

sermon - I am the way, the truth, and the life - John 14:6

**14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”**

The most recent statistics reveal 18% of Americans, 40 million adults, deal with some type of anxiety disorder. That’s nearly 1 in 5. That’s remarkable. But anxiety is not something new, though there may be things in our culture that lead us into anxiety, but anxiety is a part of the human condition, especially after the Fall. Anxiety comes on us because we land our trust in something other than God. The Scriptures address anxiety head on, anxiety being closely related to fear, the most common command in the NT is do not be afraid. But its not just saying do not be afraid and that’s it, no the other half of the equation is believe in God.

Maybe this morning you are wrestling with some form of anxiety. Now, there are anxieties of all different kinds, and I’m not making light of anything that you may be going through, but there are surface, trivial anxieties, and there are deep, eternal anxieties. What I want to address this morning is the ultimate of all possible anxieties, that is this, are you going to spend eternity with God, all peace and provision and satisfaction and joy, and glory take place, or are you going to spend eternity away from God, with all pain, suffering, and weeping.

There’s no greater problem for you to address, because there’s no other issue that produces such a difference of outcome for you.

And in fact, it is in dealing with this ultimate anxiety, that the other anxieties begin to fade away.

This morning we see the disciples on the brink of great anxiety, and Jesus is going to address them, and in addressing them, He will be addressing us this morning.

### **The Problem: Getting To The Father**

**14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled.**

Why are they troubled? It’s more like a command Jesus is saying, it’s strong here. More like, “Do not be overcome by the situation.” What situation? There’s two aspects here. 1: Jesus has just been telling them that He is leaving. Here He is, this Messiah who has finally come, He’s here, He’s been walking with the disciples. You can just imagine, as they have been following Jesus, eating with him, drinking with him, sharing ministry with him, watching all these miracles, their faith in Him has been growing, joy is beginning to well up in their souls. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords is their best friend and constant companion. How could it get any better? I mean what could happen?

Well, Jesus turns to them and says, **“33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’”**

Just as you said to the Jews. Wasn’t that an awful rebuke, wasn’t that eternal separation from the Father? Jesus, is this good news or bad news, I don’t understand what you are doing. Why would you have to leave. You are the best thing that’s ever happened to me! What do you mean I can’t come with you. I’m going to seek for you and I won’t be able to find you. Jesus, this worries me. I’m building my life on you. Don’t do that.

Then Jesus goes on, **“34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

It's like Jesus is moving into discussing how things need to be after He leaves, they need to love one another, and that's how they are going to know Jesus. It's not going to be, we saw you with Jesus, it's going to be, we saw you loving each other. Jesus isn't around.

I love Peter's response, cause it's like he didn't even hear any of this talk about what they are supposed to "do", this loving each other, he's still stuck at, "Where I'm going you cannot come."

That's cause for anxiety, that's cause to have your world shaken up a little bit. Where Jesus is going you cannot come. You don't want to hear those words, nobody wants to hear those words.

Jesus gives a little bit comfort...

**v:36, "Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." 37 Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."**

The first real cause for anxiety here is a separation anxiety. All these unknowns.

But there's also a second cause for anxiety,

**38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."**

That's cause for anxiety. Peter here is with full conviction. That means, everything in his being is saying, I believe in Jesus, and I am willing to do whatever it takes to show my devotion and worship to Him, even if that means laying down my own life.

He's not fabricating this conviction, he's not lying. It's real.

And you got all these disciples watching this go down. And they know Peter, Peter's a leader. And right now he's got that invisible, unconquerable passion and confidence. That's the type of dude you want to be like. But what does Jesus tell him, Peter, watch out, be careful with statements like that, three times before the rooster crows you are going to deny me." Pride before the fall right? That's a good word for us this morning.

"By the grace of God we stand"

If you are the other disciples seeing this, and Peter's going to deny Jesus three times, they are thinking, what's going to happen to us.

Jesus had also just got finished prophesying that one of the disciples would betray Jesus, and Satan enters into him, and he runs out.

I mean this is a moment. I'd be anxious. I'd be a little bit concerned. Of the twelve, one of them will betray Jesus, Judas, another will deny Him three times, Peter. I mean who's next? And on top of that Jesus is leaving and He's told us we can't come with Him.

What's your anxiety provoking situation this morning? Maybe our hearts are in fear. What's most important is if we are going to be with the Father. That's central to this passage, and central to the Bible. But that doesn't mean your other anxieties are not valid, whether it's financial, relational, work, and number of things.

