

# I Am the Way

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 10 April 2011

Preacher: Jonny Grant

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Verse 31, and the two readings will go all the way through to verse 14 of chapter 14. So Jonathan is going to read first, and then Kirsty, thanks.

When he was gone, Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now, Where I am going, you cannot come.

A new command I give you, love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

Simon Peter asked him, Lord, where are you going? Jesus replied, Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later. Peter asked, Lord, why can't I follow you now?

[ 1 : 0 1 ] I will lay down my life for you. Then Jesus answered, Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you.

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, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.

Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way? Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. Philip said, Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.

[ 2 : 0 2 ] Jesus answered, Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father?

Don't you believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father living in me who is doing his work.

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth. Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.

He will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it.

Thank you, Lord, very much. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 3 : 1 0 ] Thank you. Well, we're looking at the I Ams, some of the sayings of Jesus. If you miss any of these talks, as I missed one last week, they are on the web.

You can listen to them there. And indeed, do check out the [carigolinebaptistchurch.org](http://carigolinebaptistchurch.org), I think is the web address. You can listen to all the talks there.

We've also started a blog. If you don't know what a blog is, I don't even know what it stands for. But you can get involved in writing and things like that as well. So talk to Ralph about that.

But it's very interesting. Have a look. Well, let's pray. Our Father God, as we go through life, we are faced with many decisions and we are faced with many events and circumstances.

And we are not always sure what the way is. Lord, we come to your word wanting to hear what you have to say so that Jesus may show us the way.

[ 4 : 23 ] The way to live. The way to true life. So please help us to understand your word. Please help us to apply it and to work it through in our lives.

So that tomorrow morning, wherever we are, whether we're looking after children, whether we're sitting at a desk in school or college, whether we're at work, wherever we are, that your word would so impact us that it would give us a way to live life.

To live life your way. In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, it's a very special evening.

You're with your closest friends. In fact, your best friend is with you. There's a sense of closeness and intimacy as you chat and reminisce over past times.

Things are going well. There's no worries, no concerns. The future looks bright. As you eat and drink over dinner, everyone is relaxed.

[ 5 : 41 ] And then suddenly, the mood changes. I'm leaving. Your closest and most intimate of friends announces that they're going away.

They're not just leaving dinner early. They are going away for good. In fact, you're never going to see them again. In shock, you begin to remonstrate, pledging your loyalty and your commitment as a friend.

But no sooner have you finished, then he turns around and says, you're a failure. What a thing to say.

Talk about bursting the party bubble. Well, that's what happened to the disciples as they sat with Jesus during one of their most intimate of evenings.

They had just shared in the most special of occasions the Passover meal. When Jesus announces, chapter 13, verse 33, My children, I will be with you only a little longer.

[ 6 : 47 ] You will look for me. And just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now, where I am going, you cannot come. I'm leaving.

You won't be able to find me. And you can't come with me. Of course, Peter, on behalf of the disciples, speaks up. The others were always too shy.

And Peter always speaks for the rest of them. He says in verse 37, Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you. Will you really lay down your life for me?

I tell you the truth. Before the cock crows, you will disown me three times. You're a failure. You won't stand by me.

You'll pretend you don't even know me. Talk about a letdown. With the announcement that Jesus is leaving, they are left stranded in fear and failure.

[ 7 : 53 ] Even though it was said in the most gracious of ways, my children, he says, there was no getting away from the hard and difficult truth.

Jesus had been their whole life. He had taken them into his inner circle. He had called them. They had left everything. And he had brought them into his inner circle.

He had promised them life and love with himself and with the Father. He was to be the great hope for the world. The long-awaited Messiah.

He had come to renew and restore the brokenness that was all around them. And now he says, I'm leaving. Their safe and secure lives were suddenly rocked by fear and confronted with their own failure.

Now fear and failure is common to us all, isn't it? The unexpected happens in our lives. We're going along fine and then all of a sudden we lose our job.

[ 9 : 03 ] We're healthy and fit and an illness comes along. Tragedy strikes. We're enjoying the most intimate of relationships and then we lose a loved one.

Our world is shattered and our hopes and dreams become a broken mess on the floor as we are rocked by fear about the future and we're confronted by our own failure to do anything about it.

Well, into our fear and into our failure Jesus speaks these words. Look at verse 1. Chapter 14.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. Jesus is inviting his disciples and us to trust not in a religion or not in some kind of philosophy but in a person.

