

PM John 14 Claims and Promises

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[0 : 00] Our gracious Father God, as we turn aside to reflect upon your word, may your spirit be our teacher and your glory our concern. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, I would like to turn with you to that chapter from which we read and you may like to have your Bible open with you as we reflect on it. And as with this morning, when we were looking at John chapter 10, I'm going to paint with a pretty broad brush.

You could spend a whole series of sermons on this chapter. I want to pick out three headings or three themes from the chapter. The first, some of the claims that Jesus made, and we were also doing that this morning.

Also, secondly, some of the promises that Jesus gives us to encourage us on the journey of faith. And thirdly, some of the commands that Jesus sets before us.

Now, John 14, 15 and 16 are a unit. It's what's often called the upper room discourse. And here is Jesus at the Last Supper with the disciples.

[1 : 20] And this is the teaching that he gives them on that occasion. And it is essentially a word of encouragement. The chapter is also slightly structured around a series of questions that some of the disciples have asked.

Towards the end of chapter 13, the previous chapter, Peter has asked them, Where are you going? Which explains how Jesus is talking about his going away and then coming back again.

And then, of course, Thomas asks for Jesus to show them the way. And then later, Philip, down in verse 8, asks Jesus to show them the Father. So, Jesus is in this teaching responding to questions that the disciples have asked.

So, as I say, I want to look at these three headings. First of all, the claims that Jesus makes. The promises that he gives. And then, thirdly, the commands that he sets before us.

And if we begin with the claims of Jesus. The first is really both a claim and a promise. And we get it fairly early in verse 3. Where Jesus says, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back.

[2 : 35] And take you to be with me. That you also may be where I am. His claim, I will come back. In effect, Jesus is saying that he is going to die.

And then come back to life again. And return to the disciples. So that their sorrow and their grief will be turned into joy.

But beyond that, he is assuring them of heaven and eternity. The whole section, chapters 14, 15 and 16 of John's Gospel.

Are essentially a word of encouragement. And that sort of brackets these three chapters. This chapter 14 begins with, do not let your hearts be troubled.

And then at the end of Jesus' teaching, in chapter 16, verse 33. Jesus says, I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble.

[3 : 41] But take heart, I have overcome the world. So Jesus is saying, yes, you are going to have difficulties. You are going to have trials and temptations and sorrows and grief.

But don't worry. In me you can have peace, even in the midst of the difficulties of life. Take heart. I have overcome the world. And so this whole discourse of Jesus is framed in this theme of encouragement.

You will have trouble. But do not let your hearts be troubled. And of course the disciples would in the immediate context be troubled. Because Jesus has just told them that one of them is going to betray him.

He's told Peter, Peter you're going to deny me. And so on. So the disciples would be in a bit of turmoil. But we need to get our heads around that these words of encouragement are not just for the immediate disciples.

But words of encouragement for us also. Jesus has, as we know, arrived at the threshold of the cross. In a few short hours he knows that he's going to be arrested and crucified.

[4 : 58] And the disciples sensed something of that impending event. And they were surely worried and fearful of what lies ahead.

And so Jesus seeks to reassure them. Down in verse 28 we find Jesus saying, You heard me say, I am going away. And I am coming back to you.

If you love me you will be glad that I am going to the Father. For the Father is greater than I. And then he says, I have told you now before it happens. So that when it does happen you will believe. So throughout these chapters the claims and the promises of Jesus are all designed to encourage us. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Yes, Jesus is going to be taken from them. Yes, he's going to die on the cross. But don't worry, that's not the end. The disciples don't need to worry.

[6 : 04] He will conquer death. He will come back to them. Indeed, after that he will return to his Father in heaven. And prepare a place for them. And one day he will come back to take them there.

And what Jesus says to the disciples, he says to us. These words are for us also. With our trials and tribulations we face. We need to be encouraged.

That one day. If we are trusting Jesus. We will be with him in heaven. Verse 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God.

Trust also in me. My Father's house is 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. I will come back. And we look forward to that day when Jesus will one day return again.

[7 : 09] It's actually quite interesting how often Jesus speaks about his second coming. That day that still lies before us. Jesus claims, I will come back.

