

We live in the “Anxiety Age.” And it is everywhere promoted.

You are told to worry about the economy, terrorists, your weight, gingivitis, dandruff, grey hair, no hair, incontinence, termites, kids not eating their food, or too few raisins in the raisin bran.

In the face of all this, I say to you that there is really little to worry about. Why?

Jesus has gone ahead of us to open the way to His heavenly Father so that we can live with Him forever.

In Colossians 1:18 (also Rev. 1:5) Jesus is called the “firstborn from the dead.”

In Acts 26:23 He tells us about it. His plan was always that we would follow Him to heaven. (Rom. 8:28-29)

Therefore, He is called our “pioneer” our “forerunner.” (Hebrews 6:17-20)

He has made the way to where we will someday live.

But it is not enough just to know this!

Trust Jesus and you will know the Father.

In John 1-11 the author, the Apostle John, has been showing us who Jesus is.

He is God, Word of God, the Light of the World, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Son of Man.

He is the Lamb of God, the giver of living water, the one who has come from heaven and is going to heaven.

Jesus is the one who shows us God the Father, who existed before Abraham, who teaches with authority.

Jesus is the Bread of Life, the Door of the Sheep, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life.

Then in John 12 Jesus makes a turn toward the Cross.

He comes to Bethany and is anointed by Mary in preparation for His death.

After this He enters Jerusalem and begins speaking of His coming Crucifixion.

In John 13:1 we are reminded that “His hour had come.” These are the moments before His death.

Now, in John 13, Jesus begins His final teaching with His disciples before His death.

In John 13-17 we read the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus teaching His disciples before Gethsemane.

This is the longest and most intimate of all Jesus’ sermons recorded in the gospels.

It begins with His washing the disciples’ feet and ends with the High Priestly Prayer, all of chapter 17.

What is on His mind as He is sharing this supper with His disciples? How much He loves them. (John 13:1)

What a contrast then are the actions of Judas and Peter in these moments.

He then commands them to love one another (John 13:33-35) because He is leaving.

Jesus is prescribing for His disciples and through them to us, an ethic. It is a way of living. Loving service.

It is the Jesus way of living. And we are to live His way in this world that He has made.

But His disciples are upset.

They are not paying attention to the lesson because they are thinking about His departure.

They do not want Jesus to go away.

If you read carefully the first 14 verses of chapter 14 you will notice the repetition of two words.

“Believe” and “Father” These two words are key to understanding Jesus’ message.

Trust Jesus and you will know the Father.

And in demonstrating this truth, Jesus moves from eternity first to the very present.

How does this work? First, the big forever picture...

I. Trust Jesus and be with the Father forever.

John 14:1-4

Prior to these verses, Jesus has been contemplating His own death, Judas’ betrayal, and Peter’s denial.

Now He says, “do not let your heart be troubled.” On its own, this is ridiculous.

It would be like someone talking to you after your car is wrecked, your house burnt, your dog dead...

And they are saying to you, “Don’t worry. Be happy!”

You might legitimately reply, “You don’t understand the situation!”

But Jesus tells them not to be troubled and then He gives a command followed by a rationale.

We will consider both together this morning.

The command is both an action and a reason that will keep us from worrying.

“believe” = 55 times in John’s Gospel... usually a command. Jesus says it here twice... a double command!

Now it is important to understand just what this command means.

It is particularly important in modern America because we have so diluted the word.

It can be translated “have faith,” or “trust.”

Can we look at a few passages in John so far?

John 3:18

John 5:37-38, 46-47

John 8:24, 45-47

John 9:35-38

John 10:25-28

Can you see that belief, faith, trust in Jesus is at the heart of who a person is?

But for many who call themselves Christians the word means only intellectual assent.

Do you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God?

Many people will answer “Yes,” but then there is no difference, no changed life, no obedience to Jesus.

James warns us “the demons believe and they tremble.” No repentance. No obedience.

Do you believe like a demon?

