

FINDING DIRECTION FOR LIFE Sunday School- May 27, 2012

Unifying Topic: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

Lesson Text

I. Jesus Comforts His Disciples (John 14:1-4)

II. The Way To The Father (John 14:5-11)

III. Greater Things (John 14:12-14)

The Main Thought: Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me. (John14:6, KJV).

Unifying Principle: People always try to find direction in their lives. How can we know which way to go? Jesus proclaimed that He was the way people would come to God because He was in God and God was in Him.

Lesson Aim: To help students understand that Jesus is the only way to God.

Life aim: To help the students believe there is power and peace in having a relationship with Jesus Christ.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

14:11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

HISTORY:

Chapter 13:31-38¹From a human perspective, the death of Christ was a terrible thing that involved unspeakable suffering and humiliation; but from a heavenly perspective it was the revelation of the love of God. "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified" (Jh.12:23). With the exit of Judas, the stage was set for that series of events that would bring glory to both the Father and the Son (vv.31-32). He was only about 40 hours from His death and 40 days from His ascension when He would be with the Father. Jesus speaks with the tenderness and affection of a father when He says, "*Little Children*" (v.33). This is the only time this phrase is used in the Gospels. He didn't have much time left and anything they wanted to know they would need to learn quickly.

Our Lord was speaking to His disciples for the last time before He went to the cross. He was giving them His last message and that message was, "*Love one another.*" Under the law they had been commanded to "*love thy neighbor as thyself*" (Leviticus 19:18) but now Jesus was giving them a newer and higher standard. He commanded His disciples to love one another "*even as I have loved you*" (vv.34-35). At this point Peter is still a little confused. Peter seems to have thought, that Christ, being rejected by the Jews, would go to some other part of the earth to erect His throne, where he might reign without disturbance. But Christ tells him that where He's going he couldn't follow. Peter asks why, because he's ready to lay down his life for Christ? He's very impulsive. In fact, the truth is the reverse of what Peter thinks. Jesus is the one who will lay down His life for Peter. Jesus answered and predicted just the opposite telling Peter that he himself will deny the Lord Jesus three times before the rooster crows (vv.36-38). Jesus already knew what was in Peter's heart. His spirit was willing but his flesh was weak.

There is a close connection between the events of Chapter 13 and the promises of Chapter 14. In Chapter 13 the disciples had been rebuked for their lack of humility. They were instructed that Christ would soon leave them. They

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/christs-farewell-sermon-to-his-disciples/>
<http://pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

were told that one of them would betray the Master, and Peter had to be rebuked. To offset the depression produced by this startling revelation, Christ brought a message of hope and encouragement in Chapter 14.

LESSON:

John 14:1-4 Jesus Comforts His Disciples

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. This text is spoken at many funerals to comfort the loved ones of the family members. In this setting Jesus had already spoken to His disciples that one of them would betray Him (13:21). The disciples were greatly "*troubled*" (*tarassetho*): disturbed, agitated, perplexed, worried, tossed about, confused, distressed. The disciples needed to settle down so some sense of peace can be given. Therefore, Jesus begins to comfort them with these words: "*Let not your heart be troubled.*" Just because Jesus would no longer be with them physically, their believing in God would relieve their hearts to also believe in Jesus. Deliverance from troubled; from worried hearts will come through their believing Jesus as well as God. This would be their first step of faith.

14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: Jesus gives a picture of hope by showing the disciples a glimpse of what Heaven will be like. In Heaven there will be many large and stately rooms in His Father's house. Heaven is the spiritual world or dimension of being, the home of God where the mansions for believers exist. The word "*mansion*" (*monai*) means abiding place. It means places, residences, rooms, dwellings, areas, spaces for living. Just as we have dwellings and homes here on earth, so Jesus promises us dwellings and homes (mansions) in heaven. There will be no shortage; there will be many mansions!

14:2b if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. Jesus is speaking from firsthand knowledge. This is not a lie but He only speaks the truth and the disciples should be comforted by the fact that Christ is going to personally prepare a place for them. It is not only for them but for us also that believe in Him.

14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. When the Father says the time is right, Jesus will come back for us and take us home with Him. He lets the disciples know that wherever He is, they will also be. We shall be with Him and being with Jesus is being a secure place.

14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Jesus continues to tell them time and time again of His departure from this world, so they already knew.

- "*whither I go ye know*": The place He's going is to the Father where He's preparing the mansions. The place He's from.
- "*the way ye know*": It was through the process of the cross. I don't know if they knew He would suffer so much, but He had explained through a many parables, many teachings that He would die. *John 12:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you Except a corn or wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone but if it die, it brings forth much fruit."*

Jesus has kept no secrets that He came from heaven and would return to heaven. He's giving them a reminder and sets them up for the next question they will ask.

