

John Chapter 14 v 1 - 14

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[0 : 00] Your Bibles, if you have one, at hand to John 14, the Gospel of John chapter 14, where we read just a few moments ago, verses 1 to 14.

I'm sure many of you have been away on holiday. I know that many of you have over the summer, and some of you are looking forward to future holidays later in the year. Perhaps you've been camping, or perhaps you've been staying in a hotel.

Of course, if you do have the luxury of staying in a hotel, you can choose certain levels of accommodation according to your budget to enjoy when you're on holiday in a hotel.

If you're a little bit strapped for cash, then you may only be able to pay for the room, for room only, and have to sort out your own meals. If you're a little bit more money, you may have gone for bed and breakfast as well.

And if you want to push the boat out a little bit more than that, you may have gone for dinner, bed, and breakfast. But if you really are thinking, I'm going to spoil myself completely, money is no object, then you could have gone for an all-inclusive holiday.

[1 : 14] That means, of course, not only do you have your room and your bed, but you also have all your meals included in the price. And also, anything else you might like in the hotel. If you want to have drinks at the bar, you can have those.

You want ice cream around the pool. You don't have to pay any more. It's all-inclusive. It's all-included. There's nothing more to pay. That's a rather poor illustration of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is an all-inclusive saviour.

He's an all-inclusive saviour. He's the one in whom are found all the riches, all the treasures of God's grace. Paul puts it this way in Colossians 1.19.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him. And later in that same book, chapter 2, verse 3, Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

And really, those descriptions, and there's others as well in the New Testament, are summed up, I suppose, as well in what Jesus says here in verse 6, where he has this threefold title.

[2 : 21] He ascribes to himself, I am the way and the truth and the life. In other words, everything that you could possibly need. Those three nouns sum up.

Everything that is in Christ Jesus for the believer, for the Christian. Everything that God's grace has for us as those who've trusted in Christ.

I am, in one sense, the all-inclusive saviour. Now, again, many of us like special offers.

We like buy one, get one free deals, and there's many of those about to entice us to spend our money. It may be in a restaurant. Buy one meal, get another one free.

It may be on credit cards, offering 0% interest. All-unbalanced transfers. Shops seem to no longer just have a New Year's sales, but it's sales all year round.

[3 : 15] But, of course, with every one of those sort of offers, there's certain restrictions. There's a little bit of small print, we might say, on the terms or conditions.

Yes, you can have buy one, get one free, but only at certain times of the day and certain days of the week. Yes, you can have 0% on your credit card transfer, but there's also a fee for transferring your credit from one card to another.

And so it goes on. But with the Lord Jesus Christ, there are no small print or terms and conditions attached to the promises and the claims that he makes when he is the all-inclusive saviour.

You won't hear clever words or spin from Jesus. You won't hear him being economical with the truth about what he has to say about himself. What he says is clear and means exactly what he says.

Nothing less. In fact, probably much, much more than we could ever imagine. I'm the way, the truth, and the life. And in this saying, in this declaration, in this statement that Jesus makes, he is really

setting himself apart from every other religious leader, every other religion, every other philosophy, every other thought in the world concerning God.

[4 : 35] He declares all of those things null and void by saying, I am the way, the truth, and the life. His words are unequivocal. There's no other God and no other way to God except through the Lord Jesus Christ.

There's no other route to heaven except through him. There's no other person, no other system, whatever it may be called, or however many people may accept it and follow it, that can bring any person into the presence, into the favour of the one and only God, than Jesus Christ, his Son. And that's very clear as well, isn't it? Not just by the statement, I am the way, the truth, and the life, but how he qualifies what he means. No one, he says, comes to the Father except through me. There's an exclusivity that Jesus is saying here. He's not one amongst many. He's not one possible. Some years ago, we went to London and had a few days sightseeing, and we travelled, of course, on the underground, the Tube.

It's the best way to get around London. Don't drive, whatever you do, if you've ever been there. We wanted to see Tower Bridge, one of the great landmarks, I suppose. And so we took, I think it was the district line.

[5 : 50] If you know London and the Tube better than me, then you'll know all these things. But we could have easily gone on the circle line, or we could have gone on another line as well, because one thing with the Tube, it all sort of mixes together and goes together, so you can take any line that you like, and ultimately, sooner or later, you're going to be able to get to your destination.

The majority of people today in our society, in the West particularly, would say that getting to God is like going on the London Underground.

It doesn't really matter which line you take, which way you take, they're all going to get you there in the end. To think like that, and to believe that to be true, is to be in complete disagreement with the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's to call him a liar, basically. It's to say that he's a deceiver. He's a false teacher. It's to say that he is someone who has set himself up above all others with no right to do so.