I prefer the translation “trust” because it indicates an active, ongoing trusting Jesus and what He says.

In the Bible, true trust (faith, belief) always results in repentance and obedience to God.

The command from Jesus, “trust in God, trust also in Me,” is immediately followed by a rational, a reason to trust.

Why trust in Jesus? (vs. 2)

“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places” = mansions? rooms? We do not know.

But I don’t think you’ll be disappointed.

There is an old Keith Green song, the chorus,

“In six days He created everything, but He’s been working on heaven 2000 years.”

Jesus is reassuring His disciples, and you and I, that we need not worry. He has a big house.

And, you have a place reserved in that big house, if you trust Him.

“If it were not so, I would have told you” = Apparently the disciples ought to have expected this.

Do you know that you have a home in your Father’s house?

“I go to prepare a place for you” = He is making it ready for us. And now, He’s been at it for a while.

So it is good that he left 2,000 years ago because He is preparing eternal dwellings for us.

“If I go...” = So, if He’s doing all that... do not vs. 3-4 simply follow to reason?

Of course He’s coming back. Jesus is coming back to get us.

It is interesting in the Scriptures that we, God’s children, are also called collectively His bride.

In ancient Jewish marriages a man would visit with his bride and her father, asking to marry her.

If they were agreeable, the man would pay the bride price and then leave to begin building a home.

Often the home would be an addition onto his father’s house, the family dwelling.

It was when the home was finished that the groom would return for his bride.

There would be a wedding, and He would take her back to the home that he built.

This is the paradigm behind what Jesus is employing here. Trust Him.

But Thomas is uneasy, doubting Thomas. Now we get to Thomas’ question and Jesus’ answer.

II. Trust Jesus and come to the Father.

John 14:5-7

Thomas’ question is entirely understandable. I might have asked it if I had the courage.

Indeed, “How do we know the way?” Do you know the way to the Father? Can you find Him?

Jesus’ answer is perfectly logical and sensible. It is an “Ah Ha!” moment for the reader.

You see, when Jesus said, “You know the way where I am going,” he was using the word in a relational way.

Often in the Scriptures, “know” means a relational knowledge of a person.

Thomas was thinking of the way in a directional sense. How do we get there?

But Jesus is using it in a relational way. Who will get you there?

Do you know the way to the Father’s house?

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through Jesus.

Jesus here speaks the 6th of the 7 “I Am” sayings in John). He uses three singular nouns!

“I Am the way” = Do you want to know how to live here on earth and to get to heaven? Jesus is it.

“I Am the truth” = Do you want answers? He has them all, and He’ll never lie to you.

“I Am the life” = Do you want real life? Jesus is life itself. Even the grave cannot not keep Him.

As Jesus teaches us in the gospel of John, real life is all about knowing the Father in heaven.

In John, Jesus speaks of God as “Father” over 120 times! It is His favorite way of addressing God.

Do you want to know God the Father? Do you want to live forever with God the Father?

Get to know Jesus. **John 1:18**

Trust Jesus and you will see the Father in Heaven. There is no other way.

III. Trust Jesus because He reveals the Father.

John 14:8-11

Now Philip asks a question. He clearly doesn’t understand what Jesus has been saying.

And Jesus responds with a scolding incredulity, “Have you been with Me so long?”

Indeed, this has been a central theme in Jesus’ teaching and His miracles.

Jesus has been showing them God the Father, in His words, in His living, in His miracles.

Jesus now makes two points in verse 10, followed by a double command in verse 11.

Point 1: a rhetorical question, because Philip does not understand or believe this yet.

“I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.”

Jesus is intimately unified with His Father. This is the same point he made in answer to Thomas in verse 7.

It is a reiteration of John 10:10, “I and the Father are one.”

This theme of Jesus unity with His Father is key to understanding His ministry.

“I am in Him” = It is not that they are indistinguishable, otherwise this statement would make no sense.

It is that Jesus is intimately dependent and obedient to His Father.