The Bible holds out to us the clear prescription to not be overcome with trouble.

**The Prescription: Believe in Jesus**

**14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”**

This is how you are to handle your anxiety, this troubling situation, you are to believe in God and believe also in me, Jesus says.”

I love how Jesus lasers in this prescription, where it focuses. On belief in a person. Not a program. Not a religious exercise. Not on good deeds. On a person. Our temptation is always to locate salvation outside the person of Jesus, whether in ourselves or in some.

He says, v.4, “you know the way,” they respond, no we don’t know the way. Yes you do, no we don’t, oh yes you do.” They are thinking in wrong terms, in religious performance, some sort of journey they can take, maybe a physical way. Thomas , “we don’t know where you are going? Can you type it in my GPS real quick? I need the coordinates.”

If you typed in The Father in google maps, you wouldn’t get a path, you’d get a person.

Jesus responds with a most radical statement, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” You want to get the Father, there’s one way, and one way alone, and that is through me, Jesus is saying. It’s through me. I am the way. The path is me, believing in me, going through me.

You can’t get there by camel or car, not by religious performance or ethnic right, not by status nor by being sincere, you only get there through Jesus.

(When I was in the Phillipines a few years back, our team took a break from ministry and to go visit one of the tourist attractions, which were these caves. And there was actually water that flowed through these caves. As we started, I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t a little bit anxious. You begin wading into this water as you enter into these caves of pitch black darkness, with walls on either side of you. We had our headlamps, which gave us a little bit of comfort. But I mean our guides, i’m not even sure if they spoke english. There were times when you couldn’t touch the bottom, the roof of the cave is a little bit too close for comfort. I mean, when’s the last time it rained. This water was moving too. And what if it just started raining right now. Anyways, we make it through this dark, winding cave, and we are right at the end. The only problem was, there was no way out. As far as we saw, it was a dead end.

That’s when the guide motioned to us, that we had to follow the water under the rock to get out. We had to go under water, under a rock, for who knows how long, and then hope come up out of the creek. Are you kidding me?

No, it was no joke. At this stage in the game, there was no going back either, there was one way out of that cave back into the land of the living, and it was through going down in that water.

And there is only one way for us, as sinners, to get back into the land of the living, into the presence of the glory of the Father, and that is through Jesus. If you want the Father, you have to go through Jesus. Buddha will not do. Ghandi will not do. Confuscious will not do. Joseph Smith will not do. Muhammed will not do.

No philosopher or teacher or counselor or preacher will do.

Church attendance will not do. Reading your Bible will not do, getting baptized will not do, signing a pledge card will not do. Religious performance of any kind, will not do. Not even following Jesus example will do, it has to be through Jesus.

### **The price of the prescription**

We can't miss this, because it's the price that makes the prescription work.

What's this Jesus going to prepare a place for you, talk? Is He getting His Bob vella on? going to be running by Lowes, is He in heaven building a place for us?

No, this preparation is the cross. That's where He's going to prepare a place. He's saying, "I'm going to die as the means by which I prepare a place for you. I'm dying to go be with the Father, and when I die, I will be securing a room for you in my Father's house."

You see this salvation is not cheap. You don't get to the Father easily. It cost something. The beauty of the gospel is it didn't cost you anything, and it cost Jesus, the Son of God, everything.

We have to understand that this is not merely a human death. Jesus is God in the flesh, dying. That's the only way this works.

**8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.**

A Jesus that is not Lord is not a Jesus that's capable of offering anything of value. A Jesus that did not rise from the dead, is a Jesus that didn't purchase anything for you. We can't domesticate Jesus, because if we do we take salvation out of the equation.

He's not merely a moral teacher or another prophet to give us good advice, He is the way, the truth, and the life, in Him, in His person, in His blood, His death and resurrection. It's not the words that come out of His mouth that save us, it's the blood that comes out of His body, shed for forgiveness of sins that save us. He's not just a teacher, though He is that, He is the True Teacher, but if that's all He is to you, than non one can be saved.

You have to know and believe in this Jesus, Lord and Savior, Jesus, the only way, truth, and life, Jesus. If you are still ranking Him along at all in the same ball park with any other human, you haven't understood. Jesus is super exalted above every name that is named.

Listen to Thomas Kempis nail this truth home...