He says, trust in me. Trust in the person of Jesus. Trust in Jesus who overcomes our fear and who conquers our failure. In fact, it's an invitation to trust in the work of Jesus, his death on the cross.

[ 10 : 32 ] Look back at the beginning of chapter 13, verse 1. It was just before the Passover feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father.

And then at the very end of chapter 14, this is all over the special meal that they had together. Jesus is with them throughout. And then at the end, in chapter 14, at the very end, verse 31, the last little phrase, he says, come now, let us leave.

Jesus is going somewhere. Where is he going? Well, we know he said, I'm going to the Father. But to get to the Father, he must first go to the cross.

That's where his journey is taking him. That's where Jesus is going. At the cross, Jesus overcomes our greatest fear and he conquers our greatest failure.

He destroys our ultimate fear, death itself, and he deals with our ultimate failure, our sin. And unless Jesus goes to the cross, we will be stuck in fear and we'll be stranded in our failure.

[ 11 : 55 ] Chapter 14, verse 28. He said, you heard me say, I am going away and I am coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father.

It's for their good that Jesus is going away. It's for their good that he's going towards the cross because at the cross, Jesus will bring the ultimate salvation.

And so the invitation here amidst their fear and their failure is to say, trust in me. Don't let your hearts be troubled.

Trust me. Well, by trusting Jesus, fear is overcome by the promise of eternal security and failure is conquered by the promise of greater works.

Jesus gives a double promise in response to their fear and failure. First of all, look at the fear. Fear is overcome by the promise of eternal security.

[ 13 : 12 ] Jesus has just told his disciples that he was going to be leaving. He's just spent three years with them, intimately, practically every day with them. Now they're going to be left on their own.

The one who had come to change the world and to bring life was being taken from them and in their fear, Jesus brings reassurance. Look at verse 2. In my Father's house are many rooms.

If it were not so, I would have told you and I am going there to prepare a place for you. He's painting a wonderful picture of a resting place that you will find after a long journey.

It's a house, a home, an eternal home. Now we know home is where there is safety and security. A home is marked by the absence of fear.

Ask any child where they want to be when they feel afraid or if they're unsure or they're threatened. I want to go home. And so it is for the believers.

[ 14 : 19 ] We want to go home to our place of absolute security and Jesus is wanting to reassure his terrified disciples that everything is sorted and to guarantee their safe arrival.

Look at verse 3. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

I'm going to prepare a place for you. It's going to be for your good. Of course, that doesn't mean that Jesus is going to have to wash the sheets and get the linen sorted.

It doesn't mean that he's preparing the house and decorating it and getting the landscape gardeners in. It's not that kind of preparation. No, he prepares the way by going to the cross.

Look at verse 4. He says, you know the way to the place where I am going. What Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you are going.

[ 15 : 25 ] How can we know the way? Well, Jesus in some ways has already answered that. He says, I told you where I'm going. I'm going to the Father. But the disciples, as always, are slow to pick up on everything.

So Jesus makes it crystal clear. Verse 6. Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

My way is truth. What I am telling you will lead you to the Father. My way is life.

It brings you new life, abundant life, eternal life. My way is going to bring you home so that you will be never separated from me. Now, the way of Jesus is not just following his example as if we have to do what Jesus did to get to our eternal home.

No, Jesus is the way. It's his going to the cross. It's his coming back again to life through the resurrection that prepares the way and makes it possible for us to be with him forever.

[ 16 : 42 ] That's the way. It's the way of the cross. And it's an exclusive claim, isn't it? He says, my way is the only way. There's only one path.

But let's not miss also the inclusive invitation. He says, there are many rooms in my Father's house. So he is saying to us and he is saying to the world, come to me.

Trust me. Trust in the way that I have already gone and I will give you eternal security.

Fear is all about losing something. The disciples were afraid of losing Jesus. Things happen in our life that bring about fear.

if you lose your job, you fear losing your financial security. If you lose your health, you fear losing meaning and purpose in life.

[ 17 : 53 ] What can you do if you don't have your health? If you lose a relationship or a friendship, you fear losing your identity. Whatever is taken away from us in life ultimately leads to fear.

and the greatest of those is our own life. What happens if my life was taken from me? But here he is reminding us that Jesus destroys death at the cross.

He defeats death at the resurrection. He is gone where we can never go. He goes to the cross. He goes to the grave and he prepares the way for us so that we can have eternal security.

an eternal home where we are safe and secure. Where nothing and no one can take anything from us.

