

Series: I Am

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

Sermon by Lead Pastor Paul Joslin

John 12:12-19, John 14:6

Waterstone Community Church, Littleton, Colorado

Sunday morning, April 13, 2025

Hi, I am Isabelle, and I am a student here at Waterstone. A reading from John 12:12 through 19 and 14:6: “The next day, the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting, ‘Hosanna. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel.’ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on, it as it is written, ‘Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. See, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.’ At first, his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about Him and that these things had been done to Him. Now the crowd that was with Him when He called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard He performed this sign, went out to meet Him, so the Pharisees said to one another, ‘See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after Him.’” “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,’” the word of the Lord.

Paul: All right man. We are good. Can you hear me? Yeah, sort of. Maybe. All right, louder, talk. I’ll just start yelling really, really loudly. Thank you for reading for us, and I am sorry, just before I came up here, someone let me know that there was someone here that just fainted or passed out, so we have some people that are on that, but I just want to take a moment and pray for her. I am not sure about the situation. I just found out right before I came up here, so would you just pray with me for whatever is going on there? Yeah, let’s pray. Heavenly Father, for this woman who has just fainted or passed out, God, we pray that the people who are helping her know what to do. If it is fatigue or tiredness, they figure that out. If it is something more, God, that we could get her the help that she needs. God, we know that you are the great physician. You are the one who knows all of our ailments, all of the things that we struggle with, and so we just pray for your presence over that situation right now and ask for you to be with her, and it is in Christ’s name that we pray, amen. Thank you. Thank you for praying.

All right, so today we are continuing our “I Am” series on Palm Sunday and on into Easter, and if you are wondering why we are just keeping with the same series, it is because I have always wanted to preach the statement, “I am the resurrection and the life,” on Easter, and so it just worked out this year that that is the way it is going to go, and so I am really excited for next week as we look at the resurrection of Jesus and what He did. Today we were looking at the “I am” statement that was just read, when Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” It is our last two weeks in this series, but as we get going with this series today and as we look at this idea that Jesus is the way, I want to ask you a question as we get started, and I want you to take a moment and think about the last time that you felt this sensation or this feeling. Have you ever been homesick? Have you ever experienced that feeling of longing for home? Maybe it was one of the first times you went away for college, and you were on your own, and you felt like, “Oh man, a whole new world out there,” and you started to feel homesick for back home.

I remember for me, a little story, the first time I ever went away to camp. I think I was about seven years old. It was great. I loved it. Summer camp was awesome until the last night. I received a letter from my mom, and just like, oh man, I just lost it. I remember being on the bunk and just like crying, missing home. All the other kids are like, "Is this guy all right? Like, what happened?" It is like a core memory now, this feeling of homesickness, of longing for home, but now I want to ask a deeper question, not just have you felt homesick in the sense of like, "Yeah, I really want to be with my family or the place that I call home," but have you ever experienced that sensation, that feeling on a deeper level, where the world has made you feel homesick, when you look at the world around you, and you see, maybe it is injustice. Maybe it is sickness. Maybe it is just the way that things in the world seem not to be going the way that you want them to. Maybe it was a diagnosis of a loved one. Maybe it was a betrayal of someone who said that they would commit themselves to you, and then they broke that trust, and when you feel that break in the world, you begin to ask the question, "Where is God? What is He doing?" and you can have this sense, this longing, that things are not quite right.

As one of my favorite bands, Switchfoot, used to say in one of their songs, it is a tension between how it is and how it should be, and at different points, I think we have all felt that tension, that longing, that things are not quite the way that they are supposed to be. My question for you today as we examine this sensation and this feeling is, "What if that feeling is not just some nostalgia, but what if it is actually a clue, a hint that things are not the way that they are supposed to be, that they were created a certain way, and that all of the brokenness we experience, all of the injustice, all of the sickness, all of the disease, all of the death, all of the heartbreak, is actually a signal to us that things are not the way that they are supposed to be? What if this homesickness that we feel is because we are longing for a home that we think we need to go back to?"

