**Jesus Is the Way**

John 14:1-14
Key Verse 14:6 – “*Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*”

In last week’s passage, Jesus gave a new command to His disciples; to love one another as He had loved them (14:34-35). In spite of the looming betrayal by Judas and later on by the rest of His disciples, Jesus continued to unreservedly pour out His love upon them by giving even deeper meaning to the “Greatest Commandment.” In demonstrating His love through both word and action, Jesus set the standard to which all who believe in Him must aspire to so we may display the kind of love that not only changes lives but the whole world around us. Unfortunately, the disciples could not take this new commandment to heart for their own hearts were consumed by the fear of losing Jesus. They had left everything to follow Him in the hope that they would witness something glorious but now were faced with the grim reality of Jesus’ impending death and the prospect of a future without Him leading them like the Good Shepherd He is. Often times, we too find ourselves in a similar place to the disciples when we are overwhelmed by fear, leaving us feeling hopelessly and utterly lost. But all praise be to Jesus who declares Himself to be the Way, the Truth and the Life! In today’s passage, Jesus reassures the disciples by revealing how He is the only way to God and it is only through Him that we experience the wonderful and eternal security of our Heavenly Father. I pray for us to be emboldened in our faith so we may see Jesus as the only way that leads to true life and do the greater works which He has promised for us to do.

**Part One: In My Father’s House**

John Chapter 13 ends with an earth-shattering pronouncement. Jesus informed the disciples that not only would they betray him but that even Peter will deny ever knowing him three times. One can only imagine how dark, heavy and unbearable the mood of the entire room was in that moment. There was nothing else they could do but worry about their uncertain future. All those years of following Jesus appeared to be all for nothing and what must have been even more saddening was that it would be because of their own disloyalty that Jesus would meet His tragic end. However, Jesus directly challenges the dreadful atmosphere in verse 1; ***“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.”*** Think of all the things you fear for or trouble your heart in life. Some of these things are in some ways quite justifiable such as family, health, work, studies etc. There are also many others that are not but they all share one thing in common in that we often look towards them to offer some form of security in life. We believe that by having these things, our hearts will be immune from all the hardships of life. But Jesus clearly states in verse 1 that believing in Him is the real cure for a troubled heart. Jesus is not merely offering a helpful suggestion as a reading of the original Greek reveals that Jesus is actually giving this verse in the form of a command. Jesus commands us to believe in our Creator God who knows all our needs and to believe in Him who knows our every fear and anxiety. Anxiety takes hold of us when we forget about our God who is in control of everything. So when we do find ourselves in that zone, let us repent of our lack of faith and remember 1 Peter 5:7, “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

Jesus then further illustrated His command by providing a beautiful picture in verses 2 and 3. Let us read these verses together, ***“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? And if I go 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.”*** As the disciples feared being deserted and with nowhere else to go, Jesus gave them the lovely imagery of a house with many rooms which Jesus had personally prepared for them. Older translations use the word “mansions” instead of “rooms” (or “homes” in other modern translations), thus feeding into our idea of Heaven as “the big luxury resort in the sky”! However, the meaning is much more profound than this. The Greek word Jesus used here for rooms/homes/mansions is “*monai*” but it is the verb form of the word (“*meno*”) that Jesus used more often to describe an intimate relationship (John 15:4,10) and “to live within” (John 6:56). In short, Jesus is inviting us to have an intimate and meaningful relationship with Him and in deepening our relationship with Him, we experience the security that comes from knowing we have a place in Our Father’s house. In this world, everyone struggles to find somewhere they belong. We compete with everyone else in everything we do to stake out our own place in the world because we fear if we are not the very best, there will be no room for us anywhere. Even in our Christian life, we worry about even approaching God for we feel we fall so far short of His standard and broken beyond repair. But unlike this world, Our Father’s house has enough room for everyone and a place specially reserved for you! Jesus has promised us a place in His Father’s house and has promised to bring us to His house forever. When we truly believe in His promises, we are liberated from the anxieties of life. We can freely serve Jesus, giving our time and resources with great joy in our hearts for we know our true security is not in the form of money, a dream job or worldly recognition but in the form of a person. It is that very same Person who makes the way for us and as we shall see, is the only one who can lead us back to our Father’s house.

**Part 2: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life**

Upon giving such a picturesque view of our heavenly home, Jesus concluded with verse 4, ***“You know the way to the place where I am going.”*** To this, Thomas responded in verse 5, ***“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”*** Although he is known as “the Doubter,” Thomas’ honesty is quite refreshing, revealing a heart that really wanted to know Jesus all the more and what Jesus meant by them already knowing the way. Surely, Jesus had not left a map or a GPS from them to find Him with. If Jesus was indeed going back to the Father, then how on earth could mere mortals such as themselves ever hope to follow!?

