

Jesus - The Way, Truth, Life

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[0 : 00] Let's turn for a little to the chapter that we read in John's Gospel, John chapter 14, the well-known words of verse 6.

This, of course, was in response to Thomas' question, where Thomas said to him in verse 5, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. You know, supposing Jesus had said little else in his life, bar this statement here, we would have enough to rest our souls for life and to lay down our head in death if we accepted all that this statement actually says.

We've been looking recently at some of the great statements that Jesus made. We saw that Jesus, we saw him as the bread of life. We saw him as a door, we saw him as a good shepherd.

And we saw him as the light of the world. Now he tells us that he is the way, the truth and the life.

These are powerful, positive statements. And it baffles me how people talk about Christianity in negative terms.

[1 : 24] People say that Christianity is negative. I cannot think of any more positive statements than for somebody to come and to say, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life, I am the door, I am the light of the world, I am the bread of life.

These are the most powerful, positive statements. And it's madness to say, ah, Christianity is negative. Because our great shepherd, our great head, his whole message is one of light, of hope and of life.

And it's obviously, we know it's amazing, wonderful how Jesus came into this world. And how he has prepared a way for us.

And how he has told us all these great things. That he is the way, that he is the truth and he is the life. And this is real life. And if by any chance today, you're still resisting Jesus, I'd have to ask you, why?

What have you got that's better than Jesus? What have you got that is giving you a foundation in life that is greater than Jesus?

[2 : 42] I would like to know. And so would others. Because there is nobody greater than Jesus. There is no way better than the way that Jesus is going.

Because he alone is the way. He alone knows that way. Now Jesus has just been speaking to the disciples about heaven. And he's talking about going to prepare a place for them.

And of course the way that he prepared that place was by going to the cross. No cross, no crown. No cross, no heaven. But you know the wonderful thing is that Jesus tells us that he goes to prepare a place for us.

And isn't that great to know? That in heaven today, if you're a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, your place is there. In 1 Peter it tells us that we have an inheritance that is incorruptible.

That it is undefiled. And that it fadeth not away. And it's reserved in heaven for you. Your name's there. Your space is there.

[3 : 48] You know when you go to a wedding? And you go to looking at the table and you say, oh there's my name. That's your seat. It's reserved for you. That's your place. And so it is in heaven.

Jesus by going to the cross has prepared the way and he has gone to heaven. And your place is already prepared.

Your place is already reserved. Meantime, Jesus is preparing you for the place that he has already prepared for you.

And so it's a wonderful thing. And that's why it's madness to reject Christianity. As I said, what have you got better than that?

Nothing. Nothing. So this is what Jesus is saying. And I'm so thankful that Thomas asked that question. Because the response of Thomas' question is, are these great words.

[4 : 46] Somebody wrote and said this, Without the way, there is no going. Without the truth, there is no knowing.

Without the life, there is no living. I was a great Dutch-German theologian from way back, 13th, 14th century.

A man, Thomas Akempis. And that's what he said. He wrote this book, The Imitation of Christ, which is one of the great classics. And he said this, Without the way, there is no going.

Without the truth, there is no knowing. And without the life, there is no living. And how true that is.

So Jesus says, I am the way.

And I suppose if you're going to summarize it, you're going to say this very simply. That the only way to the Father is through Christ Jesus. And if we're not on that way, we are lost.

[5 : 51] It's as simple as that, and as painful as that, and as disturbing as that. And I cannot think of anything worse than going through life, and at the end of life realize that you're lost.

To go through life and find that you've been going the wrong way all the time. Imagine. Imagine spending your whole life thinking you're going the right way, and at the end of the day discover you've gone the wrong way.

And Jesus is telling us that unless we are going with him, unless our lives are in him, we're lost. We're going the wrong way.

And that is why when we're talking to the children, how important it is that we base our lives upon God's word. Being lost is an awful thing.

You can have that, and I suppose before the days of sat-nav, and even as I said with sat-nav, if it goes wrong, you can find yourself going round and round and round in circles in a city. You can let it be an awful thing being lost out in the moors.

[6 : 53] That's why if people go hill walking or anything, they should always take a compass, take a map with them. And we've always got to remember that and always tell people there should be always a sense of where they're going, a route planned.