And then the second claim I would draw your attention to is, I am the way. Thomas now expresses something of the uncertainty of the disciples.

Verse 5. Lord, we don't know where you are going. So how can we know the way? And Jesus replies, verse 6. I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Now that claim, of course, upsets many. Many, particularly today, would argue that there are many roads to God. That we live in a multi-faith society.

But Jesus is crystal clear. He and he alone is the way to God. He is not a way. He is the way.

[8 : 17] And that, of course, resides in his identity. Jesus is, after all, the unique son of God. He's not just another religious teacher.

Another prophet who proclaimed great truths. He is himself God incarnate. God with us. And one of the key themes of John's gospel is to show us who Jesus is.

And if you think back to the first chapter, that's how John begins his gospel. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And then the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Talking of the birth of Jesus. The first chapter of John is actually fascinating in terms of the identity of Jesus. Because if you look at that first chapter, you'll see that Jesus is called God.

He's designated as the creator of all things. Without him, nothing was made that was made. We're told that he is the Lamb of God. We're told that he is the Messiah.

[9 : 25] We're told that he is a king. We're told that he is the Son of Man. And we're told that he is the Son of God. And all these titles and designations are there in that first chapter of John.

And it's because of who he is, that he is the unique way to God the Father. And Jesus makes this abundantly clear as we go on.

Philip now has a turn at asking a question, which brings us to a third claim. Verse 7, Jesus says, If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.

From now on, you do know him and have seen him. And Philip says, Lord, show us the Father. And that will be enough for you. And Jesus basically says, see me, see the Father.

Verse 9, 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.

[10 : 29] How can you say, show us the Father? Jesus and the Father are one. And Jesus has explicitly stated that.

And we noted that this morning looking at John chapter 10. John chapter 10, verse 30. Jesus says, quite starkly, I and the Father are one.

Now folk speculate endlessly about God. I've actually got a book in my shelves which is entitled, The God I Want. Where various prominent people write a chapter trying to work out what they think God should be like.

Well, we don't need to try and think what God should be like. God has told us what he is like. And he has told us what he is like in Jesus.

If you have seen me, says Jesus, you have seen the Father. And Jesus encourages the disciples to believe in him. Not only in the basis of what he says, what he claims.

[11:36] But in the basis of what he has been doing. Verse 11. 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 miracles themselves.

And there is actually quite an interesting passage back in John chapter 5. Where Jesus invites people to believe in him.

To trust in him. On the basis of different layers of evidence that he is setting before them. John chapter 5, verse 36. It says, I have testimony weightier than that of John.

And he is talking there of John the Baptist. Who has given testimony as to who Jesus is. For the works that the Father has given me to finish. The very works that I am doing.

Testify that the Father has sent me. The Father who sent me has himself testified. Concerning me. Obviously referring to the voice.

[12:37] Remember it is baptism. That this is my son. Then in John 5, Jesus goes on. You have never heard his voice. Nor seen his form. Nor does his word dwell in you.

For you do not believe the one he sent. He is talking there. To those who are refusing to believe in him. You study the scriptures diligently. Because you think that in them you have eternal life.

These are the scriptures that testify about me. And yet you refuse to come to me to have life. So Jesus there is appealing to layers of evidence for trusting in him.

The testimony of John the Baptist. The voice at his baptism. The works that he has been doing. The miracles. Stilling a raging sea.

Turning a little boy's lunch into food to feed 5,000. Healing and so on. The works that Jesus does. The miracles.

[13:39] So John the Baptist. The voice of the father. The miracles that he does. The testimony of scripture. All of which reminds us that faith is not some sort of irrational leap of faith.

As opponents of the Christian faith would often suggest. In fact as sometimes folk within the church would say. You need to take a leap of faith.

Well you don't need to take a leap of faith. Faith. Christian faith is based on a sufficient evidence. It's rooted in things that happened in space and time and history.

Because it's rooted in the life and the death and the teaching and the resurrection. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. Well as I say there are many strands to this marvelous chapter.

But these are some of the claims of Jesus. I will come back. I will lay down my life and death. But I will take my life up again.

[14:43] And I will come back to you. And one day I'm going to take my people back to heaven. Secondly I am the way, the truth and the life. Another way to God.