To this, Jesus responded by delivering one of the most important verses in the entire Bible. Let us read verse 6 together, ***“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.””*** This verse not only states the exclusivity of Jesus as the only way to God but also doubles as Jesus’ claim of divinity, equating Himself with God. As such, it is important to unpack this verse so we may understand why Jesus could make such an audacious declaration.

First, Jesus is the way to the Father and to the Father’s house. Why is it so? It is because Jesus is the only one who has come from God. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:13, “No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven–the Son of Man.” When Jesus speaks of the Father’s house, He is speaking of what he has seen and experienced. More than that, Jesus came down from heaven to bridge the gap between God and man. No one could climb up to God by human effort. But Jesus came down from Heaven to Earth to open the way to God. Praise be to our Lord Jesus Christ who has given Himself as the way back to the Father (Philippians 2:6-8)!

Jesus is the way to God because He alone solved our sin problem. In the Old Testament system, the holy God lived among His people in the Most Holy Place in the temple. There was a heavy curtain separating God’s dwelling from the rest of the temple and only the high priest could go in there once a year, offering an animal sacrifice for his own sins and the sins of the people. However, when Jesus died on the cross, shedding His blood, He made an offering acceptable to God as our High Priest. As Hebrews 10:19-22 exclaim, “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” Other religions and teachings of men state that we can earn our way into Heaven by our good deeds. However, only Christianity offers a God who willingly laid down His own life, to save those who were destined for destruction, out of the immeasurable greatness of His divine love.

Second; Jesus is the truth of God made flesh. Not only did He fulfil every prophecy written about Him by the ancient prophets but no man has ever lived a life so pure and perfectly in line with His own teachings. This could only happen if He was indeed God. As John 1:14 says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Third, Jesus is the very source of life. Throughout the Gospel of John, we witnessed Jesus giving new life to both the physically and spiritually dead. For the Samaritan woman (4:13-14), the invalid man (5:8), the woman caught in adultery (8:11b), the man born blind (9:37), and to Lazarus (11:43), Jesus’ gift is available to anyone who believes in Him and is willing to receive it. Jesus promised in John 5:24, “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.” Our life is incredibly precious to Jesus for it is God-given and only He is able to give it to us to the fullest. And it is by putting all three together (way, truth, life) that we can only come to one conclusion; Jesus is indeed the Only Way.

**Part 3: I Am In the Father & the Father Is In Me**

Let us read verse 7 together, ***“If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”*** With this verse, Jesus summarizes much of what He had taught them throughout His ministry. Yet Philip still asked for something more; ***“Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”*** Even though Jesus just said that by seeing Him they have already seen the Father, Philip still asked for something more concrete and tangible. Maybe Philip wanted a great sign like when Jesus was transfigured, becoming blindingly white in appearance with Moses and Elijah flanking Him on either side (Luke 9:28-36). But why weren’t Jesus’ own words enough for him? It is because Philip still could not believe in Jesus fully. Despite everything Jesus taught him, Philip still had no security in Jesus’ word.

So Jesus replied to him in verses 9-11; ***“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’? 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. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.”*** Many times, we sound a lot like Philip – asking for some great sign that will compel us to believe in Jesus yet forgetting all the times beforehand when Jesus has proven Himself to be our Provider, our Teacher, our Good Shepherd and a whole lot more. But Jesus does not simply call us to believe due to the evidence in our own lives; there is also the work He has done in others that we can look toward. Ultimately though, our belief should be based primarily on His Word.

Look at verses 12 to 14, ***“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. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”*** Jesus further emphasizes what belief in Him will result in Him. Although the disciples were always timid, divided and had little faith, Jesus transformed them through the gift of the Holy Spirit into great spiritual leaders who spread Jesus life-giving word further than even Jesus did in His own lifetime. However they could only do so through a genuine belief in Him and earnest prayer. Jesus offers this same promise to us so that we may ask Him for anything in prayer. One prayer I have is for the growth of our St. George ministry. At times it feels difficult to serve even the small number of students we have as they are preoccupied by the challenges of university life. When you add to this the difficulty of preaching God’s Word on a campus like UofT or Ryerson, you are left with what feels like an impossible task. Yet I am encouraged by these verses where Jesus promises this rag-tag bunch of misfits that He will enable them to do even greater work than He through the belief in His word, through prayer and, as we shall study next week, the power of the His Spirit dwelling within us. I pray this wonderful promise will embolden us to continue to serve university students with the love of Jesus in the coming year.

In conclusion, we witnessed how Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is only through Jesus that we can truly know God and experience the eternal security He offers to all those who believe in Him. I pray we may truly hold on to His promises so that our hearts will not be overcome by the troubles of life but be filled with the joy that comes from knowing we have a place in His house forever, with Jesus leading us there every step of the way.