



June 11, 2023

“Trust God through Jesus”

SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.

News:

★VBS June 12-16★ ★Church Camp August 24-27★

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The topics of the Farewell Discourse:

Glory:

Jesus’ imminent departure:

His marching orders:

What:

How:

Who:

In what way:

For what reason:

The human response:

JOHN 14:1-6 ~

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

To _____ His shocking rebuke of Peter, Jesus went on to tell all of them, “do not allow your heart to be ταρασσω (tä-řäs-sō) troubled.”

As you see the chaos and suffering and the seemingly endless advance of evil, do not allow yourself to be _____ by it.

Okay, fine, how?

The phrase isn't so much “believe in God, believe also in Me,” as it is, believe in God _____ with Me.

The verb “believe” as a dramatic exhortation occurs as both the first and final word in the phrase, “believe in God and in Me believe!” It's like a _____ command to trust.

The world's falling apart around you - you do not understand why these things are happening - and Jesus is _____ with you to trust Him and the God Who sent Him.

In verse 2, Jesus gives a small explanation of what their _____ holds. The KJV has, “In my Father's house are many mansions.” The Greek word μένω (mě-nō), is the verb to remain or stay. From that the noun μονή (mō-nā) is derived, which means a place to remain or stay, an accommodation or _____ place (John 14:23).

- 1) First, to dispel the notion that we will be as _____ in Heaven as we are now.
- 2) Second, to rid you of this purely human idea of _____.

To add to the rationale that neither the Apostles, nor any other Christian should ever be troubled, Jesus pointed out that the reason for His solo journey was to actually create the place where others could _____ Him. Obviously, if He was going away to create such a place, He would _____ to get His friends for whom He did that.

Using _____ Jesus answered the group in a magnificently encouraging formal I AM statement.
Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ.

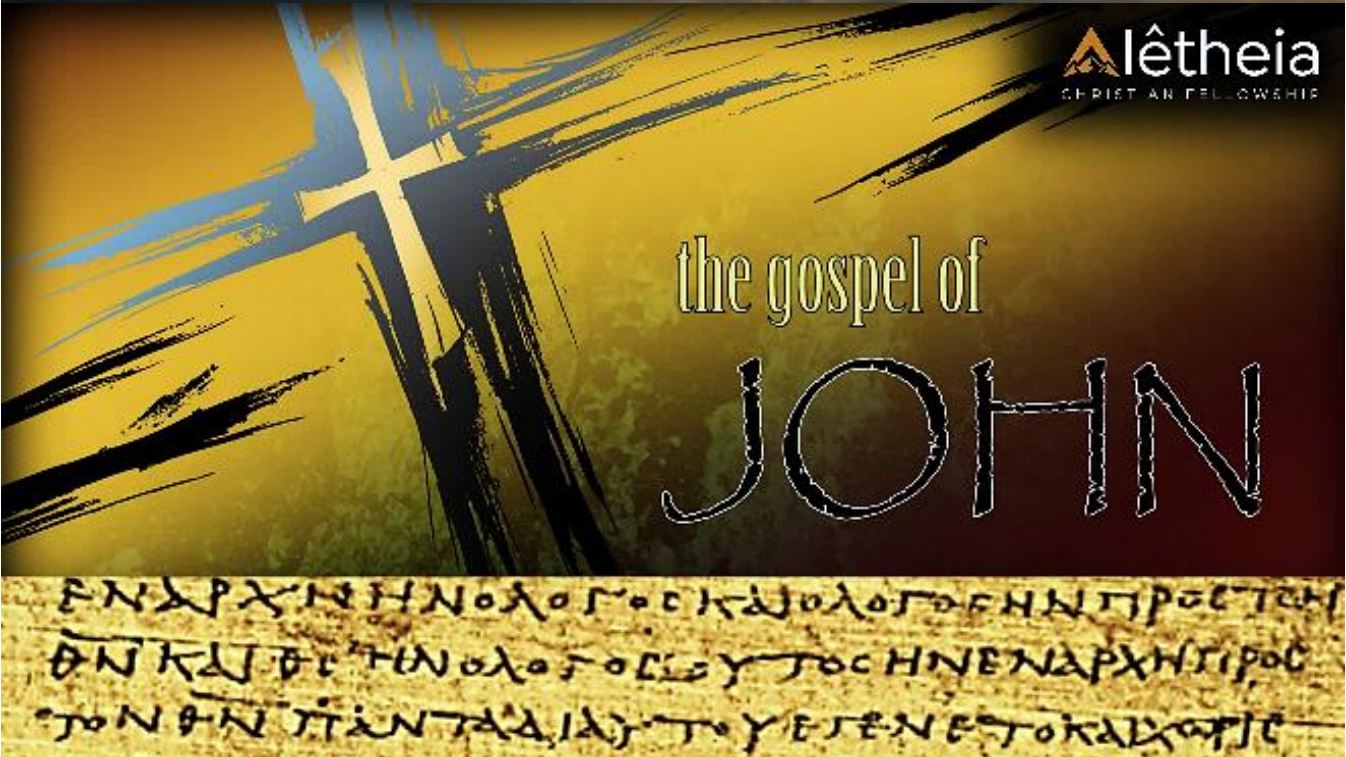
Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____



lêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



Last week we looked at the tail end of John chapter 13, a passage that functions as the introduction to what's known as Jesus' Farewell Discourse. In it the topics to

be developed over the next few chapters were broached as they came up naturally. The topics were Glory, Jesus' imminent departure, what His followers are to do in His absence, and their response to that.

We covered the first three fairly well last time, but only scratched the surface of number four.

As a reminder, or review, I guess... Jesus was "troubled in Spirit" after Judas departed from the Upper Room of the Last Supper in order to betray Him. Jesus told His guys that His mission was almost complete and that meant that He would no longer be with them physically.



He then gave them voluminous, detailed, and exhaustive instructions for all that He wanted them to busy themselves with in His absence. Jesus essentially said, “I will not be with you physically anymore, and while I’m gone, these are all of the things that I want you to do” ... “Love one another.” Yep, that’s the entirety of all that Jesus has commanded His followers to do in His physical absence.



We don't need a library for that, we could put that on a post card, or a bumper sticker, or a T-Shirt, or a bracelet. That is the sum total of everything that God wants from you. Do that and it will be “Well with Your Soul.” Do that and you will receive from Jesus a hearty “Well done, good and faithful servant!” I’m not sure what you want, but that’s what He wants.



What you are to do, is to Love one another starting with those in your local church family and it is to be done through tangible acts of self-sacrificing service. That was the point of the foot washing in the Upper Room. Get this... The most fundamental, foundational, essential, and basic part of that, loving service, is to simply be present, to participate in the life of the church as an active and integral member of the family. It is to be in relational fellowship together. You do not love that which you avoid. Do you seriously believe that Jesus can't figure that out?

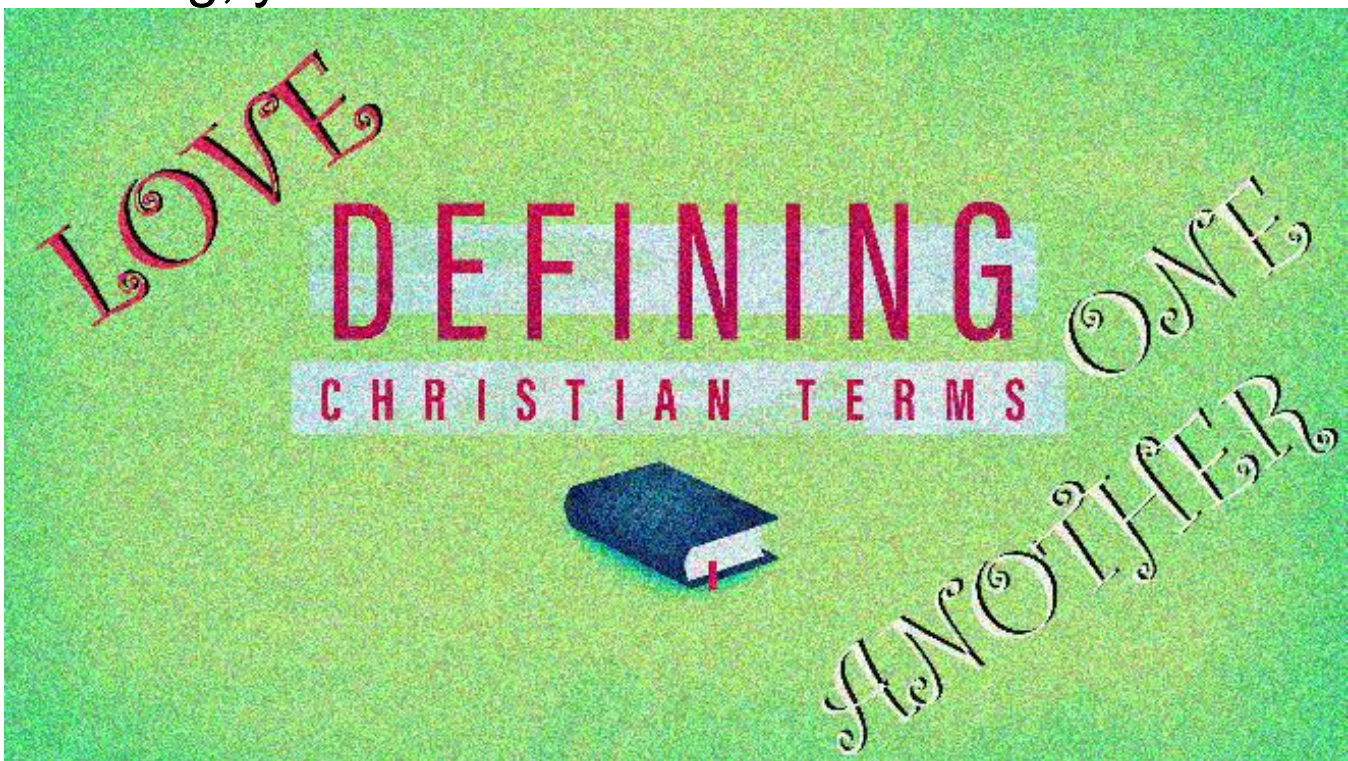
Allow the Love of
God to overflow
your cup to the
point that it
splashes over and
gets everyone
around you wet.