“He is in Me” = Jesus is speaking of complete dependence upon His Father. **John 8:28-29**

Point 2: Jesus says and does what His Father gives Him to say and do.

“I speak His words” = Hebrews 1:1-3, “God... has spoken to us in His Son...”

He has “the words of eternal life”

“I do His works” = “The Father living in Me does His works” = **John 10:37-38** They couldn’t deny the works.

So, because of Jesus’ unity with His Father, He delivers a twofold command: Trust Me.

Trust Jesus because of what He is saying about His union with the Father. (vs. 11a)

Trust Jesus because of the works that He does. (vs. 11b)

Listen brothers and sisters, who else are you going to trust with your life in this world?

Who else knows God intimately and can show you who God is?

Who else works miracles, even conquering death?

Who else promises life everlasting?

Who else has been to the grave and back?

Who else has come from heaven and is now in heaven?

Who else always speaks the truth even when all the world does not agree?

Who else loves you more than He loves His own life?

Who else is like Jesus?

Who else is there to trust?

And who else has the ear of the Father in heaven?

IV. Trust Jesus and have the ear of the Father.

John 14:12-14

Verse 12 begins with Jesus’ favorite prelude to important sayings, “Truly, truly” = “Amen, Amen”

We are meant to pay attention. This is an amazing promise.

(vs. 12) If you trust Jesus, you will do the things that he does.

Jesus is speaking primarily of our way of living, obeying the Father, loving others.

Is Jesus here speaking of miracles? Maybe. But His miracles were always signs pointing to His divinity.

If you trust in Jesus...

“the works that I do, he will do also” = Because Jesus lives in us, We will live like Him.

If God is living in you, does it not follow to reason that you will do the things He does?

Our unity with Christ is modeled after Jesus’ unity with His Father... so the world will believe!

What then are the “works?” What did Jesus do? He taught, loved, prayed, preached the Gospel, suffered.

All this He did by the power of God, to the glory of God, and for the good of people who needed to know God.

He did not build great buildings, achieve fame and fortune, conquer empires, set world records, or win games.

“greater works he will do” = not more spectacular works, or better, but greater

“because (He is) going to the Father.”

Our works will be greater because they will show not only the power of Jesus,
but the power of Jesus in working through us!

The works are greater because they impact more people in more places. They change more lives.

These amazing things that Jesus does will show up in the lives of people who are now new people,
new creations in Christ! **2 Cor. 5:17-19** We are taking the gospel to the entire world.

Finally, in verses 13-14, Jesus gives us a second amazing promise:

“Whatever you ask, I will do”

But before we get into what this means, let us consider two things.

He gives us a “how” and a “why.”

The How: “in My name” = Not that you must tack onto the end of every prayer “in Jesus’ name.”

Sometimes people end their prayers with this as if that shoots it up to heaven.

Not so. An ambassador to another nation speaks “in the name of” the one who sent him.

He says what his king (president) would say, nothing more, nothing less.

And He says it with the authority and standing that His king (president) has vested in him.

So, to pray “in Jesus’ name” means to pray in the way that Jesus would pray.

And it means to pray in the authority and standing that He gives those who are in Him.

You must know Him in order to pray this way.

You must be a citizen of His Kingdom.

This is why the Lord’s Prayer is so important.

It is the only prayer that Jesus has explicitly commanded us to pray.

The Why: “so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” = Not for your own glory. Not for what we want.

We pray so that people will say,

“Wow, Jesus must really be the exact representation of the Father. He must be God.”

It goes like this: I pray in Jesus’ name.

Jesus answers my prayer according to His will.

God, in my prayers through Jesus Christ, gets all the glory.

So, if you pray this way. Jesus will do it according to the will of God, which is really what I want.

Matt. 7:7-11 Do you want to pray this way?

Spend time with Jesus so that you know Him.

Know His words so that you know what He wants.

And trust Him no matter how He answers because He always does His Father’s will.

If you do this, Jesus will bring you all the way home.