John 14:5-11 The Way To The Father

14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Their confusion led to a question they had only interpreted with minimal understanding. But isn't this the same Thomas that said "*unto his fellow disciples? Let us go that we may die with him*" (11:16). Oh yes they were returning to Judea where they tried to stone Jesus, going into Bethany where Lazarus was buried. However, this was something deeper Thomas didn't quite take hold of and had to question Jesus to get the understanding where He was going and the way He was going.

14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, — There is a difference between pointing the way and taking someone by the

hand and leading him there. I heard someone say that they are praying for strength; well, pray that He be your strength. The person who guides a person to their destination literally becomes the way himself. Jesus Christ not only points out and tells a person how to walk through life and how to reach God the Father. He is the Way to the Father! Ask the Lord to be your Way! The Way directs you.

...the truth, — There is a difference between telling someone the truth and the living truth before them. Time and time again His Word had been spoken and proven. The Word was sent into the world, and Truth was embodied in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Word to set them free. In John 18:38, as Jesus, the Word speaks, Pilate asked, what is truth? Truth was standing before him and he didn't even know it. Let Jesus be your Truth! The truth teaches and sets you free.

...and the life: — There is a difference between telling someone about life and actually living life. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment, energy, force, and source of life itself. Jesus Christ lived life perfectly; therefore, He possesses life perfectly. When breath leaves the body, life eternally is still there. Receive the eternal life He gives by allowing Him to live in you.

...no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. — HE IS THE ONLY WAY TO GOD! Jesus is the Way to the Father; Jesus is the Truth to the Father; Jesus is the Life to the Father. If you think about it, the believer's primary objective is to go to the Father Himself, not to heaven. The believer's aim is to live in the Father's presence forever in heaven. You can't even get there on good deeds/works; it is only through Jesus Christ.

14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Jesus Christ Himself is the perfect revelation of God. If a man wishes to see exactly who God is and what God is like, he must look at Jesus Christ. The supreme revelation of Jesus Christ is that God is love (Jh.3:16). And a God of love is bound to reveal the way, the truth, and the life in the most perfect picture possible. A God of love would never leave a man in the dark, ever seeking, and never able to find and to know. A God of love is bound by absolute love...

- to show man The Way to Himself
- to show man The Truth about Himself
- to show man The Life of Himself

It takes spiritual eyes of understanding to get what Jesus is speaking. In other words, *'All you have to do is learn of Me to know me. If you had just observed Me, you would have understood and known what the Father is like. Then, you would have seen the Father because We are One!'*

14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Now another disciple comes forward with a question that seems to be already answered. He wants Jesus to show them the Father and they would be satisfied. They didn't quite understand the answer Jesus had just explained. They want a visible, a tangible display of God. I guess that would better calm their fears. That's really saying *'Jesus, You're not enough; more is needed.'*

14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? ²Jesus had been revealing the Father and the Father's "Will" ever since He came to the earth and it's astounding that they still didn't know. He says to Philip, *'have I given you such a shallow view of the Father in me, that you do not yet see the Father in me?'*

14:9b ... he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Jesus is still saying, *'You already know what God is like, what He wants, and how He feels about you. You know that because you know Me!'*

14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Jesus might have expected the ones on the outside looking in to not believe, but these are the ones close to Him asking questions. Now we really come down to what they believed and what we believe as believers of Jesus. The clear evidence that Jesus was the embodiment of God is threefold.

1. God's presence was proof that Jesus was the embodiment of God. Each has the nature and being, the Spirit

² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/john/39.html>
<http://pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

and Mind of the other. God was in Jesus, and Jesus was in God. This simply means that God's presence is not only with Him; God's presence is in Him. He Himself is God. "*I and my Father are one*" Jh.10:30.

14:10b...the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me,

2. Jesus' words were proof that He was the embodiment of God. When Jesus spoke, it was the Father speaking through Him. He didn't say anything the Father didn't intend Him to say. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews could see that He was at least a teacher sent from God (Jh.3:2). In Jh.3:34, "*For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God...*"

14:10c...he doeth the works.

3. Jesus' works were proof that He was the embodiment of God which will be explained in the next verse. There were two grounds on which they might believe; one was His own testimony, the other was His works.

14:11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. The disciples were weak in their faith. Jesus exhorts them to that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him or just simply believe Him on the basis of His works. The Lord's miracles were undeniable and spectacular. He healed hopeless lepers, cripples, and people blind from birth. And we must not forget that He raised some from the dead! The works themselves spoke for themselves and all the other actions and teachings He did and gave.

