

**To Exalt Christ;
To Equip, Encourage, Exhort, Edify God's Elect**

**Preparing For Departure: Called to Trust
John 14:1-14**

In John 13 Jesus set the disciples an example of what it means to be a servant by washing their feet. They could duplicate that example. But they could not duplicate his supreme example by serving sacrificially in the giving of his life as a ransom for many for their sin. Jesus carried out the plan and will of God which had been given in eternity past.

God chose Christ before the creation of the world to be the Saviour of those he had also chosen before the creation of the world to be saved by him. The disciples were called to serve, not as Christ did, but to serve as messengers, preachers, teachers, witnesses, writers of what was/is the gospel; that which constitutes the fullness of Easter. By example Christ was preparing them for his departure, his ultimate call to serve. This morning preparation continues as they are called to trust.

Commands – John 14:1

Jesus begins by giving them commands. In verse 1 Jesus commanded – *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”* Those 3 commands, 3 imperatives are not suggestions. They are meant to catch their attention and direct them immediately to the source of all comfort, peace and help for troubled hearts. He directs them to the first and second persons of the Trinity and by implication and association the third person of the Trinity as well. When trouble comes it is a triune team of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Do not be troubled. They are called to trust. Other translations say, believe, which means to *“be persuaded, place confidence in, rely upon.”* Up until Christ came into their lives they had trusted, they had believed and relied upon God but with the coming of Christ they have been made aware of the Holy Spirit. Each gospel writer testifies to the Holy Spirit's involvement in Christ's conception, birth and baptism. Their theological and doctrinal knowledge has been expanded with the Advent of Christ. So too has their faith. It now includes the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus commands them, calls them to trust, to believe, to have faith in them.

In 2 Corinthians 1 Paul speaks of the sufferings, the hardships, the great pressure, the trouble that he and those with him experienced so that they despaired even of life. In verse 9 he wrote – *‘Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.’* To rely on God is to have faith in the one who raises the dead. Jesus relied on that same God who was also his Father, to raise him on Easter Sunday morning from the dead, thus affirming the efficacy of his death. He did raise him. Therefore, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”* That is a clarion call to trust.

Covenant – John 14:2-4

With trust and faith comes a covenant which includes a promise. In verses 2-4 Jesus speaks of going to his Father’s house and he tells his worried disciples – *“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.”* There is his covenant. It is a unilateral agreement that Jesus has made with the promise of them/us being with him. It is not a house built by hands but one that is built by God. Jesus is heaven bound and so are they/we by obeying the command, the call to trust in the triune God.

Confusion – John 14:5

Jesus told them in verse 4 that they knew the way to where he was going. But Thomas said – *“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”*

Thomas’ question addressed his confusion but it also indicates his belief, his trust in Jesus’ covenantal promise so his faith, his trust in turn fuels his mind to want to know the way. The Christian faith is a thinking faith. It makes us ask the tough questions so that we can know. The Bereans in Acts 17 studied the Scriptures each day to see if what Paul preached was true and it was. Blind belief is just that. God gave us eyes to see physically but also a mind to see in order to understand and grow in knowledge, to know what we believe and why we believe it. It is why we need in-depth Bible study corporately and/or individually along with book by book, verse by verse expository preaching of the word. Thomas was confused. He wanted clarity, so he asked and Jesus answered him.

Clarification – John 14:6-14

Jesus answered him by revealing who he is. The great theologian of the 20th and 21st c., Dr. RC Sproul, was asked many times – *“What is the greatest need in the church today?”* His reply was always the same – *“It is to know who God is.”*

John Calvin, began his 1559 *Institutes of the Christian Religion* with just that emphasis. He wrote – **“Our wisdom, insofar as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists of the knowledge of God and of ourselves. [M]an never attains a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God....”** IOW know who God is first.

Thomas is about to acquire some of that knowledge first hand. He is going to contemplate the face of God in Jesus Christ and by it he will know not only who Jesus is but consequently who God is. Thomas asked – “how can we know the way?” Jesus replied without hesitation, equivocation, qualification or reservation – “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Thomas asked a direct question. He got a direct, answer. It is an exclusive answer. There is only one way to God, and consequently to faith, to salvation, to heaven, to life eternal and that is through Jesus Christ and him alone, ***Solus Christus***. In Acts 4:12 Peter made this same declaration based on the firsthand knowledge he had of Jesus – “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” When we accept the full authority of Scripture and its power to change lives through the preaching of the gospel, which was brought to fruition on Good Friday and Easter Sunday then we must endorse John 14:6. There is no other way, truth, life or name for salvation.

Why should we have such assurance and boldness to endorse 14:6 and 4:12? It is because no one else ever did what Jesus did. He humbled himself, became obedient to death, even death on a cross for our sin and those of the disciples.

In that endorsement we find peace for hearts that are troubled. That endorsement reflects our faith, our trust in the one who is also the truth and the life. Notice that in the triad of the way and the truth and the life that truth is in the middle. It is therefore central to who God is and who Jesus and who the Holy Spirit is. They are all of the same substance and share the same attributes. What one is or has the other does as well.

In verse 7 Jesus told Thomas, “If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” Thomas, the other disciples, and ourselves have stepped over a threshold to know he is the way that leads us to know God. to truth and life eternal. It testifies to the sufficiency of Christ and him alone. The Reformers got it right with the 5 solas of the 16th c

Reformation – *Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone, Christ alone, to the glory of God alone.* Thomas and Philip and the others that night in the upper room got a command, a covenant, confusion clarified that would prepare them for his departure. They were called to trust and trust they did. So too are we. Amen. *Soli Deo Gloria.*