And I and the Father are one. See me. See the Father. In these verses we also. A couple of these claims of promises of Jesus.

And some of the claims are sort of also promises. I will come back. It's both a claim and a promise. A promise to reassure us. And it's intriguing to note just how often Jesus makes that particular promise. That one day he will come back again. One of the longest blocks in the Gospels is Matthew 24 and 25.

These two lengthy chapters are all about Jesus teaching concerning his return. A lot of the parables have to do with his coming back again.

[15:52] I will come back. A promise to reassure us as we look forward. And then the promise of many rooms. In my Father's house are many rooms.

And if it were not so would I have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. We can glide over that. But it's quite a thought isn't it. That Jesus is preparing a place in heaven for us.

If we're trusting in him. I am going there to prepare a place for you. Jesus promises us eternity. Because that's what is involved here.

And it's hugely significant. Jesus is saying that one day he will come back. And he will take us to be with him. And the Father in heaven. Yes one day we'll die physically.

But that's not the end. Our life will go on. And one day our body and our soul will be reunited. And the presence of the Lord. So Jesus promises to come back.

[16:57] He promises us that he's gone back to heaven to prepare a place for us. And then here and now he promises us the Holy Spirit. In this chapter from verse 15 on.

We have a lengthy section where Jesus promises us the Holy Spirit. He's going to return to the Father in heaven. But he's not going to abandon us to our own devices as it were.

He will send the third person of the Godhead to take up residence within us. To help us, to guide us, to comfort and encourage us. Verse 16. I will ask the Father and he will give you another counsellor to be with you forever.

Now I know you use the English Standard Version. I'm not sure what, I didn't check what verse variation is used there.

Different translations of the Bible use counsellor, teacher, comforter, advocate and so on. Because it's a Greek word that's actually difficult to translate.

[18:07] The Greek word is a word *parakletos*. Which literally means one who comes alongside another to help them. Well the translators didn't want to put down, I'm going to send you one who comes alongside another to help them.

So they put down comforter or advocate or teacher or counsellor. And well that's fair enough. The teacher comes alongside the student to help them to learn.

The advocate and the counsellor come alongside to advise and to guide. The comforter comes alongside to encourage when someone's feeling down.

And all that and more the Holy Spirit will do in our lives. Actually specifically this word in the Greek relates to someone who helps another who is in difficulty with the law.

Now we are all in difficulty with God's law. Because in some way or another we have broken it. And we are guilty.

[19:16] And the spirit is given to help us to understand the pardon and the forgiveness that is ours through the gospel. Now Jesus talks here in chapter 14 about the gift of the spirit.

And we note that. If you go on into chapter 16 you'll find that there's an even lengthier section. Where Jesus teaches about the coming of the Holy Spirit. To indwell the Christian.

The promise of enlightenment. And this ties to the spirit.

Verse 26. But the counsellor. Or the teacher. The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name. Will teach you. All things.

And will remind you of everything I have said to you. And so Jesus directs our attention to a key work of the spirit. He is the spirit of truth.

[20:16] Who would help us to understand the Bible. And as we come to scripture. Week by week. As we worship. Day by day. As we read his word. We need the spirit.

To help us. In our understanding. In our applying the word. To our lives. Now in the immediate context here.

Jesus is speaking to the disciples. And in this promise. We have one of the reasons. We can be confident. About the accuracy of scripture. If I were to ask you.

To write down. What the minister said here last week. What sort of. Record would you hand in to me. I am sure.

There might be a fascinating mix. Some fairly accurate. As to what. Your preacher said. Some perhaps. Wildly inaccurate.

[21:15] I have always been impressed. How people thought. I said something. When I said absolutely nothing. Of the sort. So what about the disciples.

Sitting down to write. Many years after. Jesus had returned to heaven. Sitting down to write. What he had said and done. How could it be accurate.

And we can. Confident it is accurate. Because Jesus specifically. Gave them the spirit. So that it would be. Verse 26.

The counselor. The Holy Spirit. Whom the father will send. In my name. Will teach you. All things. And will remind you. Of everything. I have said.

To you. Jesus is saying there. Now. Years from now. You are going to come. And sit down. To write a gospel. Don't worry.