That is the setting for the story we are going to look at today, because as Jesus makes his way into Jerusalem, the triumphal entry, everyone celebrates the coming of a king. They start shouting, "Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. He is the promised Messiah, David, who has come to set us free, to rescue us, to set things right, to take us back home," but a few days later, after the triumphal entry, the crowds that lined the streets have disappeared, and Jesus has pulled away with his closest followers. It is the last night of his life, and all of the chants and the cheers and all of the celebration and all of the longing for Jesus to be the one who will set things right has turned to angst and fear and aggression, and so Jesus retreats with his closest followers, his disciples, to the upper room of a house, where He has a final meal with them, and it is at this final meal, when the crowds have disappeared, and He is with his closest followers, the twelve, who have walked with Him and followed him for three years, that Jesus begins this conversation that leads us to the "I am" statement, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," but before He says that, He starts in the conversation with them. They have had the meal together, and they are enjoying this fellowship, and Jesus then drops a bomb on his disciples, and He says, "Hey, I am actually going somewhere. I am leaving, and you are not going to be able to follow me," and they are surprised at this. They are shocked. They are taken aback, because if you think about it, they have been following Jesus for the last three years of their life, and Jesus is now suddenly saying, He has made the triumphal entry. He has gone to Jerusalem. The moment when He is supposed to ascend to the throne has finally come, and Jesus is saying, "I am going to leave you guys. I am going to step away, and you cannot follow me."

So, they hear this, and they are shocked and taken aback, and so Peter says, “Lord, where are you going?” and you have to understand, when Peter is asking this question, he has given up everything to follow Jesus, everything. Three years ago, Jesus found him by the side of the sea, and He found him next to a boat, and He said, “Leave all of this behind, and come and follow me,” and for three years, that is what Peter has done. He has followed Him every single moment of his life for the last three years, going where Jesus goes, doing what Jesus said to do, becoming like Jesus, and following Him all along the way, and suddenly Jesus says, “I am going somewhere where you cannot follow me anymore.” Of course, Peter would be taken aback. He left his entire life to follow Jesus, and now suddenly, when it is supposed to be getting really good, Jesus says He is leaving them, and they cannot follow, so of course he wants to know where He is going, and so he asks, “Where are you going that we cannot follow?” and as Jesus responds to him, He says, “I am leaving, and you will not be able to follow me now, but someday you will be able to follow me,” which is even more confusing, right? Like, “What does that even mean?” Like, “I cannot go now, but someday I will?” “I do not even know where you are going,” and so Phillip says, “If Peter did not get through to you, maybe I can ask a question. So, you say you are going somewhere. We do not really know where you are going, but you say that we can know the way to get there, but we do not even know where you are going, so how would we know the way?” and that is where Jesus responds with this “I am” statement. It is in this context, with a group of disciples who are following Him.

They think He is leaving them. They do not know how to follow Him, and they do not know where He is going and why they cannot follow Him, and so Peter asks again, and he says, “Lord, wherever you go, whatever you commit to, I will follow you. I will even die with you,” and Jesus says, “Really? Like you will die with me, because actually, Peter before this night is over, you are going to deny me, not once, not twice, but three times. You are not actually willing to go where I am about to go.” You can imagine in that moment, it just had to suck the air out of the room, because Jesus said this in front of the twelve, “Peter, you are about to betray me three times before the night is over. You will not even make it through the night,” and it is in that moment that Jesus says these words in John 14, starting in verse one: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Think about the context of everything that Jesus has just said and what they are going through, the uncertainty, the fear, the betrayal. “Do not let your hearts be troubled. If you believe in God, believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms, and if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there 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, so that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Does it ever feel to you like Jesus does not quite read the room, like all the disciples are really concerned about Him going somewhere, and they are not going to be able to follow, and that is what they have given their whole lives to, and that is the thing that they have committed to, and Peter is like, I will follow you anywhere,” and He is like, “Actually, no, you are not. You are going to betray me, but do not worry. My Father’s house is awesome. It is a mansion. It has got so many rooms.” He is like, “What? What are you talking about, Jesus? You just said one of your closest friends is going to betray you, and then you are talking about your Father’s house. What in the world?” and if you were a child who grew up in church in the 90s, right now a certain song is playing in your mind. Yeah. Do you remember that one? Yeah. Well, how does it go? I am not going to sing it for you, because allergies and stuff, but it is like,

“My Father’s house is a big house with lots and lots of room and a big table with lots of food and a big yard where you can play football. “Touchdown,” okay. How many of you up in a church that did “Touchdown?” Okay, that is the right approach, and if you did not do “Touchdown,” then I do not know what to tell you, and if you were not a child in the 90s, you have no idea what just happened. You are like, “What is he talking about, and why are these people shouting about football? It is spring.” All right, so that is the song. It has nothing to do with the rest of the sermon. It is a good song. It is all right, but here is the thing, it does not really fit with what is going on in the scene. It does not seem to make any sense. Jesus is talking about them betraying Him, not being able to follow Him, and then He starts talking about a house that has a lot of rooms. What in the world is going on?