How you are to do it? How are you to fellowship harmoniously with a group of people? It's important because most of us won't make it very long in our own power. What we must do is to fully embrace the ridiculously generous Agapê love that God has poured out upon us and then, through faith, step out in His lavish Love, and generously share it with others. That has been made clear, but it will be made even clearer as we continue in this Gospel. The resource is His Love, not human effort.

The who, as in who must to do it, is all those who have been "Born Again" as Spirit-filled Christians. Jesus will also make this clear as we continue along. His command wasn't just for the Apostles, wasn't just for

the clergy, wasn't just for super saints or any other subgroup. His command was for all who "call upon the name of the Lord" - all who are called by the Lord to follow Him. He stated it explicitly at the end of Matthew's Gospel where He said to the 11 remaining Apostles, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19&20). Clearly, Jesus wanted each subsequent disciple to follow the example of previous disciples. He was not at all interested in the beliefs and focus of Christianity evolving, yet here we are.



I mentioned last week that once we recognize that we're stuck with obeying this command to love one another we try to define the terms to our advantage.

We say, Love means that I have a warm feeling in my heart. Love means that I would render aid if someone was in dire need. Love means that I'll pray for them. Love means that I'll donate money to help. Those definitions, and a whole host of others like them, mean that I don't actually have to closely associate, or interpersonally interact, or spend my valuable time with the people I don't enjoy being around - with those people who are not my cup of tea.

In other words, I can remain comfortable and do what I want to do, when I want to do it, with the people I want to do it with and still feel good about myself. The thinking goes, I Love others as I am commanded, but that does not mean that I have to like them.

Since I know that God wants me to be happy, I'm sure that He is not wanting me to be bored and perhaps annoyed by hanging out with people I find tedious. Certainly, God wouldn't want me to go out of my way, to be selfless and self-sacrificing in order to develop a

relationship with someone I find challenging. Surely, He's not asking that.

Some people go with that because they don't know any better and their fleshly selfishness keeps them from thinking about it. Other people go with that because that's how they think God loves them. For such people, the problem is always that they have not embraced the actual Love that God offers. Still others go with that because they believe that they deserve His Love more than others do. God likes them better - they are more God's cup of tea. They are worthier of God's Love, acceptance, and fellowship, than others are of receiving it from them. If you paid attention through that, you could see that a failure to relationally Love others is either due to ignorant deception, spiritual disconnectedness, or arrogant pride. Perhaps a bit of all three.

I could explain those dynamics better, but I'll let you cogitate on them and how they relate to the type of Love you think is appropriate to share.

I'll mention another definition type because it will seem different even though it's all the same thing. That is the definition that Love is not what the object wants, but

what is best for them. The type of Love I will give is the type that will help discipline and mature others. What makes this a challenge is that there is far more Truth in this idea than the others, but it is then twisted to be used as a weapon, rather than as a tool.

There are two huge problems with this thinking. The first is the arrogant presumption that you know what another person needs and the second is that it puts you in a position to judge the progress your so-called Love is making.

That means that your Love is conditioned by the response of the object, which is not Agapê.

