
I. **Aim for Change**

By the end of the lesson, we will: EXPLORE the encounter between Jesus the disciples in the upper room, APPRECIATE the difficulty the disciples had in understanding Jesus, and CELEBRATE the promise of Jesus to prepare a place for His followers and hear and respond to their prayers.

**Unifying Principle—Finding One’s Way.** Some people say there are many ways to salvation and that everyone attains it by following his or her own way. What are we to make of such claims? Just as Proverbs contrasted the way of wisdom with false ways, Jesus proclaimed that He is the way, the truth, and the life through whom His disciples would come to know and understand God the Father.

**Key Verse**—“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6, KJV).

**People Places and Times**

**Philip.** He was one of the Twelve Disciples whom Jesus called directly. Philip, along with Peter and Andrew, was from Bethsaida of Galilee (John 1:44).

**Thomas.** Also called Didymus, or “the twin,” Thomas was one of Jesus’ twelve disciples. He is the one who said that he would not believe that Jesus was resurrected from the dead unless he could touch the nail prints in Jesus’ hands and the wound from the spear in His side.

II. **Background**

During His ministry, Jesus repeatedly prepared the disciples for His approaching suffering and death. Jesus tells the disciples that one of them would betray Him (John 13:21). At the same time, He also informs the disciples that He will soon be leaving them and that they could not follow Him (v. Jn. 13:33). Undoubtedly, these things disturbed the disciples.

**The Lesson At-A-Glance...**

1. Jesus, the Way to Comfort (John 14:1–4)
2. Jesus, the Way to the Father (vv. 5–11)
3. Jesus, the Way to Powerful Living (vv. 12–14)

Notes:
III.  In Depth with More Light on the Text

Joh 14:1  ¶ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In the context of this passage, Jesus ushers in faith as a comfort to relieve the anxious disciples, much like a welcome medicine for a nagging illness or parental reassurance about a child’s nightmare. In this scenario, the disciples’ concern was well-founded, since they had just learned that one would betray Jesus, that one would deny Him, and that they couldn’t go with Him wherever it was He was going (John 13).

Joh 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Our reward will not be to live in luxury, either here or in the afterlife. The word translated “mansion” is simply “dwelling place” in Greek (mone, moe-NAY). Jesus reassures them that He would not deceive them by promising them something that was so grand but wasn’t the truth.

Joh 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

In John 14:3, the phrase “I will come” is a common, single word in Greek (erchomai, ER-khoe-my) and refers to individuals arriving or returning, appearing or making an appearance. The emphasis is on “again,” just as being born is common but being born “again” is noteworthy (John 3:3). Of note, this is one of the first mentions of the 2nd coming of Christ.

Joh 14:4  ¶ And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Jesus is trying to tell or remind His disciples that they already know in their hearts where He is going and how to get there. This would be one of the things of which the coming Comforter would continue to remind them after Jesus’ departure, and about which He would continue to teach them (cf. John 14:26).

➢ Two things come out of this verse, Jesus is speaking of the Place and Path; and the way is to follow Jesus…
➢ Context: John 13:36-7, there is an immediate shift in the text from v.35.

Joh 14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

This statement by Thomas is another “iteration” of what Peter began to ask of the Lord in John 13:36-7.

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Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

It is easy to put the emphasis on this verses’ key words “way” (Gk. hodos, hoe-DOS), “truth” (Gk. aletheia, ah-LAY-thay-ah), and “life” (Gk. zoe, dzo-AY). Yet this statement was in response to Thomas’ question—what is the way to where He is going? The emphasis is on the words “I am” at the beginning of the sentence. Either one of these words could have been understood and left out by Greek grammar rules, but Jesus emphatically uses both the personal pronoun (ego, eh-GO, “I”) and a simple present form of the verb “to be” (eimi, ay-ME, “am”). These words are further emphasized by their placement at the beginning of the sentence. Jesus
would not have failed to get His disciples’ attention with this *allusion to the divine name*, with so much grammatical emphasis.

In Greek, the word “way” is *hodos* and refers to a traveler’s way or to a way of thinking, feeling, and deciding. In Greek, the word “truth” is *aletheia* and is used in a variety of contexts, including references to personal excellence and to truth pertaining to God. In the Greek, the word “life” in this context is *zoe*, the meaning of which includes the state of living, every living soul, and the absolute fullness of life. Like the words “way” and “truth,” “life” is a common word used well over 100 times in the New Testament—until Jesus says He is the life. The latter part of 14:6 is what is known as an “exceptive statement,” meaning “all and only.” All may come to the Father through Jesus, and only those coming through Jesus may come to the Father.

*Joh 14:7* If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

When people see you, whom do they see?

*Joh 14:8* Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Jesus’ exasperation is showing as He peppers Philip with a series of questions, quoting his own question back to him. Jesus stresses His unity with the Father once again. When we read these passages consecutively, we see the patient Teacher gently guiding His future apostles, who soon will faithfully carry out His Great Commission to the four corners of the world— that is, once they get it straight who He is.

*Joh 14:11* Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.

What was stated as a question in verse 10 is now affirmed indicatively. There should be no more disbelief: Jesus is in fact in the Father and the Father in Him. The full implications of this, however, are hard to grasp. It is no wonder that the early church continued to struggle with the essence of Jesus’ words. One can hardly imagine how He could have communicated His deity any more clearly than He did.

*Joh 14:12* ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

The “greater works” to which Jesus refers (v. 12) would not be possible if He stayed with them, but were only possible because He was leaving them. Jesus’ words are not only about the *fantastic advances in ministry* that they were going to accomplish when the Holy Spirit came.

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Joh 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Jesus would deny these particular men nothing. He left in their charge the greatest task ever given to any human, and He knew what they would need in order to accomplish the work He had given them. When we abide in Christ, His power flows through us to accomplish His purposes in the world. The Holy Spirit is the agent, sent by the resurrected Christ, and we are the vehicles through which He flows. It is not our confession or religious invocation that garners the forces of heaven to do our bidding. It is only when our hearts are surrendered, when we are living in and for God, when our will is attuned to His, and when our prayers are for His purposes, in His name, and for His glory that He will answer, even beyond all we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Joh 14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

The reiteration of John 14:13 must be heard in the context of the whole passage. This kind of repetitive reassurance is the type one gives a loved one who needs comfort. We tend to say things more than once when we want someone to believe us, especially if there is an impending separation. Yes, when our hearts become one heart like that of the disciples (v. 1), when our faith is sure and steady, when our will is surrendered to Christ, and when our purpose is completely for God’s glory, most certainly we, too, can believe like the disciples that our prayers will be answered.

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Liberating Lesson & Application for Activation—see Sunday School book

We cannot get to God, but God has come to us. Our God loved us enough to come to us in the flesh. As Christians, we can boldly claim that our way, our truth, our life is not a principle, place, or pursuit but a person, Jesus Christ. Jesus invites us to seek Him for wisdom and guidance. For us, His way is always the best way. Take time this week to pray, read Scripture, and seek God for His wisdom concerning your day or more important decisions. He is faithful to give wisdom if we posture our hearts to obey His directions.

Vocabulary Words You Should Know...

A. Way (v. 6) hodos (Gk.)—A traveler’s way or to a way of thinking, feeling, and deciding
B. Truth (v. 6) aletheia (Gk.)—Not falsehood, whether pertaining to God or earthly matters; personal excellence
C. Life (v. 6) zoe (Gk.)—State of living, every living soul, and the absolute fullness of life