We miss what Jesus is talking about, because in this moment He is actually pulling on a cultural thread that his disciples in the moment would have understood completely, because in that day, if a young Jewish man wanted to marry a young Jewish woman, and he wanted to propose to her and ask her to marry him, there were two steps to that proposal, so in our culture, what happens when you want to marry someone? The guy buys a ring, goes and maybe asks the father, and then goes and asks the girl, “Will you marry me?” and then they plan a wedding, and then they get married. That is the traditional way of doing things. In that culture, it was completely different, so the man would go to the father and ask for the daughter’s hand in marriage, and if all of that was worked out and the arrangement was set where they would get married, then at that point they were betrothed to each other, and it was essentially like they were married. It was more serious than an engagement, but they were not allowed to live together yet or to become officially married until something else happened. The man would go away, the fiancé would go away, and he would prepare a place for his bride, usually at his father’s house, and they would build an addition to the home, and once the house was prepared, and everything was set, they would bring the father-in-law, and he would inspect everything and say, “This is a good house. This is a place where I can trust that you will take care of my daughter,” and then they would have the wedding ceremony, and they would become man and wife, so do you hear some of the language Jesus is using? “I am going to my Father’s house to prepare a place for you, and once that place is prepared, I will come back for you, and I will get you, and then you can be with me where I am.”

Jesus is using proposal language. He is saying, “I understand. I get that at this moment you do not know what is happening. I get the uncertainty. I get the fear and your lack of understanding with what is happening in this moment, and I am telling you I am going away, and I am saying you are going to betray me, and you are all going to fall away, and you are not going to follow me, and you cannot go where I am going, but do not worry, because I, like a groom, am going away to prepare a place. I am not leaving you forever. I will come back for you. I am not leaving you stranded forever. It is a season. It is a moment. It is a time when I am stepping away to prepare a place for you and to bring you to where we can be together.” It is a promise Jesus is making to his followers in this moment of uncertainty that I am coming back, and I am like a groom coming back for his bride. I am not leaving you forever, so do not be afraid, and then He finishes that statement by saying, “You know the way to the place where I am going,” and Philip responds and says “Jesus, not so fast.” He says this in verse 5. He says, “How could we even know the way to the place you are going when we do not even know where you are going? You still have not told us where you are leaving to, so how in the world would we know the way?” We do not even know

the destination,” and to that question, Jesus responds and says “I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me.

Now there are three statements that are happening in this “I am” statement, the way, the truth, and the life, but I really want to zero in today on this idea of the way, because it is the one that carries the most emphasis in the story. The truth and the life are subsets. They feed into this idea that Jesus is the way, because of what is happening, and everyone is talking about the way, the way, the way. “How do we know the way? Where are you going? What way are you going? How do we follow you?” The way is the thing that Jesus is trying to make clear to them, and He does not say, “I will tell you the way to get to me.” He says, “I am the way. I am the way,” and He also is going back to this idea of the Father’s house. There are two places in John where Jesus uses that term, “my Father’s house.” Do you remember the other one? It is in John chapter 2, when Jesus goes to the temple, and He is ticked because the religious leaders have been taking advantage of the people, and the Father’s house has become a den for robbers, and so Jesus goes in there and starts flipping tables, so there is temple language happening here too. Jesus is saying something about the presence of God, where God’s presence rested at the temple, and that He is going somewhere to prepare a place for people to encounter that presence.

He is like a groom who is coming back for his bride, to take her to the place where they can be together, and I want you to notice something else. Going back into the passage, look with me, and I know we are going deep into this passage. We are going to zoom out in just a second, but in verses 2 and 3, when He is talking about his Father’s house, “If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you now?” What is interesting about that passage is that the place, that the rooms are already prepared, that there are already many rooms in the Father’s house, but He is going to prepare a place, a special place for you, “and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me.” What is Jesus saying? He is saying, “I am going to the Father’s house, and I am making a way for you to be there with me. I will come back for you and bring you with me to the place where we can be in God’s presence together.”