See, like all the previous five I am sayings, Jesus makes very clear his uniqueness as person and of his work.

[7 : 06] I am thee. There is that qualification. He's not, I am a, or I am an. I'm not a light of the world and there are other lights.

I am not a way, or a truth, or a life, but I am the way, the truth, the life. I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world.

I am the resurrection and the life. So when it is the light of the world, Jesus means apart from him, this world is in darkness and all people are in darkness apart from the light that he brings.

Every teaching is darkness and that gives no light. When he says, I am the bread of life, he means that in him alone is spiritual nourishment, is food for our souls, is life-giving bread.

When he says, I am the resurrection and life, he means apart from him, all humanity is powerless to overcome death. And so on. But you see, when Jesus says these things, I am the way and the truth and the life, he's not saying them that he might destroy faith.

[8 : 15] Yes, that he might clear away false beliefs, but rather that his words are spoken to encourage. His words are spoken to build up our faith. His words are spoken to give us comfort, joy, blessing and delight.

Whoever we are, whatever situations we find ourselves in. And that's very obvious, I think, because of the context. As I said, in the NIV, it gives us a helpful little subtitle.

It's not scripture, of course, but it's a subtitle, Jesus Comforts His Disciples. The words of Jesus here are words of great encouragement and comfort. We know that their hearts are troubled because he says, do not let your hearts be troubled.

They were upset, they were anxious, they were worried. What were they worried about? Well, because Jesus had made clear to them, this is his farewell speech. This is the last time that he will be with them, speaking to them in this way.

He's told them that he's going to be with them for a little while longer and then he's going to leave them. And he says, where I'm going, you cannot come. They'd been with Jesus three years, they'd followed him.

[9 : 22] He'd been their mentor, he'd been their master, he'd been everything to them, their whole world. And now he was leaving and they've got lots of questions, lots of doubts, lots of fears.

Peter says, in verse 37 of chapter 13, Lord, why can't I follow you now? As we've seen, a question comes up from Thomas, Lord, we don't know where you're going.

Philip as well has concerns. Lord, show us the Father and to answer these concerns, to answer these anxieties, to bring them peace of mind and heart, Jesus clearly and plainly teaches as he does.

And for us, this six, I am saying, is of immense encouragement, immense comfort for all of us today because all of us struggle. All of us have doubts.

All of us have fears about the future. All of us find ourselves facing circumstances at times which say, Lord, why can't we? Or where are we?

[10 : 25] Or what is happening? And so we do learn so much from Jesus' words here to help us in our faith. For those of us who have faith in Christ, to encourage us in faith, those who don't have that true and saving faith in Christ, that we should.

If we put our faith in anything else, anyone else, any system, any religion, dear friends, let us see that all of them are wasted, useless, empty, and leave them behind and come to the one faith which is Jesus Christ, the person, not a system, not a set of rules, not a religion, but the one who is the way, the truth, and the life.

So let's look briefly at these three descriptions as we did with the children, not quite as briefly as them, I'm sorry to say, but we're going to think about these things. So I am the way. I am the way. Whenever we start a journey, we ask ourselves, where is this way taking us? Whenever we come to a road junction, we say, well, where is that way taking us? Where will we end?

When you don't start a journey, beginning a journey, say, I don't care where I'm going. Well, you might do, you might just want to go out for a Sunday drive. There's lots of Sunday drivers, I think, around Whitby, driving at 30 mile an hour in a 60 mile zone.

[11 : 45] None of you, of course. But ultimately, when you're going on a journey, you say, this way is going to take me to that destination. Well, Jesus says, I am the way, and I take you to the destination which is God the Father.

No one comes to the Father except through me. He's said that plainly before, verse 2. In my Father's house are many rooms, I am going there to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I'll come back and take you with me to that place.

Everyone for whom Jesus died, everyone who has put their faith and trust in him, everyone who has been born again of the Spirit of God cannot fail to arrive at their destination in heaven when they die or when Christ returns.

That's the guarantee that Jesus is declaring when he says, I am the way. I am the way. There's the guarantee cast iron, solid, concrete foundation that says, those who follow me will get to the destination, and that is to be with God their Father.

But this wonderful thing is this, is that as we unpack the words of Jesus, he's not only talking about death, he's not only talking about heaven, he's talking about not just this glorious hope for the future, but he's telling us this, that if we have faith in him and put our trust in him, we can experience daily what it is to come to God.

[13 : 14] that's why in his first letter, John says this in chapter 1, we have fellowship with God the Father.