Additionally, you're not God so you don't really know and even if God were to share His knowledge with you concerning another person, you're not God and so your motives are not pure. I know that you think they are, but I've interacted with many people in this category and every one of them defined Love in this way, not because they truly cared about others, but because they wanted to be in control. Controlling equals, is never Love.

As a sidenote, when you believe that it is your place to control an equal you prove instantly that you do not

view them as equal but as less mature, as subordinate, as weaker, as inferior.

It all boils down to us wanting to minimize the command of Jesus because initially we don't want to serve others, more insidiously as we grow in Christ, we minimize His command because we only want to serve others on our terms. Serving others on your terms using only the resources that you're willing to spend is you in control - it is you being god.

We do that, don't we? And if it's not that then it is defining the second term "One another." John Darby is just one example of a self-described Christian leader who constantly shrunk the "One another" pool down to be smaller and smaller, until only he was a true "One Another." He is by no means alone even though all such people end up alone.

As I said before, the Love we are to bestow upon others is defined by the Love Jesus has bestowed upon us. I'm fairly certain that His Love is a Love that actually serves, even unto death, if required and I'm quite confident that it's a Love that extends to all kinds of people who are immature, annoying, remedial, ignorant, foolish, and full of themselves.

Another way to look at this is to ask yourself the question... How much will you limit God's Love when you give it to another? How much will you restrict God's Love when you chose to whom you will share it?

Do you seriously think that the human Jesus was looking forward to getting off of His comfortable couch and going around the room washing the disgusting feet of His disciples? Do you seriously think that the human Jesus enjoyed the personality of all of the guys equally? That He was just as eager to wash Peter's feet as He was John's feet, just as excited to wash Judas' feet as He was James' feet? It's called self-sacrificial service and it loses its luster when we take control and decide when and how and to whom. Jesus was led to do what He did by the Holy Spirit. He repeatedly said that everything that He said and did was precisely what the Heavenly Father desired.



Jesus didn't serve Himself and He didn't put restrictions on what He was willing to do for the Father.

The type of "Love" is the "Love" Jesus Loves you with and the type of "one another" is the "one another" whom Jesus Loves. You only need to Love those whom Jesus Loves and you only need to Love them as well as Jesus Loves you... Easy.

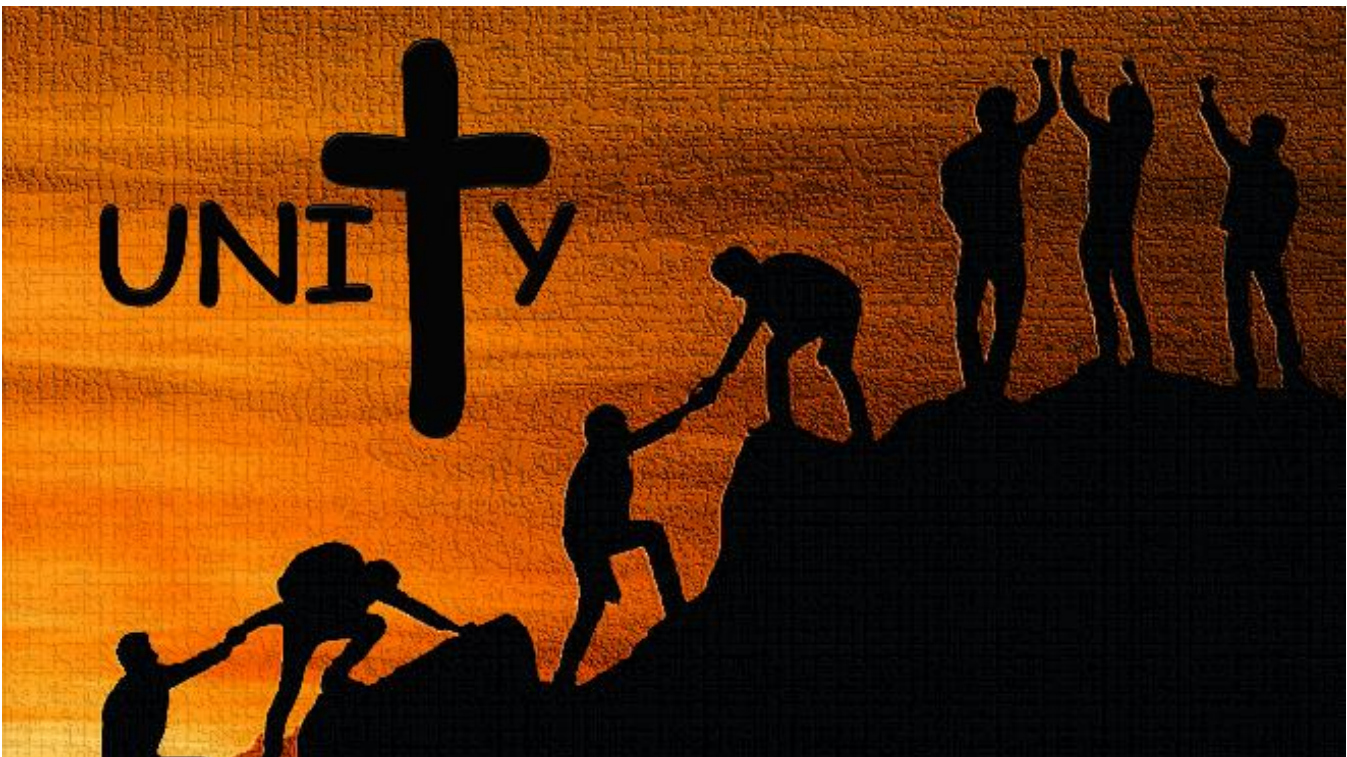
Let me interject something here... I have said many, many, oh so many times, that it all starts with your closest connections first...



and there can be no closer relational connection than that with the person who has been joined to you in Holy matrimony. Two individuals, one male, one female, becoming one flesh in the sight of Almighty God as witnessed by the Christian community. That's Biblical marriage and there cannot be any closer connection between any two people Biblically and spiritually speaking. Now, what that means is if you cannot truly Love your spouse with the Love of God in your heart... Please hear me. If you refuse to Love your spouse with the unconditional Love of God, you can just forget about all the rest of Christianity as well. Throw your Bible away - it doesn't really mean anything to you anyway. Quit going to church, quit calling yourself a Christian. Take the fish bumper sticker off of your car.

I'm not saying that there can't be boundaries or that you can control how the other person responds. I'm not saying you cannot be forgiven for fussing, fighting, or even divorcing. I'm saying that if you are not willing to do your best to Love your spouse with the Love God has given to you, you are not at all interested in obeying the Lord Jesus Christ and since that's true - why the sham of pretending to be a Christian at all?

We work out this Loving one another nearby because the nearer the "One another" is to us, the more difficult it is to Love them. Anyone can Love the church when they are on a mountaintop all by themselves. Try it in the trenches.



Finally, the reason... The reason that we are commanded by Jesus to Love one another actively, tangibly, and habitually, is because that's the way people will know that we are Christ's Own. You can disagree with Jesus on this, but according to Him, it is the unity of the church that reveals the Spirit of God at work in the community of men.

Francis of Assisi supposedly said, "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words." The saying is used to justify lazy evangelism, but even more than that, when we hear this saying, we think in terms of our personal behavior. In other words, we think that if I live a happy, moral, and successful, life, non-Christians will want what I have. They will eventually ask me about Jesus - they will be Saved by my model behavior over decades. That seems reasonable, it resonates, we want it to be true and certainly rationalize it that way, but it honestly does not work. What is true, again, according to Jesus, is that if His people will love each other in a community setting the world will see the Truth of Christianity - they will see Christ in that unity.

To preach the Gospel to the unsaved without words... is to love your brothers and sisters in this room. That's what Francis knew.

So, to recap, Jesus said, “I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another.”

Immediately... Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.” Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.” Jesus replied, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.

Here’s the gist... Peter basically said, “Lord, I don’t want to love these people, I want to come with You.” “Well, Peter, you can’t come with Me,” Jesus said. To which Peter objected, “Why can’t I come with you? Look, I’m ready. I can do what You are going to do. I’m ready to die in the struggle, die for the cause, go down as a hero, if necessary, just like You. Come on, why can’t I do what I want to do?”

Sounds childish, doesn't it? If you are real with yourself, it sounds like you too, doesn't it? Lord, I don't want to Love, I want to fight. I don't want to Love, I want to be cool; I don't want to Love, I want to be respected and liked and accepted. Most of all though, I don't want to Love, I want to do what I want to do and what I don't want to do is to spend my resources - my time, my efforts, my money, my Love - on other people, unless I can do so on my terms.

If we view our resources as ours, we typically hoard them, but some people can sort of grasp the idea that maybe we should give a little to the church or to charity. Some Christians can even accept the notion that 10% or so of their take-home income should be given for God's purposes.



Very few people are able to embrace the Truth that 100% of our gross income, along with all of our stored wealth, property, and investments, as well as the totality of our energy, enthusiasm, and brain power, along with every moment of our time, belongs to God. He is the One allowing your heart to beat and your lungs to fill and your brain to function. He is the One literally holding the subatomic particles of your body together by the Word of His power and so, it is never a question of how much of your resources will you give to God; it is always a question of how much of the resources that God's entrusted to you, will you spend on yourself.

Once we recognize that all that we are is God's, then the question becomes what does God want me doing right now? What is God actually asking of me, asking of you? I thought long and hard about how to phrase this properly.

Here it is my friends... Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is actively commanding you and me to be lovingly relational with one another. The entire thing is first and foremost relational. That was His entire purpose of making Christianity a team sport instead of an individual pursuit. Jesus established His universal church to be made up of local church families of individual Believers. It is to be relational with Him and through Him with the Father and the Spirit as well as with all the other members of the family. The saying goes that "You can pick your friends, but you can't pick your family." No, God has done that. How will you respond?



My personality is far better suited to worshipping on a mountain top by myself. And, of course it is... that's easy. Any moron can do that, but to worship God shoulder-to-shoulder with people who are just as imperfect and broken as I am, well, that's difficult. It's so difficult, in fact, that I cannot do it in my flesh and with my strength. I must have the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

There are many reasons that God has ordained it this way. Mandated that His children would be in relational communities, and I think that instead of belaboring the issue, I'll just let you explore some of those things on your own. This is your homework for this week.

Examine why God has created Christianity to be so interpersonally relational.

Peter was far more interested in doing something bold and even rash, than he was in lovingly leading his fellow Apostles and the growing community of Believers.



Notice that it is a rebuke of Jesus, His plan, and His instruction. Jesus had now said twice in just a few minutes that the guys couldn't come where He was going, at least not yet. So, He had something else that He needed all of them to do. Namely, to Love each other.

Peter was telling Jesus, “You don’t understand my level of commitment to the operation - come what may, I’m ready to join You right now!” Peter didn’t know what he was talking about as usual. He assumed a physical battle, and he was actually ready to fight and even die in such a battle. Peter wasn’t wrong about his commitment to fight the battle that he envisioned; he was wrong about the battle itself.

Obedience without needing to know the reason why, is proof of trust. Peter should have trusted that for whatever reason, Jesus wanted him doing something other than what Peter wanted to do. Now, of course, the question for us is will we obey Christ without rebuking Him by questioning Him? We’ll talk more about Peter’s denial and the rooster later on.



John 14:1–6

1“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2In My Father’s house are many rooms; if that were not so, I would have told you, because I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you also will be. 4And you know the way where I am going.” 5Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going; how do we know the way?” 6Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

To soften His shocking rebuke of Peter, Jesus went on to tell all of them. “do not allow your heart to be ταρασσω (tä-räs-sō) troubled.” The same word just used to describe Jesus’ emotional state. You’ll remember that Jesus was troubled in Spirit, indicating that His primary source of turmoil was His concern for Judas and the effect of Judas’ betrayal on the group. Here the concern is internal. Jesus was saying that there is reason for you all to be troubled and the reason will grow to monumental proportions when what I’m talking about becomes actual.

When you actually see Judas betray Me, when Peter actually does deny Me, When I Am actually gone, dead and buried, BUT, as a command, do not allow yourself to be troubled by these things. This is essentially what Jesus is commanding you as well; as you see the chaos and suffering and the seemingly endless advance of evil, do not allow yourself to be troubled by it.

Okay, fine, how? That’s trust, faith, belief, in Him Who is able. If you trust in the world system, you will be disappointed, if you have faith in people, you will be disillusioned, if you believe in yourself, you will be disheartened. Hope in imperfection can only result in

imperfect outcomes. If you hope in the eternal perfection of God, you will have the only hope that is certain.



Jesus' point was that His followers need to believe in, hope in, Almighty God, which includes Him as God's Holy Word made flesh and blood. Jesus was revealing the future that the Father, the Spirit, and He had settled on before creating the universe together and while what was about to happen would seem disastrous, everything was going perfectly to plan... Trust that, because you Trust God in all Three Persons.

As I subtly indicated the phrase isn't so much "believe in God, believe also in Me," as it is, believe in God together with Me. As We are in harmonious unity,

believe with your entire being and trust with all your strength in Us - believe! The connection between God and Jesus is much closer than the English makes it sound and the verb “believe” as a dramatic exhortation occurs as both the first and final word in the phrase, “believe in God and in Me believe!” It’s like a pleading command to trust God and His Word even though everything seems contrary to what you think it should be... Just believe, just trust.

The world’s falling apart around you - you do not understand why these things are happening and Jesus is pleading with you to trust Him and the God Who sent Him.

Now, in verse 2, Jesus gives a small explanation of what their future holds. He could simply say trust and leave it go, but He wants to give them a glimpse of what awaits as an encouragement to stay the course.



Your earthly actions replicated in Heaven

The KJV sort of messed this up with the translation “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” Naturally, that resonates with modern and post-modern people. It suits our independence and self-focus. We think about a mansion all our own, a big one worthy of our long and difficult service to the Lord. I’ve heard preachers tell folks to work hard, live right, and give generously to the church, so that they can build a monster mansion in the sky that will be their own beautiful bastion forever.



Well, it's a bad translation. The Greek word μένω (mē-nō), is the verb to remain or stay. From that verb the noun μονή (mō-nā) is derived, which means a place to remain or stay, an accommodation or dwelling place.

The word made its way into Latin, and then French and finally into English as, you guessed it, mansion. A mansion was merely a place to dwell to the French a thousand years ago. In England as the French-speaking Norman invaders, they lived in very nice accommodations, like castles for an example and the word took on the meaning we know today.

Even when the KJV was translated over 400 years ago, a mansion meant a majestic palatial manor house,

castle, or palace. It's a bad translation because it still leads people to think that in Heaven they will have their own place - their own private estate - where they can get away from everyone and relax at home alone - watch Seinfeld reruns and munch bonbons. The exact same word is used a few verses later in John 14:23 where Jesus said, as translated in the KJV, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode (μονή) with him. We will dwell together with him.

Why bring it up? 1) First, to dispel the ridiculous notion that we will be as individualized in Heaven as we are now. We will be one with God and one with each other in Heaven in the same way that the Triune God is One. That's not to say that we will meld into a big spiritual ooze - we'll all still be us, but we will all be united together in perfect harmony where there will never be even the slightest friction between us. We will truly Agapê Love one another for all eternity... Maybe we should get started now? Seems like I've heard that somewhere before. Seems like that might be one reason God has us together now.

2) My second purpose is to rid you of this purely human idea of reward. I don't have the time today to

cover this in detail, but I will tell you that none of us is going to get better quarters than anyone else. No one's getting a bigger room, a better shower, a nicer view, a comfier bed, a fluffier pillow, or a more luxurious set of sheets. We are all going to dwell together with Almighty God and with each other as one big happy family forevermore.



That's what you have to look forward to, so in the meantime, trust and do not allow yourself to be troubled.

To add to the rationale that neither the Apostles, nor any other Christian should ever be troubled, Jesus pointed out that the reason for His solo journey was to

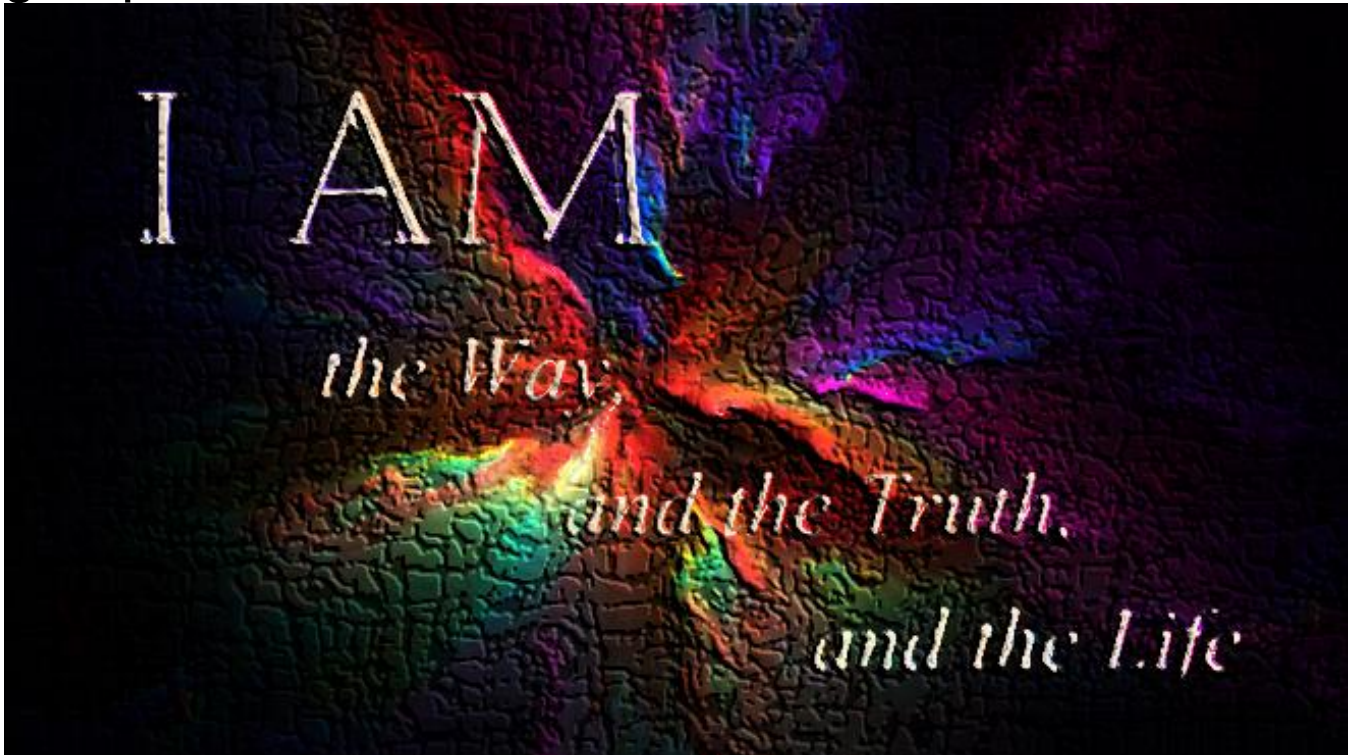
actually create the path so that others could then follow and join Him where He would be.

Well, another analogy for the journey, or the path, is the dwelling place. Jesus used that idea here. He was going away alone in order to create the possibility for God and man to dwell together forever. Obviously, if Jesus was going away to create such a possibility, once He completed His task, He would certainly return to get His friends for whom He did all that work. Jesus was encouraging them, as He is us now, to trust Him through the trials and torments of life because He's returning to get us.

These are some of the most comforting words possible - God through His Word is saying that I "will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you also will be." As a Christian, you don't need to find your way home, Jesus will come and escort you home - He will not only show you the way, so that you'll know it intimately, He will personally accompany you along the way so that you cannot possibly get lost.

Thomas didn't get it. I'm sure Peter didn't get it either, but he was no doubt still licking his wounds from his last objection. Using plurals, Thomas spoke for the

group, “what are you talking about Lord, we have no idea where You are going or how we’re supposed to join You later?” Using plurals Jesus answered the group.



Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι’ ἐμοῦ. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

This is one of the many formal “I AM” statements of Jesus. Ἐγώ εἰμι (ě-gō ā-mē), I AM, I AM that which I AM - pure existence, I exist as, the singular one and only ὁδός, road, path, way, to eternal dwelling with God. Likewise, I exist as the singular universal and absolute ἀλήθεια, Truth from the mind of Almighty God.

Likewise, I exist as ζωή, the singular life generating and life sustaining force temporally and eternally.

No one, οὐδεὶς, inclusively without any possible exception, NO ONE is able in any way, shape, or form, to approach the Heavenly Father except exclusively through Me.

A lot of people have a massive problem with this verse. That makes perfect sense to me because this verse spoken by Jesus is one of the greatest statements ever made in human history. Anyone who thinks that Jesus was not God, either doesn't understand the ramifications of these words, or they have dismissed them as false. Anyone who thinks that there is any other way to dwell either here or eternally with the One and Only Creator of the Universe, either doesn't understand the ramifications of these words, or they have dismissed them as false.

These words indicate both the divinity of Jesus and the exclusivity of Christianity. They are immensely powerful and unimaginably important, so yes, of course the enemy of reconciliation and right-relationship between God and man will work overtime to cast these words in a negative light.

When these words are accepted for what they purport to be, they are without question the most comforting words possible. You want to know how to find God, how to find meaning, how to find purpose, how to find happiness, how to find Love, Joy, and Peace... It's Jesus. It's only ever Jesus. Trust God through Jesus and Live.





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- 1) First, to dispel the notion that we will be as individualized in Heaven as we are now.
- 2) Second, to rid you of this purely human idea of reward.

To add to the rationale that neither the Apostles, nor any other Christian should ever be troubled, Jesus pointed out that the reason for His solo journey was to actually create the place where others could join Him. Obviously, if He was going away to create such a place, He would return to get His friends for whom He did that.

Using plurals Jesus answered the group in a magnificently encouraging formal I AM statement. Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

