

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

JOHN 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and

from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

NOTES

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Lesson Text: John 14:1-11

Related Scriptures: John 13:31-38; John 14:12-21;
Colossians 1:15-20; John 12:44-50; John 5:19-30

TIME: A.D. 30

PLACE: Jerusalem

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**GOLDEN TEXT**—"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).  
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Lesson Exposition

A PLACE PREPARED—John 14:1-3

Believe in Me (John 14:1). Chapters 13 through 17 record what occurred in the upper room at Jesus' final Passover. To set the background for this week's lesson, we note that Jesus had washed the disciples' feet and also revealed that there was a traitor among them. John divulges the identity of the betrayer to us (13:26), but the disciples at this time did not know it (vss. 28-29). Once Satan had entered Judas, Jesus commanded him, "That thou doest, do quickly" (vs. 27).

With the betrayer now absent, Jesus began to reveal to those who remained the events that would soon befall them. He also gave some instructions meant not only for them but for all future believers as well. Jesus informed His disciples that He would only be with them a little while longer and that He would soon be going where they could not now follow Him.

When Peter asked Jesus where He was going, He answered by saying merely that he could not follow Him

now but would follow later. But Peter again asked why this was so and added that he was willing to lay down his life for Jesus. The Lord's response appears to have ended Peter's persistent enquiry, prophesying that he would deny Him three times before morning dawned.

So when Jesus said to His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled" (14:1), His intention was to reassure them. After all, Christ had just spoken ominous words that had shocked and saddened them. He had been their Teacher and constant Companion for three years; now He spoke of His imminent departure. Actually, Jesus had previously warned them on numerous occasions that He would one day be rejected and killed at Jerusalem.

In verse 1, Jesus is not telling His disciples to merely put troubling thoughts out of their minds, but to see those troubling thoughts in the new light of their eternal hope in Him. The reasoning is that since they already believed in God the Father, they should likewise

place the same trust in Him, for He had always faithfully revealed the Father to them as they had been following Him over the course of their discipleship.

My Father's house (John 14:2-3). The Father's house is generally understood to be heaven. Jesus, of course, was not going to heaven directly from the upper room. Between this time and His actual ascension into heaven a number of events had to occur, most significantly His crucifixion and resurrection.

The Greek word rendered "mansions" appears only twice in the New Testament, here and in verse 23 where it is translated "abode." It is the noun form of the verb translated "abide" in 15:4, 6, 7, and 10. Therefore, we should not assume that Christ is saying here that each individual will have his own private, large, stately home in heaven. Jesus is saying that there are many places for believers to live in heaven, indicating nothing about their relative size but rather emphasizing the tremendous privilege of abiding eternally with Him and the Father.

While the words, "I go to prepare a place for you" (14:2) are usually seen as referring to heaven, we should not imagine that Jesus was returning there to engage in a construction project to accommodate His new followers. We should see it more along the broader lines of the invitation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).

Christ would soon die and rise from the dead. In this way, He was making the necessary preparations for His true disciples to be with Him forever.

The fact that Christ would "come again" (John 14:3) is usually understood as a reference to His Second Coming. Some think this is a reference to His resurrection, but His stated purpose was having His disciples be

where He would be—surely the kingdom He would establish.

THE WAY REVEALED—John 14:4-7

Momentary confusion (John 14:4-5). Although Jesus said that the disciples knew the way to get where He was going, they apparently did not fully grasp His meaning.

Thomas is mentioned in the other Gospels, but only in passing when listed among the other apostles. In John, however, he is mentioned several times, the most famous being when he doubted the testimony of the others concerning Jesus' resurrection (cf. 11:16; 20:24-28; 21:2).

Whatever else might be said about Thomas, he does seem to have been inquisitive and willing to speak his mind. On this occasion, he openly stated that he and the other disciples did not know where Christ was going, nor did they know the way.

Eternal clarity (John 14:6-7). Verse 6 is one of the most famous and frequently quoted declarations of Jesus. It is also one of the most controversial, since it denies the possibility that faith in anything other than Jesus Christ can actually lead a person to the true God. Jesus corrected Thomas's objections by revealing to him that, in fact, they did know the way because they knew Him, and He Himself is that way! The way is not a thing but a Person; to know that Person is to know the Way.

Christ is also the truth. Yes, He spoke the truth, but He is as well the very embodiment of the truth in human form. Jesus declared that God's Word is truth (cf. 17:17), and He Himself is God's Word made flesh (cf. 1:14).

Christ is also the life. Life is a common theme in John's Gospel, and it usually refers specifically to eternal life (3:36; 5:21; 6:33; 8:12; 10:10), which actually begins when we receive Christ as Lord and Saviour by faith

(5:24). Moreover, Christ is the Creator of all physical and spiritual life in the universe (1:3-4).