Because, for instance, in Skye, the black coolants, they have magnetic properties in them. And that's why the mountain rescue there will always warn people and say, your compass might not work.

Because of the magnetic properties that are in the rocks there, and it'll put the compass ski with, so it'll give you a false reading. And that's why there are so many accidents and tragedies in Skye, is because it's not called El Anahia for nothing.

Thick mists descend very quickly, and people can often get lost, and even their compass won't put them in the right direction. And in a thick mist, they get lost and fall. And you know, if we go through life in a thick mist, and we're looking at the wrong, we have the wrong compass, and we're getting the wrong directions, it's an awful thought that at the end, to discover that we're lost.

And that's why Jesus has come into this world. Jesus has come to make a way, and Jesus is the way, and Jesus is telling us this, the importance of walking with him.

[8 : 17] And so, this is what faith does. Faith accepts what the Lord says. Because maybe you're here today, and you say to yourself, you know, I can't understand this.

I'm hearing what you're saying, but I just don't accept it. But you see, that's where faith comes in. Because faith just believes, and accepts what God says.

Don't ask questions. You know, that's part of the problem. I'm not saying we don't ask questions. It's good to ask questions. And we live in a day, maybe we ask questions more than at any other stage in our lives.

It's a way people learn. But you know, you can question yourself into a lost eternity. Because people can have so many questions. But faith is a matter of accepting.

Don't spend your life question, question, question. Why, why, why? I don't understand. There's loads of things you'll never understand. The greatest saints in this world, there's lots of things you didn't understand.

[9 : 16] But they accept. That's what faith is. It's resting on. It is believing. It is trusting. And that's what we do with the Lord. We're trusting Him because it's His Word.

And as we say, there are loads of voices which are calling us in different directions. But Jesus has come to make this way.

And Jesus alone can know this way because He alone has traveled the way. He alone came from heaven. He alone went to the cross.

He alone has opened that door for us. He alone has made provision. He alone is the way. There isn't. There isn't another way. And you know, we live in a day where people say, you can't make statements like that.

Because you've got to be all-inclusive. Well, Jesus has given the most all-inclusive statement that there is. And He says, I'm there for everyone. Listen, this is His great invitation.

[10:23] He invites everybody. That's, you can't get more inclusive than that. You see the great invitations in the Bible. Whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Not great, in the end of Revelation, where He's giving to the Spirit and the bride say, come and whoever will, let him or her come and take the water of life freely.

Can't be more inclusive than that. But in the all-inclusiveness of His invitation, He's also saying, I am the way because I have come. Nobody else has come from heaven, down into this world, and done what Jesus has done and made the claims that Jesus has made.

He has a right to make these claims. Because He is the eternal Son of God. Nobody else can. And that is why He will say, there is no other way.

There is no other way to the Father. That's what He says. No one comes to the Father except through me. And I hope that there's nobody here today who's still trying to go on their own through life.

[11:38] Trying to figure it out themselves. Hoping that at the end of the day it will turn out okay. It won't. Unless you have Jesus. Unless your life is trusting in Jesus alone.

And so Jesus, as we say, is the one who has come and He's taken us. And you know, when a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ, there's a sense of homecoming.

Isn't there? There's a sense of, I've arrived. There's a sense of, all of a sudden you realize, I'm home.

My soul is at rest. Can you remember, maybe your experience was different. Can you remember the restlessness of your life? As you were searching for the truth, searching for peace, and you couldn't find it.

The restlessness. Then, when you came to faith in Jesus Christ, the peace. The restlessness gave way to rest.

[12:42] And it was real. And so there was this wonderful sense of, I've arrived. I'm home. There was almost a sense of the smile of heaven coming down on your soul.

This sense of, I belong. I'm home. This is who I belong to. And as we said, the moment that you come to faith in Jesus Christ, we've said that the place is already prepared for you.

And now the preparation for that place is now taking place. And whatever you're going through in life, that's part of the preparation. Because God says, I have to fit you for coming home.

I've taken you home into a place of rest in this world, in me. But I've got to get you ready for your eternal rest. And so God is at work.

And all the knocks, and all the blows, and all these things that are happening in your life, it's all part of the preparation. I say, you know, there's the person with the chisel.