We have it already. And Romans chapter 8 teaches us that we pray to God in a very intimate and personal way. Abba, Father. Jesus himself taught us to pray daily.

Our Father. Prayer is coming close to God. Our prayer is coming through Jesus into a conversation, into a relationship with God in his presence.

Reading the Bible is hearing the voice of God speaking to our hearts and minds personally. This is the great joy of the Christian life. This is the great blessing of the Christian life.

Not that we have been saved from hell and we're going to heaven. Marvelous though that is. But every moment of our day, of our day, so every moment of our lives in this world, we are constantly able to come to God the Father and live in his presence.

[14 : 15] We're no longer separated from God because of our sin. That's what sin does. It separates us. It casts us. It pushes us away from God. But even now, we live in the very nearness and the presence of God.

Here's how Paul describes something of it in Ephesians. It says, Now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ, through his death in our behalf. chapter 18, of that same chapter, For through him, we both have access to the Father by one spirit. Yes, we do long for heaven.

We do long for that day when we shall cast aside all the things that spoil life, all the sin, all the weaknesses. But don't we realize that we can know and do know God's presence and fellowship now, today.

That's our privilege. That's what Jesus says later on in that chapter. My Father, if anyone loves me and will obey my teaching, that's becoming a Christian, to love Christ and to obey what he calls us to, to repent and believe.

[15:21] My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him. That's what it means becoming a Christian. Not setting, again, not following a set of beliefs or rules or stipulations, not accepting something that's true in our minds, but coming into a relationship, an intimate relationship with God where God comes and makes his home with us and we are placed in Christ and he is placed in us.

See, Jesus didn't just teach us the way or show us the way, but he is the way. It's in him, through him, by him, that we are brought into God's presence to enjoy fellowship daily.

Secondly, Jesus says, I am the truth. In one sense, it's because he is the truth that he is the way or he is the only way because he is the only truth.

Yes, there are other ways, but they're not the truth ways. That's why they're empty ways and false ways and dark ways. Just as all of humanity, because of our sin, has been separated from God and isolated from God without Christ, so likewise, all people are ignorant of God without Jesus Christ, the truth.

He is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about God. God. Whatever anybody has to say about God, whatever their thinking or philosophy, whatever their thoughts about God, if they're not in keeping with what Jesus Christ has said and not what he's revealed himself to be, then they are lies because he's the truth.

[17:08] One of the great cons, as it were, of our day and generation is this, that you can believe whatever you like about God and it's just as good as what anybody else believes.

It's truth for you, but it's not truth for you. It's your thinking, it's your ideas, it's your imagination, but it's not truth.

For me to stand up and say, I believe that a dog has six legs, doesn't make it true, unless you happen to have a dog with six legs, which I don't think you do.

Truth is only truth because it's true. Not because you think it's true, not because you believe it's true, not because you want it to be true. Jesus Christ is the truth.

God cannot be known in any other way apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, because he's not merely one who teaches the truth, though he truly did, not because he just shows us the truth, which he did by his life.

[18:13] His life is the outliving of the truth of God. When we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus Christ and his life and we see God of justice and holiness, of compassion, of mercy, yes, of wrath against sin.

But he is truth. He's truth personified because he is God personified. He's not telling us second hand what God is like. He's not passing on a few teachings that he's heard or learned himself, but because he is God in person.

Earlier in the gospel of John itself, it begins with that wonderful prologue, that wonderful declaration about the person of Jesus. We're told in verse 14, the word, that's God, that's Christ rather, became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

We've seen his glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the Father full of grace and truth. Later on, verse 18, no one's ever seen God, but God, the one and only, who is at the Father's side has made him known.

Jesus is truth. So when poor old Thomas here asks, sorry, not Thomas, Philip rather, in verse 8, asks, Lord, show us the Father, Jesus explains, look, you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

[19:28] You've seen me, you've seen God. And the evidence and the reality of Jesus, to back up his claims, if I can put it that way, so that we can be certain and sure that he truly is God living amongst us, he says, look at the miracles, look at the evidence.

It's one of the things we've got to say to people nowadays. One of the things we've got to stand up for in the truth is say, where's the evidence? Where's the evidence that this person is a prophet of God?

What's the evidence that this religion brings us to God? Where's the evidence that this philosophy is the truth? There's no evidence. There's no proof apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, he is the truth. Again, that's great encouragement for us, dear friends, because the adventure of the Christian life is enjoying the very presence of God and knowing his presence and walking in his presence and enjoying fellowship with him all the time.

But part of that glorious experience is that we grow to know more and more about God. We learn more and more of his character, more and more of his nature, more and more of his grace.

