed the only way of atonement of our sins – to sacrifice the animals in Old Testament time. Jesus is the final revelation of our salvation – He came to die in our place so that whoever repents and believe in him will be saved. Acts 4:12 says

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved.”

There’s a story told of a man who died and went to the gates of heaven. When he got to the gates St. Peter told him his life would be reviewed and his good deeds would be added up. To be granted admission into heaven he had to have earned 1000 points. The man said, “That should be easy. I taught the Bible for 30 years.” **Peter said**, “Okay, that’s worth one point.” The man was a little surprised and then said, “Well, I was also a faithful and loving husband as well as a dedicated and nurturing father.” Peter said, “Okay, That’s worth one point.” The man was becoming concerned. So he blurted out, “I tithed 10% all of my income from the age of 18!” **Peter said**, “Okay, that’s worth 1 point.” Now the man was worried. He said, “I was a director of Washington UBF. “That’s only worth a half point.” After the man had gone through the entire list of every good thing he thought had ever done with his life , he had only 12 points. Finally, in exasperation, he said, “I give up! The only way a guy could ever get in here is by the grace of God.” **Peter said**, “That’s worth 1000 points! Come on in!”

Jesus Christ is the way given by God. Jesus Christ is the grace given by God. Yesterday we learned through Msn Tunde’s message that is finished, which means that God doesn’t have to add anything to save us. We also don’t have to add anything for our salvation. We should simply believe and accept Jesus as the way by faith.

2nd, Jesus said “I am the truth”. Jesus did not say, “I am one of the truths.” But that he is the truth.

When our culture hears Jesus’s exclusivist claims as the way to God, they get upset and call Christians narrow minded and even bigots. If Jesus’ claims are right then that means all other ways are wrong. Their focus is not on the truth but instead on their own way. If one says 1+1 can only be 2 it is narrow minded but it is right. Of course, we should never boast or be arrogant about our salvation because as stated earlier it is God’s way not our way. In the postmodern and post truth times of our day, people take away absolute truth and leave only interpretations and opinions. But without any truth we cannot build any foundation. Without truth we have nothing to hang onto and people are left either totally lost without any meaning besides seeking their own benefit.

Despite the post modernists claims, knowing and seeking truth is still the foundation of one’s life. When your wife asks, “do you love me”? She is wanting to know the truth. Then she can decide how well to treat you. When we go to the doctor, we want to know the truth about our condition so we can get better. When you decide a major of study, you want to know the truth about your job prospects after graduation. What about life? What is the truth regarding your life?

Jesus, as the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1) is the source of all truth. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Thank God for Jesus who came from the Father full of grace and truth. Since he

came from the father, he alone can testify about who God is. About who we are. He alone can testify about God's goodness, holiness, righteousness, judgment and ultimately the way to the Father. He alone is faithful and trustworthy as a son to his father's mission.

Not only is he the truth but when we read the Bible Jesus also teaches us the truth. Jesus often said "I tell you the truth", he didn't say "I tell you my opinion". Thank God for Jesus' words "I tell you the truth, you must be born again!" "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains only a single seed but if it dies it produces many fruits". The truth has power to change our lives into a new creation, molded into the image of Jesus himself. These days we heard a lot of testimonies. In Andy Gholson's testimony on opening night, he revealed how the truth given to him by Abraham Song in 2 Corinthians 14:6 "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" helped him get out of a destructive relationship. He was suffering greatly but now due to acting on that truth he has a great life ahead of him in Christ as he prays to go out to Italy as a missionary. Praise God.

Jesus is the truth also means that he is God's holy and perfect standard. Though no one can live up to this standard the standard cannot be lowered. We still need Jesus as our standard so we will not measure ourselves against the people around us but live godly and holy lives until the day of Christ's return. When we hold to Jesus as the truth and standard we can be challenged to love others, build each other up and encourage each other.

Third, Jesus is the life.

Jesus said, I am the life. Jesus himself is the path to eternal life.