[22 : 14] The spirit. Will remind you. Of what I said. So that you can. Put it down. Accurately. I suppose.

It is a slightly. Similar vein. That as we come. To read the scriptures. And scripture union. Used to have this. The head of the. Bible reading notes.

From Psalm 119. Open my eyes. That I may see. Wonderful things. In your law. Open my eyes. We ask. God the spirit. To open our eyes. To see wonderful things.

In his law. Enlightenment. And then. Peace. Peace. The chapter. Begins with. Encouragement. Not to be troubled. Well now.

We find. Christ's promise. Of peace. Verse 27. Peace. I leave with you. My peace. I give you. I do not give to you. As the world gives. Do not let your hearts.

[23 : 10] Be troubled. And do not. Be afraid. And here. We have this. Encouragement. Not to be troubled. Repeated. Now.

This of course. Isn't a peace. That means. He will keep us. From all the trials. And tribulations. Of life. Not a promise. That life will be easy. And free. From suffering. And sorrow. But a promise.

That in the midst. Of the trials. And tribulations. Of life. He will be with us. He will encourage us. He will strengthen us. He will give us. His peace.

As I have already referred. Jesus concludes his remarks. At the last supper. I have told you these things. So that in me.

You may have peace. In this world. You will have trouble. But take heart. I have overcome. The world. And so we see.

[24 : 05] Some of the claims. Of Jesus here. We see some of the promises. That he gives to us. But perhaps. We need also to note. That he sets commands. Before us. And there are essentially.

Two commands. Trust. And obey. Verse 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me.

Trust him. Because of who he is. Trust his promises. Trust his claims. It's interesting.

The number of times. Jesus calls people. Here in this chapter. To believe in him. To trust him.

Trust. And obey. And the call to obey.

Is in verse 15. 21. 23. Verse 15. If you love me. You will obey. What I command. What's the test of our love.

[25 : 04] For the Lord. It is our obedience. It is our obedience. It is our obedience. And it's interesting. How Jesus ties love and obedience. Together here.

It's so easy to say that. We love the Lord. To sing of our love for the Lord. But the proof of that love. Lies in our obedience. Verse 21.

Whoever has my commands. And obeys them. He is the one who loves me. He who loves me. Will be loved by my father. And I too will love him. And show myself to him.

If anyone loves me. He will obey. My teaching. Trust. And obey. In this wonderful chapter.

Then we find. God in all his fullness. His father. Son. And Holy Spirit. We are told of a father. Who loves us. And gives his son for us. Jesus himself.

[26 : 02] Tells us. How he is going to give his life. On the cross for us. The Holy Spirit. Is promised to us. To comfort. And instruct us. We have noted then.

Some of these claims. I will come. Come back. I am the way. The unique way. To the father. To see him.

Is to see God. And we have considered his promises. That promise to come back. The promise that he is preparing somewhere for us. In heaven. The promise of the Holy Spirit.

The promise of enlightenment. Through his word. The promise of peace. And then that call. To trust. And obey. And then.

If we walk in the light. Of the spirit. We will surely know. Something of. A wonderful communion. With the father. And the son. Verse 23. Jesus replied.

[27 : 02] If anyone loves me. He will obey my teaching. My father will love him. And we will come to him. And make our home. With them. And make our home. Not just the spirit.

That if you like. Is in residence. Within our hearts. As Christians. Jesus here says. We. That is. He and the father. Will come. And make our home.

With him. These. Chapters. We have. Just really looked. In chapter 14. In a very. Sketchy outline. But these chapters. Are written.

To encourage us. And. The concluding. Remarks of Jesus. I think. To sum it all up. I have told you. These things. So that in me.

You may have peace. In this world. You'll have trouble. But take heart. I have overcome. The world. Let's pray.

[27 : 58] Father. We thank you. That as Jesus. Faced up. To. The events. That were to transpire. In such a short space. Of time. He took.

Time out. As it were. To. Encourage his disciples. To. Assure them. That. He would come back. To assure them. That he was. Going to prepare.

A place for them. We thank you. For these wonderful. Promises. And we pray. That we. May respond. With trust. And with obedience.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen.