

Sermon- The Way, The Truth and the Life

Scripture: John 14: 1-7

Sunday, July 14, 2019

Last Sunday our guest preacher, Pastor Basil preached a wonderful sermon about seeing ourselves and others as God sees us and finding people in our lives we can bless by seeing them as God sees them. We were blessed by that perspective. Today we are going to continue our journey in the Gospel of John. The last time when we were in John I talked about Apostle Peter and the declarations of faith he made even before he had the Holy Spirit functioning inside of him. But Jesus knew that the real work of faith in his disciples would come only when the Holy Spirit was functioning inside of them. And for the Holy Spirit to come He would have to leave the 11 for a while. So in today's passage we find Jesus preparing his disciples for this time of temporary absence. And what Jesus did was remind his disciples of some key elements about himself that if they held on to, they would be able to handle Jesus' absence well. So let's look at each of these elements.

Before we get to the three elements, Jesus tells his disciples, do not let your heart be troubled. Turn to your neighbor and say, "do not let your heart be troubled". He said trust in God and trust in me. Turn to your neighbor and say, "Trust in the Lord"

Now this phrase "trust in the Lord" has only as much meaning you pour into the word "Lord". And in your passage you have two entities Jesus is asking you to trust, the Father and the Son. Now to be honest the disciples are not going to be at peace unless they know what Jesus really means by saying, "trust the Father and the Son". So Jesus launches into some more explanations. But what he is doing is what a parent would do if they were dropping their kids off to school for the first time.

Picture it this way. Your child is so anxious because he or she has never been away from home. They are crying bitterly as they stand there at the door of their school. What would you tell your child at this time? Well, you would tell your child first of all that you are not leaving them permanently and that you will be back very soon to get them, right? What else? You tell them that you love them. You might tell them that school will be fun and it is good for them, right? Now if you analyze these statements you will see that there are three things you are doing. You are reassuring your child that the separation is not a permanent loss because you are coming back. Secondly, while the child is in school and you are at work, important things are happening that will be helpful for both of you. And most importantly, at the end of the day you remind your kid that they will be back home safe.

This is what Jesus the Christ is doing with his disciples. Think of the parent child conversation as just a starting point because what Jesus is communicating to his disciples is something way deeper. So let's try and understand what is going on.

Remember Jesus opens this chapter with this line, "don't let your hearts be troubled". He is saying don't worry. Why? Because you need to trust God and Jesus. What are you going to trust God and Jesus to do? In the NLT it says, you need to trust God that in the Father's house there is more than enough room for you, because Jesus is going to the Father so that he can prepare a place for his disciples. Now in the King James it translates this as, "in my Father's house there are many Mansions". This is an instance where the King James does not quite get it right. Actually if each person in heaven were to live in a mansion, heaven would be a really lonely place. The Greek word "monai" simply means "dwelling place". So what Jesus is saying is that his disciples, when they feel the absence of Jesus in the coming days, they need to trust that Jesus is on a mission for their sake, to go and prepare a dwelling place for them in his Father's house.

Jesus did not want his disciples to be troubled because he was gone to prepare a place for his disciples right in the home of God himself.

OK is that much clear to you? Ok hold on to that clarity because just after that, Jesus goes on to say, *“When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. ^YAnd you know the way to where I am going.”* This makes Apostle Thomas quite confused. And he speaks for the whole group when he says, “We have no idea where you are going, Jesus, so how can we know the way?” And Jesus then jumps on this opportunity. You see, Jesus had literally set Thomas up to ask about the “way”. Because Jesus then says, thank you for asking Thomas. Listen up, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life and ...no one comes to the Father... but by me”. This is Jesus’ biggest I AM saying to this point. This I AM saying is like a big summary of all the previous I AM sayings, bread, light, gate, good shepherd and Resurrection and the light. Jesus is now summarizing all those I AM sayings with three words “the Way, the Truth and the Life”. These three words are now so full of meaning that we are going to meditate on them for the rest of the sermon.

The first thing I want to say about these three words is that these three words are three concepts. And all three concepts are introduced to us right in the prologue of John in reverse order. So for example someone read John 1:4 says, “the Word gave life to everything that was created”. Verse 9 says “the one who gives true light to everyone came into the world” and “true light” means the truth. And verse 12 goes on to say, “But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God”. That is a little more indirect but work with me here. He is saying all those who believe and accept him, become something. What do they become? They get the right to become children of God. When you become a child of God, now you are following a new way of life, right? That is your third word, the “way”.

But here is the problem with the word “way”. When you think of the word “way”, you think of path that you have to follow, and it is easy to think of the path that you have to follow as the work you have to do to get to heaven. Certainly, Apostle Thomas was thinking of some kind of path he had to follow because he asked Jesus, “how can we know the way when we don’t know the destination?”

But where did Jesus say he was going in verse 2? Well, he said he was going to prepare a place for you. And where was that? In his Father’s house. Now is that any physical path that anybody can take to get to Jesus’ Father’s house? No. We cannot travel to his Father’s house any more than the people building the tower of Babel were able to build a tower to reach God. So the destination is not a physical place. So what is it then? Jesus was going to make a way for his disciples to “dwell with God”. So if you want this ability to “dwell with God” is there some path that you can follow to get to that destination? Well here is the deal folks. There is no path that you and I can take to get to that destination. Jesus has to do the work. Jesus is the path. And what does it mean that Jesus is the path? It means gives us the “way of life”. In fact it means the “Jesus way of life”. Living life like Jesus did. And how did Jesus live life? Completely submitted to His heavenly Father in every way. The Jesus way of life. So in other words Jesus is saying, “*anUZjZfZMIXMMZu{ /Zy| ySaZ~ bZy{aZl {aZxb a{ {njbZ{aZ/Zy| y,, Mn_jbZ^a*” Jesus said I am “the way of life”

That brings us to the second part of this I Am saying, “I AM the truth”. John 1:9 introduced us to the idea that Jesus was “the Truth” by saying, the Logos was the “true light”. And what does true light do? It gives light to everyone else. What that means is this. Jesus has an illuminated mind that holds the big truths. People of the world may be confused and try to confuse others but Jesus holds the truth and he gives that truth to other people. Think of it like this. In the old days there were different weights and measures and people were cheated all the time. It was like there was no truth in the transactions. Then an absolute standard for weights and measures was established as

the universal standards. So now when people wanted to buy 1 kilo of something, as long as they were using the 1 kilogram weight that was certified by the organization that held the true 1 kilogram, they were good. In other words, when you are connected with the truth, truth is contagious. And you wanted to be infected by truth. Now what is the most important measure in life? It is the measure that came before all other measures right? What is the measure than came before all other measures? John 1:1 says, in the beginning was the Logos. In other words understanding the Logos or understanding who Jesus is, is the most important truth you can hold in your mind. Jesus is the very being of God and how he lived was according to the will of God. And He and He alone is the salvation of the world. If you get this right, everything else in your life will be measured against this truth. Jesus said, I AM the Truth.

Now let me ask you this. Can you live a “Jesus way of life” without an understanding of the truth of Jesus Christ? Not really. Can you do it the other way around and hold in your mind the “truth of who Jesus Christ is” without having a “Jesus way of life?” No can do. In other words you cannot have the “way” part without the “truth” part, right? So what I am saying is that the first two parts of the I am saying cannot be separated from each other.

It gets even better. Because there is a third part to the I AM saying, right? I AM the life. Now friends, what do we know about the life of Jesus Christ? What happens when Jesus Christ dies? He comes back to life, isn't it? So that means the life of Jesus Christ is an “eternal life”. Think about this, Jesus Christ was the only human who had eternal life after the fall. Yes there were three other people who never experienced physical death in the Bible. But Jesus was the only one who died and rose again to never die. Not only that, even his eternal life is contagious. Through Jesus you and I can have eternal life too.

So here is the interesting thing. If you have the “way of life of Jesus” and you have the “truth of who Jesus is” can you be separated from the “eternal life of Jesus?” Not really. You will not be separated from the eternal life of Jesus. In other words, the “way of life of Jesus” cannot be separated from “the truth of Jesus” and both the way and truth cannot be separated from the “eternal life of Jesus”.

In other words, The way and the truth and the life are interconnected and cannot be separated. And what is more, the way, the truth and the life cannot be separated from Jesus. And Jesus’ one mission is to lead people to His Heavenly Father. That is what it means when Jesus declares, “I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father, but by me”.

There is one more connection Jesus is making here and so I will make it as well. That comes from verse 7. He says “If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is.^[c] From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”. Just a quick point about this. No human being as direct access to the Father except Jesus. So anything that is revealed about the Father, comes from Jesus Christ. So this is the reason why no one can come to the Father except through Jesus Christ because no spiritual being that ever has existed has direct access to the Father except for Jesus Christ. Jesus said I AM the Way the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father but by me.

So the only question remaining to ask is, what does that mean for you and me? The first thing I would say is this. You really cannot separate your “way of life” from your understanding of the “truth of Jesus Christ” and the “eternal life” you have. This eliminates the whole false division between faith and works, right? There was never any division between faith and works in the Bible. Your way, your truth and your life are one entity. How integrated are these three in your life?

Secondly, if Jesus Christ is the only access point to the heavenly Father, and you are the only access point to Jesus Christ for many people in your life so what does that make

you? Yes, friends that makes you and me the only access point many people may have to the Father. Does that sound like a lot of pressure? Well, then don't let your heart be troubled friends! Trust in the Lord. And ask him to help you bring those three things I talked about together as one. Trust God to bring your way of life, your understanding of Jesus and the promise of eternal life all together. Then you will not only feel the pressure being lifted but you will become a super-conductor to the Father. If you are hearing this and still don't know what I am talking about, go wrestle with Jesus some more. And the access point to help you with that may be sitting right next to you. Let us pray.