[13:53] There's the stonemason. I remember reading about this man. He was a stonemason, or a sculptor of some kind.

He was going to make a lion. And he was chipping away. And somebody said to him, how do you make a lion? Out of the stone and with your chisel.

Oh, he says, I chop away anything that doesn't look like a lion. And that was so true. He was just chopping away until he began to get the features and everything off the lion. And in a sense, that's what God is doing with us.

He's chipping away everything that doesn't look like Christ in our life. Because the great purpose is to conform us, make us into the image of Christ.

So all these other things. And you know, if you get something chipped away, physically, it's sore. And so it is spiritually. Often, these things, they can be tough in life.

[14:54] But if we could see the glory, if we could see the end result, if we could see, then we would know this was, it was worth every chip and everything that happened to us in this world.

And so, all the time, the Lord is at work. And then, following on from this, Jesus then says, I am the truth.

First of all, he says, I am the way. Now he says, I am the truth. And as we said, these are awesome claims that he is making. Now we live in a world that is full of deception, full of untruths, full of lies, full of uncertainties.

So often we say, I don't know who to believe. Sometimes we hear that in the world, in the political world. And people say, I don't really know who to believe. We hear it in so many different ways. There's a lot of people today who say, there's no such thing as absolute truth. Well, I would hate to live my life if for one moment I thought there was such a thing as no absolute truth.

[16:05] It would be like trying to live your life on moving sand. And that would be difficult.

Because it would be kind of all over the place. And that's part of what's wrong with society today.

That's why there is so much discontent. That is why so many people are unsettled. Because they're trying to live their lives on a foundation that is always moving. There's no stability, no security, no authority, no absolutes.

Well, there are. We can't change these absolutes. But God, God is absolute. Absolute truth. And Jesus is absolute truth. And how thankful that is so.

And so we find that Jesus says, I am the truth. Now, in the gospel, Jesus conveys, the word of God conveys so many truths.

And again, it comes back to the faith of believing them. But people, people will say, well, do you just listen to what God's word? Because he's telling you things by way of information.

[17:12] But it's far more than by way of information. When Jesus says, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. Yes, that's information. But it's far more than information.

When Jesus tells us that, there is conviction with it as well. In other words, it goes down deep into our heart. And you know, there's something about this conviction through the work of the Spirit that conveys and says, this is right.

You know, sometimes you can, say for instance, you're in a town or in a city and you're lost in the car and you stop someone and you say, you know, I'm trying to, I really don't know where to go here.

I'm trying to get to such and such a place. And they'll start giving you directions and they say, oh, right, you go down, you go down this road there and then you turn, turn, or is it turn right?

Is it turn left? And you're saying to yourself, they haven't a clue. They're trying to give me directions but they've no idea themselves. And sometimes that's what's happening in life, that there are so many people that are telling you, this is, this is the truth, I've got the truth here, this is the right way, or this is the way, this is, this is a, but Jesus says, no.

[18:31] Jesus says, I am. It's not just, I'm telling you the truth, but I am the truth. That's why we're saying Jesus is unique. Because as we said earlier, nobody else has ever come from heaven into this world.

Come from the Father. Come into this world and prepared a way to get us back to the Father. That is, that is, that is so unique.

Christianity is absolutely unique. Can you think of anything else in this world that is comparable to that? That anybody else in this world has made a claim similar to that?

And yet people dismiss Christianity. People say, I don't believe that. Well, as we often said it, as C.S. Lewis said, the claims of Jesus are only three possibilities.

That either he was mad, or he was bad, or he was exactly who he said he was and is.

[19:38] And that's, that's the alternatives. That either somebody who is making the claims, they're either, they're preposterous claims if they weren't true.

And this person is, you would say, that's a bad person who would make claims like that if it wasn't true. Or else somebody who was deranged if it wasn't true.

or else it is true. And if it's true, and we believe 100% it's true, then that means that we have the responsibility to fall down before Jesus and say, Lord, you have to be Lord of my life because there is no alternative.

And so Jesus is telling us, what I'm telling you is absolutely true. There is, there is nothing else. There is no other way. And you know, that's one of the wonderful things about preaching is that you're doing something that you are 100% convinced is true.

You know, you can have very gifted salesmen or saleswomen who might be selling particular products. The products might be brilliant, but maybe the products aren't that great.