John 14:12-14 Greater Things

14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. Jesus gives a surprisingly great promise. You must be a believer to receive this promise. The believer shall do the very same works that Jesus did and do ever greater works. Three facts:

1. The genuine believer will do the same kind of works that Jesus did:
 - a. Loving and caring.
 - b. Ministering and healing.
 - c. Proclaiming and teaching.
 - d. Witnessing and testifying.
 - e. Sharing and discipling.
 - f. Helping and performing miracles.
2. The genuine believer will work hard for the very same purpose as Jesus. He will work...
 - a. to show men the love and justice of God.
 - b. to help men in all their need.
 - c. to lead men to believe on the Son of God that they might be saved and delivered from sin, death, and hell.
3. The genuine believer will do even greater works than Jesus. This means that the true servant of God will reach more people and have broader results than Jesus did. While Jesus was here on earth the fullness of God was available to man only in one human body, in the body of Jesus. Greater works are possible only through Jesus, only because He has gone to His Father and is sitting at the right hand of the Father and the Father sends the power of the Holy Spirit to live within us. The whole world would eventually hear, and an impact would be made upon many societies and nations as a whole.

Jesus has proclaimed this to His disciples and to us as believers.

14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, — The verse is in connection with the above verse in doing greater works. The "*whatsoever*" is confined to prayer in Jesus' name where the believer asks only those things that will bring honor, praise and glory ("*that the Father may be glorified in the Son*"). The Christian is given the power of attorney to use the name of Jesus. In "*Jesus' name*" there is "*His authority*." You have to be in accordance with His Word; praying in agreement with His desires. This does not give believers authority to ask anything that detracts, lower, or lead away from the Father and the Son. Effective prayer is the "Will" of God to be done. Believers would need to pray in Jesus' name to do greater works. Jesus says: "*that will I do,*" because it's in His name and in His Will.

- The only acceptance to God is in Jesus.

- The only Mediator between God and men is Jesus.
- The only Intercessor before God, the only Person asking God to accept man is Jesus.
- The only name that is perfect enough to approach God is Jesus.

14:13b ...that the Father may be glorified in the Son. The result of prayer is the glorification of the Father in the Son, not self-glorification. The believer seeks to glorify the Father as we pray through the Son. When Jesus answers prayer, the Father is glorified, and so is Jesus.

14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. Therefore, when the believer prays and receives what he asked for...

- his attention is upon both the Father and the Son.
- his praise and thanksgiving are heaped upon both the Father and the Son.
- his loyalty and surrender to both the Father and the Son are deeper and more mature.

The condition to Jesus doing what you ask is in His name. The extent is to ask within the realm and scope of His work and His character. Therefore, it's not in our will but it's bowing to His "Will" and His perfect "Will" will be done, in Jesus' name. ³We must come with a spirit of complete submission to the Father's "Will", feeling that His "Will" is best, and saying in our hearts, "*Thy will be done.*"

SUMMARY:

Immediately after predicting Peter's denial Jesus said to the disciples, "*Do not let your hearts be troubled!*" Deliverance from worry is to believe in Jesus as you believe in God. There are many mansions Jesus will be preparing in His Father's house. That means He has to go away; back to His throne in heaven. Wherever Jesus is, we will be there also. (vv.1-3). ⁴Thomas still does not understand the meaning of Christ's statement, so he asks a question. In simple terms he says, "*I don't know where you are going, so how could I possibly know how to get there?*" (vv.4-5). Jesus makes it clear that He was going to the Father and that He was the only way to the Father. Jesus' statement that "*no man cometh unto the Father but by Me,*" erases the possibility of going to heaven through good deeds, religious ceremonies, giving money, etc (v.6). Knowing Jesus, you know the Father because He is seen in Jesus. Now Philip wants to be satisfied with seeing the Father face to face. '*Show Him to us!*' (vv.7-8). The revelation that Jesus is the full embodiment of God is not seen to them. They are not believing the Father is dwelling in Jesus and doing the works. The clear challenge is to believe Jesus for the very miracles He has done (vv.9-11). Now, the clear promise is that the works that they have seen Him do, they will do greater works, with condition: they must believe Jesus. That's going to take faith. Faith and works always go together. As He goes to the Father, whatever we pray or ask for, it's in Jesus' name that the Father may be glorified in the Son. He said "*I will do it*" (vv.12-14).

APPLICATION:

The way has been made for us. The truth is given in His Word. The Life is produced throughout eternity. Your belief in Jesus will take on a greater meaning and direction in life as you allow Jesus to lead. He causes His Word to reveal the right path leading to Jesus' eternal life.

³ <http://www.studylight.org/com/pnt/view.cgi?book=joh&chapter=014>

⁴ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-encourages-the-troubled-disciples/>
<http://pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>