Are you following along? Do you see that? That was not very encouraging. We were a little, I mean, we might be falling asleep on me. I promise this will pay off in just a second. Well, now we have got to take a timeout from the story. We are going to zoom out of this dinner scene for just a moment, because when it comes to this statement, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” I do not think that there is a more comforting and controversial statement that Jesus has ever made, especially in our culture, because it is an exclusive statement. He is not saying that there are many ways. He is not saying there are lots of ways, that there are other ways. He says, “I am the way.”

I want you to imagine for a moment, I do not know who your favorite self-help person is or your favorite financial advisor, whoever that might be. I want you to think about them for a moment. Usually what do they do? They say, “You know what? I have ten ways that you can find financial freedom,” or “these are ten rules for your life that if you live this way, then you will find the kind of life you are looking for.” It is always pointing to a way that you can get to the life you are looking for, but Jesus makes the claim, “I am the way.” Can you imagine if Jordan Peterson got on his podcast and said, “You know what? I am the way”? That is an incredibly bold statement: “There are no other options. Those other options are not going to work for you. I am the way to the life that you are looking for, the truth that you are seeking.”

It is incredibly exclusive in a very inclusive society, and I think it makes us very uncomfortable. We do not like the idea. I mean, “All truths lead to somewhere.” “All paths lead to God,” or God just has this idea that everyone will eventually get to Him somehow, and Jesus says, “No, you do not understand. I am the way.” It is exclusive, but the problem with that exclusivity, and I am not saying that it is not true, but the problem is the way that we have turned that exclusive phrase to misrepresent the heart of God. So many times, when I hear this statement, it is this idea that some people are in, and some people are out, and we need to look a certain way at all the people that are out, and we weaponize the statement. This is so important as we begin to zoom out on what is happening here. This statement is not a weapon to prove others wrong. It is a window into God’s heart. This statement where Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” is God saying, “I am God, who has come to bring everyone home.” It is not about hurting people’s feelings. It is about the feeling we all have that sometimes things are not the way that they are supposed to be. What happens in this moment, as Jesus says He is the way, is that He is actually pulling a thread that has been going on from the very beginning of creation, because if you remember the story, and we are going to zoom back, and we are going to go from Genesis all the way to the end of scripture in about ten minutes. Are you with me? Right. You are going to have to keep up. We are going to go fast.

All right, all the way back in Genesis, you remember the story, right? God creates the heavens and the earth, and He creates them as beautiful and perfect, and He says that they are good, and He is in perfect harmony with his creation, and Adam and Eve live in the garden with God, and they experience perfect harmony, perfect relationship with Him. Do you remember what it says in Genesis about their experience with God in the garden? They walked with Him in the cool of the day, as if they were face to face with God. Every moment of their existence was breathing in the presence of God, and into that space comes a whisper. “Did God really say? Are you sure this is the life, that you want this kind of intimacy? Are you sure you do not want something else? Are you sure that this is all that there is for you?” and then one bite. In one moment, that trust was broken, and that harmony was broken, and the world cracked open, and shame and sin flooded into the world, and this space that had been reserved, Eden, for this perfect harmony, this perfect relationship between God and humanity, where they had been unafraid and undivided, was suddenly a place of fear and division. So, Adam and Eve run, and they hide, and God comes looking for them, and He says, “Where are you?” not because He does not know, but because they had lost their way.

They no longer knew where they were, so God comes to them, and He says, “Where are you?” and they begin the blame game. “Well, he did not do this,” and “she did not do this,” and “you are the one who did,” and it all falls apart, and in that moment God curses the ground and the land, and in the middle of the curse there is this element, this moment where Jesus meets them in their shame and their sin and their vulnerability, and there are two things He does that are merciful and gracious in Genesis 3:21 through 24, where it says this: “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them.” He clothed their shame. He covered up their sin, “and the Lord God said, ‘the man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil, and he must not be allowed to reach out his hand take also from the tree of life and live forever.’” Sometimes we miss this, but when God has barred the way back into Eden and says they cannot get back to the tree of life, there is actually a grace and a mercy in that what God is saying is He does not want sin to live forever.

This broken state, the home that was broken, He does not want that to be our eternal existence, and so He cuts off the way back into Eden. “So, the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken, and after He drove the man out,” this is so important, “He placed at the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim,” which are like angel creatures, “and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard” what? “The way to the tree of life,” and so into this beautiful home that humanity has been given, they are driven out and experience exile. The relational intimacy that they had with the Father, living every day in the presence of God, has been broken, and their way back into that existence has been broken and barred and cut off from them. They no longer can experience the life that they were intended to experience.