[20 : 56] but they're still trying to sell it and sometimes people might be trying to sell something that they're not 100% convinced about. But the beauty about preaching is you're 100% convinced.

You know this is true. I know this is true. I know myself that as I look at myself, I know that I'm not altogether true. I know the corruption and the deceit in my own heart, the failures and failings that I am.

But I don't preach myself, I preach Jesus Christ and him crucified and of that I have total confidence and so does every other preacher who comes to preach total confidence this is the truth and you preach God's word nothing else.

This is the word of God. So you have this tremendous confidence in knowing this is the truth and as Jesus said of the truth, the truth will make you free.

And then finally just in our word life. We all want to live, of course we do, we want to live life to the fool to the man's. Well it's only Jesus that can enable us to do that. Only Jesus.

[22 : 03] You see God is the life of his people and without that life we cannot develop, we cannot grow. You see the moment we come to faith in Jesus Christ life begins.

Eternal life. And you see when we die we don't get another life. Some people think that when you become a Christian you get this kind of Christian life while you are here in this world and then when you die when you go to heaven you get another life.

No you don't. It's a one life. The Holy Spirit comes into your heart and you come when you come to accept when you are born again when you regenerated the seed the Holy Spirit comes into your heart and brings life because the Holy Spirit has come to live there.

And this is life eternal. And when you die death doesn't stop that. Death doesn't sever it. That life continues. But it's like it will explode as it were into the fullness of glory.

Here we see as it were through our glass darkly but there we will see face to face. That's as we were saying the homecoming will be complete. We had the start of the homecoming when we came to faith.

[23 : 18] But then we will have the glorious homecoming. When we come into his immediate presence. And this life that we have as we say it is forever.

Some people will say how do I know I'm a Christian? How do I know I have eternal life? Well in the very same way as a human knows that they have life. Because you begin to grow.

You begin to see. You begin to hear. You begin to understand. You begin to walk. You begin to talk. All these things that the Christian does.

You begin to see things and understand things that you didn't before. You begin to talk in a particular way in the sense that you talk as a spiritual edge to it.

You begin to walk the Christian walk. You begin to run. You begin to fight the Christian fight. The fight of faith. Still the same person.

[24 : 16] But there's been a change. There's new priorities. You see things differently. You begin to realize the things that are of utmost importance in this world.

So the great question that we have to ask ourselves today is this. Is Jesus today for you the way? Is he today for you the truth?

Is he today for you the life? because as I said who in this world has something greater to offer? Can you think of anybody in this world who has something greater to offer than Jesus? And if they haven't then why follow someone else or go in some other way when you have the offer of the greatest where the greatest is here offering himself to you.

Let us pray. Lord we pray that as we have been considering of Jesus there as a way the truth and the life we pray that Jesus may indeed be for us the way the truth and the life that each and every one of us will know personally the residing presence of Jesus through the Holy Spirit in our heart.

[25 : 40] Lord be with us we pray and we pray to bless a cup of tea coffee in the hall after we pray to bless everybody here today we ask Lord to take us home safely and to do us good and cleanse us we pray from our every sin in Jesus name we ask it Amen Let us conclude our service singing from Psalm 27 and we sing verses 1 to 4 I should have mentioned that I'm away on a break for the next week I forgot to say that earlier on so I'll be back a week on Monday I'm away God willing tomorrow Psalm 27 verses 1 to 4 on page 37 this is in Sing Psalms and the tune is Denfield Psalm 27 Sing Psalms verses 1 to 4 page 31

The Lord's my Saviour and my light who will make me dismayed the Lord's the stronghold of my life why should I be afraid when evildoers threaten me to take my life away my adversaries and my foes

will stumble in that day although an army hems me in my heart will feel no dread though war against me should arise I will lift up my head one thing I'll plead before the Lord and this I'll seek always that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days one to four the tuner's den field Psalm 27 the Lord's my Saviour and my light who will make me dismayed the Lord's stronghold of my life why should I be afraid when evil doers threaten me to take my life away my love and my voice will stumble in that day although

I need and need my heart will feel no dead though war against me should arise I will lift up my head one thing I'll lead before the Lord and listen and seek away that I may come within those hands and dwell there all my days I allow me

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