

Life with the Father

We have many troubles that we face in our day—the threat of violence, internationally and domestically; the threat of financial woes; the threat of illness and death; and especially the threats of both the evil one and the weakness of our own flesh. We have much to worry about! So did the disciples. We learned in John 13 that the clouds of doom continue to encircle Jesus and His disciples. Jesus has just announced that He will be betrayed by one of His Twelve, that Peter will deny Him before the evening is over, and most distressingly, that He Himself will be departing to a place they cannot immediately come. The disciples know that Jesus has called them to a significant task, and they have experienced some success with His presence, but they know that they have no hope of performing the duties of the Kingdom without Jesus at their side. They are truly shaken.

In the midst of their distress, Jesus gives a very simple remedy for their troubles.

John 13:36-14:11

36 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” **37** Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” **38** Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

1 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. **2** In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. **4** And you know the way to where I am going.” **5** Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” **6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **7** If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

8 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ **10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. **11** Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

In Jesus’ remedy for the disciples’ distress, He gives a very simple direction in verse 1: “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.” We have many ways of relieving our distresses, and many of them do a wonderful job of alleviating symptoms, but Jesus is addressing the core of our troubles: a doubting or unbelieving heart. He simply says “believe in me.”

Specifically Jesus shares three treasures in which the disciples are to put their faith.

I. Jesus has provided for us a place with the Father (14:2-4)

Jesus explains that it is actually to our advantage that He go away from us, because He goes to prepare a place in the Father’s house for all of His disciples. Notice that in this upper room discourse Jesus begins His instructions on discipleship with this promise. We cannot possibly serve Him faithfully and effectively without seeking the things above and eagerly expecting heavenly dwellings. (See Philippians 3:20-21 and Colossians 3:1-4). One can only imagine what this place must be like with Jesus, the Lord of the universe, who loves us with an everlasting love, preparing it for us. But we know that this place will be full of Christ (vv. 3-4).

II. Jesus has provided for us a pathway to the Father (14:5-7)

Thomas speaks up and claims not to know where Jesus is going or the way to get there, and Jesus responds with perhaps the most famous of all of the “I Am” statements. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Here Jesus not

only shows us that there is a way, but He makes it clear that simple faith in Him *is* the way. He is the way precisely because He is the source of all redemptive truth, and He is the source of life itself. Notice that Jesus makes it extremely clear that there is no other way to the Father but by Him. The apostles also cite this reality in their letters (Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5). For us to deny the exclusivity of Jesus' claims is to deny Christ Himself. Some may wonder if Christ saves all of God's people but without the necessity of actually hearing and believing the Gospel. Paul addresses this question in Romans 10:14-15 when he says: "How then will they call on him who they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?" We can see from this text that Jesus is the only way and hearing and believing the Gospel is the only way to be in Jesus Christ.

III. **Jesus has provided for us the presence of the Father, even in this life (14:8-11)**

Philip makes an amazing statement, requesting that Jesus show us the Father. This had to be a disturbing question for Jesus to hear, since He had been teaching His disciples for months that He is the revelation of the Father; but here, nonetheless, very patiently, Jesus explains to Philip and to all of us that He speaks for the Father and fully reveals the Father to us. In our relationship with Jesus Christ, we have the revelation of the Deity. As John says in John 1:18, "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

Discussion Questions

1. Why were the disciples troubled in the upper room? (see 13:36-38) Why are we and our friends sometimes troubled today?
2. What is Jesus' remedy for their troubles and ours? (see 14:1) What substitute remedies do we sometimes use rather than the one Jesus gives us?
3. Why was it better for us that Jesus departed? (14:2-4) What do we know about this "place"? How does our belief in this place change our lives now?
4. What is unique about Jesus' response to Thomas in verse 6? Why is it essential that we believe in Jesus as the only way to the Father?
5. What does Jesus teach Philip in verses 9-11? Why is this so important to us?

Going Deeper

1. Have you learned to trust in Jesus for all of your troubles? Is there anything in your life that is now distracting you from your worship and service to Him?
2. Do you see Jesus as the only way to eternal life with God? If so, how does your life reflect it?