

I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

JOHN 13:31 - 14:7



UNDERSTANDING HIS WORD

1. This is part of the Upper Room Discourse, the final teaching of Christ before He goes to the Cross. In less than 24 hours, His body would be stretched on the Cross, His blood spilled for us. In these final instructions, He tells His disciples what is most important to Him.
2. After Judas had left the Upper Room, Jesus declared, *“Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him...”* (13:31). The moment at which Judas goes out at the command of Jesus to set in motion the events that will take Jesus to the Cross, is the moment God is glorified in the Son of Man. It is the glory of perfect love forever poured out and forever received within the being of the triune God (Newbigin).

“Now” is the moment of manifesting God’s glory, but is also pregnant with future hope. For us too, “now” is always full of promise of a glory to be revealed. The future glory is present now in suffering.

The glory of God is the love of Christ freely given.

3. It follows naturally, then, that the mark of glory for God’s community is love. The same love that Christ demonstrated by His self giving sacrifice that glorified God. *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another”* (13:34 & 35).
4. In giving up His life, Jesus tells His disciples, *“Where I am going, you cannot come”* (13:33). To which Peter asks, *“Lord, where are you going?”* Jesus replied, *‘Where I am going you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.’* Peter asked, *‘Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.’* Then Jesus answered, *‘Will you really lay down your life for me?’* I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!’” (13:36-38).

Peter felt the pain of exclusion from Christ when He indicated the disciples could not go where He would be going. The disciples were already stunned when Jesus told Judas to go to execute his treacherous act. Now, Jesus predicts Peter will betray Him. Peter was shocked into silence. He does not speak again. The disciples were in turmoil and greatly disturbed. Just as Jesus *“was troubled in spirit”* when He identified Judas (13:21).

5. So, Jesus consoles them, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled...”* (14:1). It is best translated, *“Stop letting your hearts be in turmoil.”* In order for that to happen, the disciples were exhorted, *“Keep on believing in God...Keep on believing in me...”* (14:1). Prevailing faith is encouraged when circumstances dictate a different response.
6. The basis for faith is now described: *“In my Father’s house are many rooms...”* (14:2). The picture portrays a large house with many subsidiary living quarters, a symbol of the City of God in Rev 21:9 – 22:5 (Beasley-Murray). The death and exaltation of Christ is to make it possible for His disciples to be there with Him. The promise Christ makes is that He goes 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”* (14:2b-3).
7. Jesus indicated to His disciples, *“You know the way to the place where I am going”* Thomas said to him, *‘Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’*” (14:4 & 5). Thomas was interested in the destination, but that is beyond human comprehension. How does the finite grasp the Infinite? All we need to know is the way there. The destination is where Jesus is.
8. Jesus makes the self revelation: *“I am the way and the truth and the life...”* (14:6). In context, *“the way”* is dominant as it answers directly Philip’s question, *“How can we know the way?”* (14:5). He is the Way because He is the Truth about God, ie. what He reveals about God is true. He is the Way because the Life of God resides in Him. *“The Way”* depicts Jesus as the mediator between God and humanity; the Truth points to Jesus as the mediator of the revelation of God; and as the Life, Jesus is the mediator of salvation which is the life of God. Jesus is the Way to God, the Truth about God, and the Life of God.



APPLYING HIS WORD

1. Trouble is what we experience in life. When security is threatened, we are anxious. The disciples were already troubled. Trust in God allays fear and gives peace. If God has prepared our final rest, then all that happens to us enroute can be entrusted to God’s care. *“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you”* (Isa 26:3).