Now that has massive implications for us today. We don't need to fear losing in this life because we have everything to come. We have the Father's home which we're heading to and he's guaranteed it and he says it's yours and I'm coming back and I'm going to bring you there.

[ 19 : 09 ] So what does it matter if we lose things in this life? What does it matter if we lose our job? If we lose our health? If we lose a loved one? Of course there is sadness.

Of course there is difficulty. But it's not hopeless. Jesus has overcome our greatest fear. Death itself.

so we need not fear today or tomorrow or the future because he has taken all of that in control. And he says I have your eternal security sorted.

Trust me. Don't let your hearts be troubled by the fears that you face in this world. Trust in me. fear. So that's the first promise in response to the disciples fear.

Second, the promise is that failure is conquered by the promise of greater works. Remember Peter's promise in verse 37.

[ 20 : 18 ] Again, he's speaking on behalf of all the disciples. Where, sorry, verse 37, Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.

It's a typical Peter response. And in response to what Peter says, Jesus highlights the disciples' failure and then he makes a promise of his own.

Look at the two contrasts. It's striking. Verse 38. Jesus says, I tell you the truth, before the cock crows you will disown me three times.

failure. Now look at chapter 14, verse 12. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.

He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. Can you see the contrast? It's a promise to overcome and conquer their failure.

[ 21 : 18 ] In fact, it's a promise for us. Verse 12 says, I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me. So what is this huge promise that we read in verse 12?

Well, before we get stuck into it, let me read it again, and some of your translations will read it this way, and I think it will help us better unpack it. Read verse 12.

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do the works I have been doing. He will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father.

You see, if we, and look at the promise, it says, if we are going to do greater works than Jesus, we must know what works Jesus did.

Now, at a first read, and I'm sure if I asked you all this out now, it seems to be a promise to the church today that we are going to do greater works than Jesus.

[ 22 : 29 ] In other words, we're going to do miracles that Jesus did, only greater. I mean, that's how I read it, first off. Are we going to do greater miracles than Jesus?

Well, it's hard to think of any miracles greater than those of what Jesus did. In John chapter 2, we read that Jesus changed water into wine.

We'd put the whole alcohol industry out of business if we could do that. He walked on water. He fed 15,000 with five loaves of bread and two fish.

He called Lazarus out of the grave at just a word. He healed masses of people at just a word and just a touch. Are we going to do greater things than those?

Even the disciples as recorded in Acts, the first insight into the early church, they didn't do anything like this. They did do miracles but nothing compared to what Jesus did.

[ 23 : 40 ] So I don't think this is saying that we are going to do greater miracles than Jesus. In fact, the miracles of Jesus, as John's gospel has made clear, are signs.

That's what he calls them. They are especially unique to Jesus. Look at verse 11. He says, believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

You see, the amazing works and miracles of Jesus, everything that he has been doing, are there to authenticate who he is and what he has come to do.

He's coming into the world and saying, I am nothing less than God. I am God in the flesh. Believe what I say. If you don't believe what I say, believe on the evidence of the miracles.

It's all about Jesus. Jesus. Now, for the record, I'm not ruling out miracles. I'm not saying that miracles aren't for today.

[ 24 : 46 ] I think they do happen and can happen. But I don't think it's saying here that we are going to do greater things as far as greater miracles are concerned.

So what does it mean? Well, have a look back to chapter 4 of John's Gospel. This is the well-known story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan lady at the well.

A Samaritan was an outsider. You didn't talk to Samaritan people, especially to a woman. That just didn't go on. And yet Jesus, we find him at the well with the lady, and he's been offering her eternal life.

He says, if you drink what I have to offer, you will never thirst again. It will be like a well inside you, welling up to eternal life. He is offering true life.

And then the disciples come and they discover that Jesus has been meeting with this woman and they say, come on, we should be off getting food, not talking to this woman. Now look at John chapter 4 verse 34.

[ 26 : 05 ] My food, said Jesus, is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say four months more and then the harvest?

I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest. harvest. The work that Jesus has to finish is the work of going to the cross.

The work of bringing salvation to the world, not just to Jewish people, not just to the inside people, but to the world, to Samaritan people, because he talks about the harvest is ripe.

It's for everybody. And his work is to go to the cross so that salvation can go out. So the works of Jesus, while it does include miracles, is ultimately one of salvation.

Now that helps us to understand what we do and how we can do greater things than Jesus. It's an amazing promise telling us that people like you and me can do greater things than Jesus.