Then the people, the story goes on as they move further and further and further away from God’s presence, but God does not move on, and so He calls to Himself a people, Israel, that are going to be his people and that they are going to expand and be in relationship with one another, and we see this playing out in Exodus. There is this passage in Exodus chapter 6, where it is before God has freed the people from Egypt, He comes to them, and He makes them this promise, “Therefore, say to the Israelites, ‘I am the Lord.’” It is the “I am” statement again. “I am the I am, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.”

Do you know what is fascinating about this passage? Do you remember the marriage ceremony that I told you about earlier, where the husband would go and propose before he would go to prepare a place? Do you know what passage they quoted when they did that? This passage, they would say, “I will bring you. I will free you. I will redeem you.” It was this promise that God had made in Exodus to marry the people, to covenant with the people of Israel, and the men would pick this up and say they will do the same thing with their wives. It goes on, and it says this: “I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God, and then you will know that I am the Lord your God who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.” God is promising the Israelites in Egypt while they are still in slavery, that He is going to bring them out of slavery so they can be together, so He will be their God, and they will be with Him, and as God frees them from the Egyptians, and as He takes them out into the wilderness, He brings them to a mountain where He fulfills this promise, and He begins to make them become his people, and He says, “I am going to move in among you. I am going to live among you at the center of your camp. We are going to build a tent, and in that tent my presence will dwell.”

This is the part of Exodus where we all tune out, because it is like, “I have been camping before. I do not need instructions on a tent,” right? But they give these very specific instructions for what the tent is supposed to look like and how it is supposed to function as God’s presence moves in with the people. I want you to notice this particular passage, where God gives instructions of what the Tabernacle is supposed to look like: “Set up the Tabernacle according to the plan shown you on the mountain. I want you to make a curtain of blue and purple and scarlet yarn, finely twisted linen, with cherubim woven into it by a skilled worker.” Do you see the correlation? He goes on to say, and we are going to skip down to the bottom here, “I want you to hang that curtain with the cherubim on it, and that curtain will separate the holy place from the most holy place.” The most holy place was where God’s presence was supposed to rest in the Tabernacle, in the tent, and what is guarding the way into that tent? The curtain with cherubim on it, guarding the way, barring the way back into God’s presence, and that curtain stood for generations, and

the Tabernacle became the temple, and this curtain with cherubim stood in the temple, guarding the way into God's presence.

In fact, even though God had moved among the people, his presence was still not fully experienced, and there was only one day a year when one person could go behind that curtain to encounter God's full presence. That was it, until Jesus arrives on the scene, and Jesus starts saying things like his name is Emmanuel, God with us. God moved into the neighborhood. God's presence manifests amongst us, and then He starts to say things like, "I am the bread of life." He is pulling on that name, Yahweh, and saying "I am the one who you will find all of your satisfaction in. I am the light of the world, the one who illuminates the darkness and the brokenness. I am the vine that keeps you connected to the Father. I am the way, the truth, and the life," and He makes these claims about who He is and what He is doing in the world, and people hear these claims, and they have no confusion about what He is saying. He is saying He is Yahweh, and so they pick up stones to kill Him multiple times, because it is blasphemy, but He is saying, "You do not understand. God has made his presence come and dwell among you. I am the way, the truth, and the life." It is not a metaphor, and it is not a suggestion. It is a declaration that Jesus is the way back to life.

Do you remember what happened when Jesus goes to the cross? The day after the night He is betrayed, He goes to the cross, and He is killed, and the moment his final breath is taken, do you remember what happens? That curtain that hung in the temple, such an important detail, it tore from top to bottom, as if heaven itself was ripping away the curtain, the barrier between God's presence and us. The whole story of Jesus is this idea that He is the one who makes the way for us to get back home, that we have been longing for home, and in our brokenness, and in our exile and in our sin and in the devastation of the world that we see all around us, Jesus is the one who makes the way for us to come back home to the Father's presence.

In Hebrews it picks this idea up in chapter 10, verses 19 through 22, and it pulls all of this together. It says, "Therefore brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter" where? "the most holy place," the place of God's presence, the place that had been barred by the curtain, the place that we were not allowed to go, "By the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain that is his body, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God," over the Father's house, "let us draw near to God with sincere hearts, with full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience, and having our bodies washed with pure water."