That no one can come to the Father except through Christ has some implications regarding the effectiveness of prayer, but the primary implication here has to do with salvation. Simply put, no one can be saved apart from Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5-6).

To know Christ is to know the Father (John 14:7). The disciples not only knew the Father; they had actually seen Him in the Person of His Son.

THE FATHER SHOWN— John 14:8-11

Seeing the Father (John 14:8-9). Still confused about what Jesus was saying concerning the Father, Philip asked Him to show the Father to them. If the disciples could just be granted an actual look at God Himself, Philip reasoned, that would be the fulfillment of all their needs forever.

In answer to what seemed such a bold request, reminiscent of Moses' request to behold the Lord's glory (cf. Ex. 33:18), Jesus redirected Philip's thinking with a gentle rebuke: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" (vs. 9). In other words, Jesus was saying, "After all this time, Philip, haven't you seen enough of Me to be convinced that I am Myself the full revelation of the Father?"

For us to know God, to see the Father, all we have to do is look at Jesus. He perfectly reveals God Himself. If we want to know how God behaves towards people, look at how Jesus treated people. If we want to know God's character and integrity, examine Christ's character and integrity in the Gospels. All the attributes of God the Father are revealed in God the Son.

Words and works (John 14:10-11). There should have been no doubt in the minds of the disciples that the Fa-

ther was in the Son and the Son was in the Father. Moreover, the words of Christ are the words of God. Jesus did not come to do His own will but His Father's will. His words were not His own but the Father's words. His works likewise were the Father's works.

The works in this case had to do with the miraculous signs Christ had performed, which are presented throughout John's Gospel as testifying to His divine identity and forming the foundation for saving faith (cf. 20:30-31).

While John is very selective concerning the miracles he records in his Gospel, relating only seven of them, he acknowledges that there were so many more that they were actually innumerable (cf. 21:25).

—John Alva Owston.

QUESTIONS

1. Why were the disciples troubled?
2. What is the "Father's house" (John 14:2)?
3. What was Jesus emphasizing in using the term "mansions?"
4. What preparation did Christ make for us to go to heaven?
5. What did Jesus mean when He said He would come again?
6. Which apostle insisted that he and the other disciples did not know where Jesus was going or how to get there?
7. What did Jesus declare about the way?
8. What primary implication follows from the fact that no one can come to the Father except through Jesus?
9. How can we see God the Father?
10. What were the works of the Father that Jesus did?

—John Alva Owston.

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. The best way to maintain peace of mind is to trust in Jesus (John 14:1).
2. We can rest assured that we have a place in God's presence (vss. 2-3).
3. When we do not know where to go, what to do, or what to say, we can ask God (vss. 4-6).
4. To know Jesus is to know God (vs. 7).
5. The Lord does not become angry or frustrated when we ask questions that He has already answered (vss. 8-9).
6. Everything Jesus tells us is straight from God the Father Himself (vss. 10-11).

—Charity G. Carter.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. What are some things you can do to keep your heart from being troubled (John 14:1)?
2. Was Jesus talking about literal mansions or using figurative language (vs. 2)?
3. What does it mean that Jesus will receive us to Himself (vs. 3)?
4. Philip asked a question that Jesus had just answered. What does Jesus' second response teach us about dealing with difficult people (vss. 7-9)?
5. Why do people have a hard time believing that Jesus and the Father are one (vs. 10)?

—Charity G. Carter.

Golden Text Illuminated

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

When Jesus tells His disciples that He is getting ready to leave, He also tells them that they know where He's going and how to get there. However, Thomas, replying for the group, protests that they know neither His destination nor the route.

Jesus answers their query with the simple statement: “I am the way.” As explained later in the verse, no one comes to the Father except through Jesus.

The statement “I am the truth” means more than just “I tell the truth,” or even “I am life's ultimate reality.” Right from his prologue, John establishes that Christ is the Word of God, who perfectly reveals the Father (John 1:1, 14, 18; 5:19; 8:29; 14:7-11).

“I am the life” means more than “I am alive.” John's Gospel is well known for its stress on “life.” Indeed, God sent Jesus into the world so that those who believe in Him might experience abundant life (3:16-17; 10:10), and “this life is in his Son” (I John 5:11; cf. vs. 20). Thus, “I am the life” means that eternal life is found in Him.

As Jesus prepared to die for the sins of the world, He also began to prepare His disciples for their roles following His death. “I am the way, the truth, and the life” is more than Jesus' claim to fame. He calls His disciples to know that He is the way to life with the Father because He is the truth of the Father.

—David Samuel Gifford.