

John Ch14v1-14 - Knowing and Showing the Father

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Preacher: Martin Parker

[0 : 00] John 14, starting at verse 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

You believe in God, believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms, 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, that you also may be where I am.

You know the way to the place where I am going. But 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 know me, you will know my Father as well.

[1 : 07] 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.

Jesus answered, Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you for 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, I do not speak on my own authority.

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 in the evidence of the words themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

[2 : 15] And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Thanks, Martin. Welcome. Thank you for coming and being with us today. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Well, it's lovely to be with you this morning.

I know it's a day of immense sadness for you as a church, and really, it's like Jesus, it's hard to know where to turn. That last song we sang, talked about all kinds of things we might feel, and just that encouragement to come to Jesus.

And so this morning, that's simply where I want to bring us, is to bring us to Jesus. And hopefully there, we will receive the comfort that we need in the face of death, and also the courage that we need to face life in the days that lie ahead.

I don't know if any of you did your leaving certificate this summer, or even in recent summers. Even if it was in far-off summers, you may still remember having to read a play for your English paper.

[3 : 27] For some of you, that might have been a delight, and for others, I'm sure, a complete drag. But there's a sense, really, isn't there, in which a play is to be shown in order for it to be known.

There's something different about seeing. It acted out the way the writer meant it to be displayed. There's something different, a different kind of knowing the play by the actor showing the play.

Likewise, if you're anything like me, before you go on holiday, you might like to read up in advance about the place that you're going to. You know all about the tourist attractions you want to see or the historical buildings that you want to visit.

But there's a different kind of knowing when the guide is showing you those sights themselves. Well, in order that we might know the Father, we're told here that Jesus came to show the Father.

The Son of God comes in human form so that the invisible God might be made known by being shown. Some of the followers of Jesus will talk about not only seeing with their eyes, but what their ears have heard and what their hands have touched.

[4 : 46] The invisible God, the Father, is made known as he is shown by the Son of God come in human form. In this passage, Jesus says to Thomas in verse 7, if you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.

From now on, you do know him and have seen him. You see, the incredible truth is that we know the Father by knowing Jesus.

Now, there's a complexity to this relationship between the Father and the Son which is so hard for us to understand. We struggle to grasp it. In human relationships, you might say things like these, you are just like your Father.

I think that's usually said in a negative tone. You're just like your Father. Or you might say she is the spit of her mother. Now, we mean one of two things.

We might be talking about a physical likeness. The daughter looks so much like her mother that there's no mistaking what family she belongs to. Or we may be talking about characteristics.

[5 : 58] We see this son's sense of humour and we know exactly where it comes from. It's as though the Father is speaking. But in no sense would you ever say if you know the son, you know the father.

Or if you know the daughter, you know the mother as well. We understand that they are unique individuals with different desires and aspirations, likes and dislikes, interests, hobbies, and pleasures.

Well, the relationship between the father and the son is far more complex than that. It's not a physical likeness because God is spirit and Jesus has come as a human being.

And in character, we're not simply saying that the father and son are like one another in certain ways. what we're saying instead is that they share the very same characteristics because they are one in their very being.

There is one God. this is not like anything in human relationships between two people who have differing wills and desires. Rather, what the father wills, the son wills, what the father loves, the son loves.

[7 : 19] Though they're different persons, they're one God. So Jesus can say in verse 11, I am in the father and the father is in me.

Now, as complicated as that is, and if it is too complicated for you to grasp, I'm going to put it in simple terms because it's also wonderfully simple. We know the father by knowing the son.

We know the father by knowing Jesus. It's as simple as that. Jesus' disciples want to know God the father and Jesus' message is wonderfully simple. So simple they're struggling to grasp it in verse 7.

If you really knew me, you would know my father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. Well, how can that be?

It's because we know the father by knowing Jesus. And according to Jesus, there is room in the father's house for all who trust the son.

[8 : 26] Verse 2, in my father's house are many rooms. if it were not so, I would have told you. Maybe you've had the experience in your house that your teenage son or daughter tells you that they've been invited to stay over at their friend's house and your first question is, do their parents know?

Is this an invitation from the friend or is this an invitation that comes from the parent? After all, it is their house. But remember that the son, Jesus, and the father are one.

What the father loves, the son loves. What the father wills, the son wills. So there is room in the father's house in heaven for all who trust in the son.

And these rooms in the father's house are made ready by Jesus. He says in verse 2, I am going to prepare a place for you.

I remember something in my youth that I heard numerous times and I think I remember hearing it most clearly from a singer who was popular at the time, Keith Green. If that brings a smile to your face, that puts you in a certain era of time.