[20 : 35] Peter, at the end of his second letter, says, but grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Who here can say, I've reached the zenith of knowing everything about God?

None of us. Who can say, I've even begun to learn anything about God? We've just skimmed the surface, haven't we? When we think about how much we know about the Lord Jesus Christ now, we're just those pond skaters over a great and vast and deep sea.

But that's the joy of the Christian life. There's more to be found out. Please, dear friends, don't ever get to that plateau place in the Christian life. And I know that we do get to it.

Don't ever get to that place where you're in the foothills of the Himalayas and you're just sort of, well, I'm quite happy here. I don't really need to go up higher to get to the top. Yes, press on. This is Paul, isn't it?

In Philippians. I press on. What does he press on? He presses on that he might know. He says this.

[21 : 41] I want to know Christ, the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death. He says again, verse 12, not that I've already obtained all this, but we've already become perfect.

I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Is that your desire? Is that something of your heart? Is that how you pray when you come to God?

Is that how you come to the Bible with that same earnest hunger saying, Lord, I want to know you more and I want to know you better? Or are you just quite happy with the scraps from the table? How many of us are happy with just second best Christian living? When Jesus is on the way and the truth. Lovely little devotional book Charles Swindoll wrote called Intimacy with the Almighty. It's not about learning doctrine. It's not about learning teachings, theologies. It's about learning Jesus and loving Jesus.

[22 : 51] Because of that, we come to the third and final. I am the way and the truth and the life. What's the greatest obstacle to anybody becoming a Christian?

What's the greatest obstacle to somebody coming to God? Is it that they don't know the way or is it that they don't know the truth? Even if people are presented with the way and the truth as they are often, that still does not bring them to God.

We are unable to come to God because we lack that one thing which is essential to life and that is spiritual life. Men and women are dead in their trespasses and sins.

That's what the Bible declares in Ephesians chapter 2. Men and women cannot come to God. Why? Because sinners deaden them, deaden their minds, deaden their hearts, deaden their souls towards God.

Ephesians 2, as for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. That's what it's done. It's robbed humanity of spiritual life. But when we come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, when we come to him, he is the one who gives us life.

[24 : 01] Life. He gives us that divine life. He is the source of life. He says himself in John chapter 5, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.

That's the single most important difference between a nominal Christian and a real Christian. A nominal Christian might know things, may even in their minds, believe things to be true, do things perhaps that a Christian does.

But a real Christian is somebody who has received and been given the very spiritual life of Christ within their souls. They have become a new creation, says the Bible.

Jesus says they've been born again. They have been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life. For in that Ephesians 2 passage, that's what Paul goes on to say.

Because of God's great love for us, God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions.

[25 : 09] It's by grace you've been saved. Life has come where there is death so that we see things, hear things, understand things, live the life that God wanted us to live.

And the wonderful thing that Jesus is talking about when he says, I am the life, the impartor of that life, it's not like the life in one sense that Frankenstein's corpse received.

I prefer the 1930s version of Frankenstein, it's great. Boris Karloff. But anyway, that's another thing. But anyway, when Dr. Frankenstein wants to raise this corpse to life, he wheels him up as it were to the roof when the thunderstorms so that lightning strikes the body and brings it to life.

Being a Christian is not simply about receiving a lightning strike to give us life, to get the heart going again. It's receiving life daily, constantly, that supply, that's going to come out when we get to the very seventh of Jesus' I am sayings.

He says, I am the vine. Those who abide in me are connected with me. Yes, it's eternal life. Yes, it's everlasting life in the nearness of God, in the room that Jesus has prepared for us.

[26 : 20] But it begins now. We're not those people who live for tomorrow. We're not those people who simply live for what's to come. In one sense we do, but also we live now.

We live now in the life of Christ. We live now enjoying the truth of God. We live now following and walking in the way of God. He is Jesus, the all-inclusive Savior.

Everything we'll ever need, he'll supply. Everything that we ever want, he has at his disposal to give. Everything that we can ever ask for is found in him.

Have you received this all-inclusive Savior? Is he yours? Are you following in his ways? Are you enjoying that daily nearness and presence of God?

Are you receiving the truth that he has to reveal about God and delighting in it and hungering for more of it? And is he living in you and through you?

[27 : 29] Are you receiving from him the supply of all your needs? Here's how Paul closes his letter to the Philippians. My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches.

That's his heavenly riches. That's all the riches of heaven itself in Christ Jesus. Nowhere else. Just there. And that's where we need to go.

And now to him who's able to do increasingly more than all we ask or imagine according to his power that is at work in us.

To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout every generation today and forevermore. Amen.