[ 27 : 20 ] At the end of Jesus' ministry, if you were to read to the end of John's gospel, there's just a few people who are following him. Only a few, a handful.

After everything that he did, most of them had deserted him and run away. He's left with only a few. Now the promise, he's saying in verse 12, is greater works will be done.

Well, how will that happen? Well, look at the last phrase of verse 12 of chapter 14. He says, he will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father.

Now we've looked at one side of that. What happens when Jesus goes to the Father? Yes, he goes to the cross, but what else happens? Look at chapter 16, verse 7. I know we're flicking backwards and forwards, but I think this will just help us to unpack it all.

Chapter 16, verse 7. I tell you the truth, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor, that's the Spirit, will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you.

[ 28 : 37 ] And what's the Spirit going to do? Verse 8, when he comes, he will convict the world of guilt. So Jesus is saying, greater things are going to happen because I am going to go to the Father, and when I go to the Father, the Spirit is going to be poured out into the world.

And salvation will come to the world. And that's what we begin to see as we read into Acts. The very first sermon that Peter preached.

Remember, we leave him in John as a failure, but now this promise of verse 12 comes true. Because after his first sermon he preached, how many people came to believe?

Three thousand people came to believe. That's the promise. That's the greater work. The Spirit has come, and now literally thousands, millions of people around the world are following Christ.

Now you compare what there is today, and compare that to the few who are following after Jesus' ministry. That's the greater things that are going to happen.

[ 29 : 59 ] So look at verse 13 of chapter 14. verse 13. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. Now again, we have to be careful we don't just lift that out of context and say, well I can ask for anything, a new car, new health, new job, anything, and you'll do it.

That's how some people will read it, but in the context and what we've seen, it has to fit in with the salvation that God brings. Ask for anything in regards to the salvation plan of God, and He will do it.

We can pray for our friends and for our family who are not yet into that intimate circle of Jesus and the Father. We can pray it because His Spirit has come.

Now it's not just that the Spirit is better in terms of greater in that way, that having the Spirit is better than having Jesus.

[ 31 : 10 ] It's not like that. It's saying that when the Spirit comes, He expands the work of Jesus. Jesus was always limited and isolated to one place wherever He walked on earth.

He couldn't be in ten places at one time. But the Spirit of Christ has come and He's everywhere and He's at work everywhere. This is the amazing promise for the church today that we are to claim, that we are to live by.

Peter the failure, now with a wonderful promise. Now failure has a crippling effect on us, doesn't it?

The world tells us that if you fail, if you mess up, you're out. There's no room for those who get it wrong, whether it's in the sports team or whether it's in work.

You have no place, no part to play. If you fail, struck off, that's it. Not so with Jesus. Peter failed.

[ 32 : 18 ] He disowned Jesus. He turned his back on Jesus. Peter failed spectacularly. But Jesus threw the cross because he had to go through the cross conquers our failure.

He forgives our sin. He takes a punishment for our sin. And in its place he gives us his spirit and he promises us that we will do greater things than Jesus.

We will see more people come to faith than Jesus saw. You see, if Jesus overcomes our greatest failure, which is our sin, can Jesus not work in failures like you and me and bring salvation to our friends, to our family, to our community around us?

This is an amazing promise, one that overcomes failure. Fear and failure can paralyze us.

If we live within fear and failure, we won't do anything. Because we'll fear losing what we have. What if I do it and what if I lose it?

[ 33 : 34 ] We'll fear failure even if we try to do something. What if it all goes horribly wrong? We'll never do it. But Jesus invites us to put our faith in him.

Trust me. I am the way, the truth, and the life. It's a way of freedom. It's a way that takes away our fear.

It takes away our failures and it enables us to live life the way he calls us to. Through the cross he has overcome our fear. He has conquered our failure so we can live confidently and with complete assurance that we are eternally secure and will do greater works.

let's pray together. Our Father God, it's so often that we feel afraid and we feel failures.

But yet Jesus has come and has given us a new way to live. He has overcome our fears. He has conquered our failures so that we can live with confidence and assurance today.

[ 35 : 10 ] Father, help us to trust you that when things are taken away from us should we lose our job, should we lose our health, should we lose a loved one.

Help us that we might trust you. Help us to trust you, Father, that you have overcome the greatest fear, that we have everything to come and so we can willingly live our lives giving freely of all that we have, risking everything because we have security with you.

Help us to trust you. Help us to trust that your way is the right way. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thank you. Amen. Amen.