Since Adam sinned death came into the world. No matter how much we exercise or diet we will still surely die. Because the relationship between God and us is broken we are no longer connected with God, the source of life because of our sins. Just like the flowers we buy from the shop, even though they still kind of look pretty, they are dying or already died in some sense because they are cut off from their root. We are not the source of our life, but God. Death became a ruler above all of us. However, "for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) Jesus is full of life. Life overflowed from him. The edge of his clothes healed the bleeding woman. No one can stay sick before him. He raised the dead. No one can even stay dead before him. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He died for our sins and rose up and then he never dies. He is a living God and willing to give us eternal life. True life doesn't just mean to be alive, but includes a lot of wonderful things in life, such as love, peace, joy, hope, passion, direction. John 10:10b Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life; and have it to the full."

In Asian culture we cannot enter anyone's house without taking off our shoes for they are dirty and will mess up and make the entire house dirty. The owner would be angry and we wouldn't feel comfortable there for long. Though God accepts us as who we are, we cannot enter his

kingdom just like we are, covered in our sins and filth. We must be clean. Some people say the kingdom of God should be a wide door and everyone should be let in. But who knows who would be your roommate for all eternity if that were the case. Could you stand them for all eternity? 1 Corinthians 6:9 says “The wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Only those who repent of their sins on their hands and knees and are covered and cleansed in the life giving blood of Jesus Christ will be able to enter. Only those who know, worship and make every effort to enter through the narrow door of Jesus Christ.

The words Jesus spoke were very compelling and of comfort but still Phillip wanted more. In verse 8 he says “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” It is like Phillip was asking for one more piece of cake after a big buffet. One more and that will be enough. Some of us may be just like Phillip, show me one more thing and that will be enough for me. Instead of showing one more thing, Jesus challenges him to know Jesus. Apostle Paul said “For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified”. When we resolve to know Jesus men can love their wives and women can respect their husbands. When we resolve to know Jesus we can have stand on the side of truth but with much grace because Jesus himself is full of grace and truth. When we resolve to know Jesus we can attempt and expect great things for God. May God bless you as we leave here to make a decision to know Jesus all the more. For he is the way, the truth and the life. Nobody comes to the Father except through him.

In 14:12, Jesus says, “Very truly, I say to you, all who have faith in me will do the works that I have been doing and they will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father.” Jesus proclaims that His disciples will perform even “greater works” than He has because he has gone to the Father and unleashed the Holy Spirit. When Jesus’ disciples accepted Jesus as the way, the truth and the life they did even greater things than Jesus through the Holy Spirit by reaching the whole world with the gospel. On the day of Pentecost and in Acts chapter 2, Peter preached a sermon and 3,000 people believed in Christ. All of this occurs through Jesus’ power because He goes to the Father. Jesus releases the Holy Spirit to accomplish great work through his followers. When we believe Jesus is the way, the truth and the life we too can take part in great works of Jesus. Please pray for our 17 life testimony speakers at this conference that God may use them to accomplish greater things for God than any of us can imagine through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Verses 12-14 show us that despite all of our troubles and trials the church will accomplish God’s eternal purposes no matter what due to his going to the Father. What a great comfort to those who accept Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. Verses 13-14 says “I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask for anything in my name and I will do it.” When we accept Jesus as the way, truth and life sincerely we want to follow Jesus and do his will and not mine. We no longer have our agenda but we ask for and pray for the things Jesus wants. When we do Jesus becomes our advocate, he tells us ask anything in my name and it will be given to you. Let us humbly come before him, repenting of our sins of following our own way and align our hearts, minds and wills with his. Let us ask him

for strength, courage and wisdom to carry his truth back to our campuses and plant his life giving words among many dying souls so that they too may experience God's perfect love and kingdom.

In conclusion as we leave this conference, let us lift up the name of Jesus the way to the Father's house. Resolve to know him more than anything else. Come to him and let him wash your sins and look forward being in his Father's house with him forever. May God bless you to plant the truth of Jesus into a dying world.