[9 : 40] And one of the things that he'd often say was this, if it took God six days to create the world and more than 2,000 years to prepare our eternal home, a wonderful wonderful place it must be.

Now I understand the sentiment but it is something that is mistaken. God didn't need six days to create a world. He didn't need 2,000 years to create an eternal home.

He could have created each in an instant. God doesn't need all of that time. So what was Jesus referring to when he speaks of going to prepare a place for us?

Well he's talking about his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. That's what's needed to prepare our eternal home. In our sinful rejection of the Father, we'd forsaken all rights to our eternal home.

And Jesus is the only one who can make it possible for us to return. It's not it that needs to be made ready for us. It is us that need to be made ready for it.

[10 : 52] That's the very reason Jesus came. It's the very reason that Jesus is speaking about leaving his disciples. He must die for their sins. He must take the judgment that their sins deserve.

He must rise from the dead and return to the Father's house, having made ready room for them, just as he does for us.

These rooms in the Father's house are made ready by Jesus and he will bring us there. 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.

If the reason for Jesus leaving is to prepare a place for us in the Father's house, there's still something more to be done. He must return so that we might join him in the Father's house.

Now perhaps when someone is coming to visit you in your house, you provide them with directions. Usually you start with a well-known landmark. For us, that's DID electrical.

[12 : 03] As you come into Vanden, do you know where DID electrical is? If you can find that, then you can get to our house from there. Now if you live in the middle of nowhere, directions can be a little bit more complicated.

After the crossroads, drive for exactly one mile and then take the right turn. Now those kind of directions make me very nervous.

What helps is this when a friend says, I'm going, I know the way, I'll pick you up at 7.30 and you can come with me.

I don't have to think about it anymore. my friend knows the way, my friend is the way, they're going to collect me, I don't need to worry about it.

Well that's exactly what Jesus is saying about getting to the Father's house. He will bring us, he will collect us. If you're trusting in Jesus to bring you to the Father's house, not because of something you have done, but because Jesus has prepared it for you by his death and resurrection, you can have absolute confidence in the face of death.

[13 : 24] You will gain access to the Father's house, because Jesus himself will take you to be where he is in the Father's house.

And there you will live with him. It's described in the most intimate terms, isn't it? The most personal of terms, verse 3, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

You see, heaven is not so much about the place as it is about the person. It's about being with Jesus, the one who loved us so much that he would give his very life in our place, the one who has made ready for us room in the Father's house, the one who will come and bring us to be with him where he is.

What a comfort that brings. to a church and to a family at a time like this. When experiencing the loss of someone who is loved by so many, to know that there is for joy room in the Father's house made ready by Jesus who has brought her there to be with him.

for Jesus' first disciples struggling with the fact that Jesus is about to leave them, this is what would bring them comfort. Though Jesus is leaving, he is going to make ready room for them in the Father's house.

[15 : 21] Why? so that they might be with him forever. Now, all of that sounds wonderful, and other people, even over these next days, will commend you for such faith.

It's wonderful that you have such faith. faith. But now we get to the offensive part. Because Jesus says in verse 6, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. We can know the Father by knowing Jesus and only Jesus.

You see, it might be acceptable for other people if we say, I know God by knowing Jesus. That would be acceptable to people as long as we're not telling them that for them to know God, they also must know Jesus.

They have their own way of relating to God. It's great to have your way, but I'll find my own way. That's why the words of Jesus bring not only comfort but offence.

[16 : 39] Jesus is not leaving room for any other way. We know the Father by knowing Jesus and only Jesus. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Perhaps there are some here today who have heard much about Jesus, even like much of the things that Jesus has to say, but don't yet trust him to rely on him and only him to bring you to the Father's house.

But there is no other way and so long as you don't trust Jesus, there is no room for you in the Father's house. You must turn to him, ask for forgiveness and trust him that he does it all by his death and resurrection.

That he and he alone can bring you to the Father's house. Now Jesus speaks in this passage not only of knowing the Father, but of showing the Father.

It's Philip who makes the request in verse 8, Lord show us the Father and that will be enough for us. Now Philip's question comes in response to what Jesus has just said.

[17 : 58] Remember verse 7, if you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on you do know him and have seen him. Now Philip has to ask show us the Father, he has yet to grasp in whose company he has spent the last few years.

Because the very reason that Jesus came was that he might show the Father. He shows the Father by speaking the Father's words, verse 10.

The words I say to you are not just my own. Jesus isn't just a religious teacher who's outlining his own particular philosophy about life and about God.

No, Jesus speaks the Father's words. Remember that Jesus not only calls himself the way but the truth. Once again, we live in a society that doesn't want to accept the idea of absolute truth.