Jesus tore away the curtain that barred our way to God, because He is the way. He made a way on the cross through his broken body, made a way for us to come back home to the presence of the Father, and we no longer have to go to the Father's presence and be fearful of a guilty conscience. We no longer have to hide in our shame, because Jesus has made a way that we can come before the Father into his very presence, fully known, fully loved, fully welcome, not because of anything we have done, but because of what Christ did on the cross, that He made a way. Jesus did not just point to the way. He did not just say, "Here is a good way," or "Here is a good option." He said, "I became the way," and He tore down the barrier, and He leads us home. He says, "Come and follow me. I am like a groom coming back for his bride. I want to take you to the place where you can be with me." Do you see the story?

So, Jesus on the night that He is betrayed, the night before He goes to the cross, because the disciples are confused and concerned, and they are looking at the world, and it does not make any sense, and they are filled with uncertainty and insecurity and the lack of confidence, because they have been following Jesus and they do not know what is happening next, He says, “Do not be afraid. Do not let your hearts be troubled.” “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,” and it is an exclusive claim. He is the only way back into God’s presence, because He is the only one who is willing to make a way, because God Himself chose to make the way for us to be together, and it is an exclusive claim, but it is an inclusive invitation, because all along the way, Jesus says again and again and again, “Come to me, all who are weary. All who are weary,” “for God so loved the entire world.” The entire invitation is for anyone, whoever wants to follow me, it is open to anyone who is willing to say that Jesus Christ is Lord. He is the only way, but He offers that way to everyone, because He is the truth, and He is the life, and He is the way back into the Father’s presence.

So, if you are here today, and you have ever felt in a moment that you are far from God, if you have felt like the way back into God’s presence has been barred, because you look at your life, you look at the things that you have done and the things that you have not done, the things that have happened to you, and you think there is no way the Father would ever let me come home, Jesus made a way. If you have ever been in that place where you look at the world, and you feel that longing, that desire to go back home, that feeling that things are not the way that they are supposed to be, Jesus says yes, I have made a way for you to return to the way that things were supposed to be.” So, the beauty of the story that we believe in is that it is not just that we ache for home, but that God aches for home with us, that He wants home with you, that He wants you to come home. That is the promise of this story, and that even though He has left, He is coming back, like a groom coming back for his bride, so that we can be together forever.

So, as we close, and as I pray over you, I am going to invite you to stand now, and as you stand, and as we get ready to respond this morning, I want to pray over you a simple prayer. Jesus, in your name I pray that anyone who feels like this morning that the way back to you is too far, that the chasm is too wide, that the road is too long, that there is too much that they have done wrong, God, I pray that they would rest in the assurance, the confidence that you have made a way through the blood of Jesus. God, for those who are here today and maybe searching, they are wondering “What is the way?” What is the way to the life that they are longing for and looking for and hoping for, and they have tried a million different things and all of the different advice, all of the different ways that have been available, all of the different TikTok videos that say they have the answer, and they still are filled with a longing and a hope, a desperation that there must be something more, I pray in Jesus’ name that they would see that the way is open wide, that the invitation is for everyone. God, for those of us who know the brokenness of this world, the longing that this is not the home that we were meant for, who our prayer, in sickness and in disease and betrayal and heartache is, “Come Lord Jesus, come,” I pray that we would be encouraged by your Spirit to hold onto the hope that you are coming back to take us to be with you, that that prayer, though it is our cry, is not the end of our story, and it is in Christ’s name we pray, amen.

Some of you are here today, and you are longing for home, because we are in the in-between. Jesus came to make a way, but we are not home yet, and so the cry of our heart is, “Come, Lord Jesus, come,” in the turmoil and the chaos and the difficulty and the uncertainty, and that is the cry of our hearts, but it

is not the end of our story, so I want to read for you the end of the story that ties so many of these things we talked about together today.

Revelation 21: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new Earth, for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea, and I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look, God’s dwelling place is finally now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God Himself will be their God, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away,’” and if I might add, we will finally be home. That is our hope, and that is our prayer, and next week we have another opportunity to celebrate the beauty of that story with Resurrection Sunday, Easter, Jesus’ power over death and sin and the grave, and so I am inviting you back. Invite your friends back to hear the story about how Jesus is the resurrection and the life and the hope we have to return home one day. So, come back next week. It is going to be a great weekend. I can’t wait.

41:09 minutes

Edited by Tom Kenaston

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