*I am the way to God: I did not come  
To light a path, to blaze a trail, that you  
May simply follow in my tracks, pursue  
My shadow like a prize that's cheaply won.  
My life reveals the life of God, the sum  
Of all he is and does. So how can you,  
The sons of night, look on me and construe  
My way as just the road for you to run?  
My path takes in Gethsemane, the Cross,  
And stark rejection draped in agony.*

*My way to God embraces utmost loss:  
Your way to God is not my way, but me.  
 Each other path is dismal swamp, or fraud.  
 I stand alone: I am the way to God.*

*I am the truth of God: I do not claim  
 I merely speak the truth, as though I were  
 A prophet (but no more), a channel, stirred  
 By Spirit power, of purely human frame.  
 Nor do I say that when I take his name  
 Upon my lips, my teaching cannot err  
 (Though that is true). A mere interpreter  
 I'm not, some prophet-voice of special fame.  
 In timeless reaches of eternity  
 The Triune God decided that the Word,  
 The self-expression of the Deity,  
 Would put on flesh and blood—and thus be heard.  
The claim to speak the truth good men applaud.  
 I claim much more: I am the truth of God.*

*I am the resurrection life. It's not  
 As though I merely bear life-giving drink,  
 A magic elixir which (men might think)  
 Is cheap because though lavish it's not bought.  
 The price of life was fully paid: I fought  
 With death and black despair; for I'm the drink  
 Of life. The resurrection morn's the link  
 Between my death and endless life long sought.  
 I am the firstborn from the dead; and by  
 My triumph, I deal death to lusts and hates.  
 My life I now extend to men, and ply  
 Them with the draught that ever satiates.  
 Religion's page with empty boasts is rife:  
 But I'm the resurrection and the life.<sup>5</sup>*

So this prescription comes with a price, but Jesus also speaks of a promise.

### **The Promise of God's presence and power**

**“2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.”**

Landing their belief in Jesus, He's saying, Don't worry, don't be overcome with anxiety and trouble. I will be coming back to get you. I'm leaving, but I am coming back and I will take you to be with myself, with the Father. Do not be anxious, do not be afraid. You will be with me in eternal glory. This idea of having a place in the Father's house, it's the idea of dwelling with God, being completely taken care of and being infinitely satisfied in God for all eternity.

What is the coming back to get you? When does that happen? Some think that this may refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit, but most Bible scholars would agree that this is talking about the Second Coming of Jesus, as

in the advent, when He comes back to set up His Kingdom. Which means, Jesus is still waiting for the right time to come get His people to bring them to Himself.

But what's interesting, is you might say, okay, well, that's potentially really far off. What about the now? Like saying, okay, great we got a meal coming, but I'm starving now!

Jesus answers that, it's pretty cool how He does this, this whole dwelling with God thing.

**v.16, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." Then goes on, v.18, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you."**

**v.23, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."**

There's two ways this works. 1. I will come back and get you at the appointed time of the Kingdom, when I gather all the saints, resurrected into a new heavens and new earth. And then 2. When you believe in me, I will send the Holy Spirit to dwell in you now. You can believe in eternal presence, but you can begin enjoying our relationship now.

There is life today, life abundant. Church be empowered, be comforted, God is here with you and in you. He has said He will never leave you or forsake you.

### **The Promise of God's Power**

The last piece I want to touch on is the power. V.12, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father."

This is tied to His present presence through the Holy Spirit which only comes to us via Jesus going to the Father, and to His sovereign Lordship, But He makes a clear statement about this power, once He's in us, we WILL do greater works. Woah! Greater works than Jesus!

What exactly does this mean, greater?

Well bible scholars aren't too sure. The two best interpretations are 1. greater in geography and number. Jesus was in one place at one time. Once He is ascended, and sends His Spirit, through the Church He's all over the world. And 2. Greater, because Jesus is at the Father, they are greater works because of they are works done in the new age, greater as in, in a greater age, after Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.

The works here are christian works. Acts that portray the new age that is upon us, good works that reveal Christ as Lord and Savior, Acts of love, humility, sacrifice, mercy, compassion, gentleness, patience, acts of service.

If you have ever thought that getting saved is just to put you in a waiting pattern until Jesus comes back, you are wrong. Being saved ushers you into vibrant, flourishing, ministry. The desire of God is for everyone to have this, it is not for some spiritual elite, for a select few. Ministry is for ALL of God's people. Every one of you are key players in God's redemptive work unfolding in the universe. You skills, relationship, influence, resources, leveraged for the glory of God. Are you bearing this fruit?

He then ties this fruit to prayer, if you ask anything in my name, I will give it to you that the Father may be glorified in the Son.