We live in a world that wants everyone to be able to define their own truth, whatever works for them, but Jesus doesn't allow any wiggle room here either. He is the truth.

[19 : 09] He speaks the truth because he speaks the Father's words. Jesus shows the Father by doing the Father's work.

Look again at verse 10. The words I say to you are not just my own, rather is the Father living in me who is doing his work. Now notice here that there is hardly any distinction at all between words and works.

I am not only talking about the English spelling of the words. In fact, I think they are so close that if I was listening carefully enough, I think at one point Johnny said words where the word was works when he was reading the passage.

Jesus barely distinguishes between the two. In other words, doing the Father's works is to speak the Father's words.

We tend to think, don't we, that the miracles of Jesus are the works of Jesus, the works that the Father sent him to do, but the purpose of miracles was always to authenticate the words.

[20 : 20] Back in John chapter 10, Jesus challenges unbelievers to at least accept the reality of his miracles if they will not accept his words. Now here in verse 11, he has to say the very same thing to his followers, at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

Jesus does the Father's work by speaking the Father's words. And Jesus shows the Father by seeking the Father's glory, verse 11.

Jesus promises to answer the prayers of his followers so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You see, Jesus shows the Father speaking the Father's words, doing the Father's work, seeking the Father's glory, as do we.

That's the incredible truth contained in the very last verses that we read this morning. Look at verse 12, I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.

But what has Jesus been doing? He has been speaking the Father's words. He has been doing the Father's work. He has been seeking the Father's glory.

[21 : 46] And when we trust in Jesus, we do those very same things. things. But Jesus says even more than that, things that I think we get confused about at times in 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 my Father. Sam Albury helpfully writes, Jesus can't be saying that we will somehow outperform him, or have a more powerful or miraculous ministry than him.

Not even the miracles of the apostles recorded in the book of Acts top what Jesus did. But if it is through Jesus' words that the Father is working, then our greater works is not about us doing flashier miracles, but about multiplying his message.

The more his words are shared, the greater is the work done by the Father. In his earthly ministry, Jesus could only be in one place at a time. Now, through his disciples, millions of mouths can be speaking his words all over the world at one time.

How are we to do that? How are we to speak the Father's words as we do the Father's work and seek the Father's glory? Well, quite simply by the Spirit and prayer.

[23 : 16] Now, the Holy Spirit isn't mentioned here explicitly in this passage. He will be in the verses that follow, but in verse 12 when Jesus speaks about his followers doing greater works, the reason he gives is this, because I am going to the Father.

If you read on a little bit later, you'll see the reason he's going to the Father is that he might send his Holy Spirit. These even greater things will be done because the Holy Spirit will come, who will multiply the message of Jesus as it goes forth from his people by the Spirit and prayer.

Because Jesus says he will do whatever we ask in his name. Now, again, that can be a confusing thing, can't it? It's not some kind of magic formula that guarantees success when we pray in Jesus' name.

It's not some kind of special power that we can invoke by simply saying in Jesus' name. If it was, isn't it something we would do in order to prevent what you face at this time?

rather, Jesus has come in the Father's name, representing the Father, doing and saying only what the Father wants, and we too are to pray in Jesus' name, asking for those things that Jesus wants.

[24 : 57] When we desire what Jesus desires, what the Father desires, Jesus will do it so that all of the glory will go to the Father because his will is being done.

Do you know the Father? If not, you can only come to know him by knowing Jesus.

And if you do not trust in the Son, there is no room for you in the Father's house. God because Jesus is the only one who can bring us to the place he has made ready for us.

And if you are trusting in Jesus, can I encourage you to seek the Father's glory by speaking the Father's words and doing the Father's work because he has given you his spirit and he will answer your prayers so that we might show the Father to those around us doing the even greater things that Jesus has promised.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for the comfort that is found in the gospel of the Lord Jesus even and especially at a time like this.

[26 : 36] We thank you for the absolute confidence and assurance that we have that those who trust in Jesus have a place in the Father's house.

confidence and that Jesus himself comes to take us there. And I pray for Chris and his family at this time that you might bring the assurance of those truths to their hearts and to their minds and in the midst of much sorrow to also bring that assurance and confidence.

we pray not only that you would give comfort in the face of death but that you would give courage to live life as you want us to live it.

That we would seek to bring glory to the Father by doing your works and speaking your words, trusting you to do with them what you will please. And we pray even for tomorrow as testimony is given to joy, faith and trust in the Lord Jesus.

that you might be pleased by your spirit to use all that is said and the life that has been lived to speak into the lives of others.

[27 : 54] And we ask this in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.