

John 14:1-14

The Way, The Truth, and the Life

Warmup question: Any funny stories about spectacular failures in sharing the gospel with friends or family? Or of people trying to share the gospel with you? (Jehovah's Witness' and Mormons are fair game!)

John 14 is part of Jesus' farewell discourse - this is the final part of Jesus' readying his disciples for continuing their ministry without him. The passage this week is about the only way of getting to heaven or salvation or God - Jesus himself.

Read John 14:1-14

Jesus tells his disciples that he's leaving them and that he has to go so that he can prepare a place for them. My assumption would be that our place has also been prepared at the same time. In other words, Jesus, after his ascension is preparing places for those who believe in his Father's house (heaven).

Question: John's message all along to his readers/listeners is that they need to "believe" in Jesus.

- Believe what exactly?
- Does it sound right to you, all you have to do to be saved is believe in Jesus?
- Are there any natural consequences to this first step of believing? Does it imply anything else?

So the implication is that Jesus is coming back once he's prepared the place for those who believe in him. Philip doesn't quite get what this means and there's some confusion over how to get there because he doesn't know where Jesus is going. Jesus' response is, "I AM the way."

Question: If Jesus had just said, "I am the way" we'd all know what he meant. What does it mean to be "the truth and the life"?

Do you think there's any correlation between 'way', 'truth', and 'life' and the trinity? The reason I suggest there could be is because Jesus talks about being one with the Father and then says that he has to go back to the Father ("truth"?) so that the Holy Spirit ("Life"?) can come. This implies to me that Father, Son and Spirit are one (essence) yet three persons. We can read Trinity into this passage but John's readers certainly would have no concept of that.

Because Jesus is going back to the Father and the Spirit is coming Jesus tells his followers that they will do greater works than him.

Question: In reading Acts we can see a 'double portion' of the Spirit (remember Elijah passing the mantel to Elisha). Undoubtedly Jesus was talking to the twelve with this promise. Does this promise apply to the church today? Many contemporary preachers would say not (we call this cessationism).

Finally, Jesus says that anything they ask in his name he will do for them. Forgetting that Jesus isn't Santa Claus could get us in big trouble here! Remember in the Bible names describe who the person is or some aspect of them (Jacob - one who grabs the heel; Peter - rock; Malachi - my messenger). I suggest then that asking "in Jesus' name" means "according to who he is" or "according to his will."

Question: What are the implications of this? Does it apply to us? If so what is our role in his Kingdom and how does this affect the way we pray?