

JESUS THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

John 13:36-4:6/#theheartofJesus

"Do not let your hearts be distressed. You believe in God; believe also in me." (John 14:1)

What's the number one command in all of Scripture?

In over 150 verses, more than any other command by far, God tells His beloved children to not be afraid, to fear not, to not let our hearts be troubled.

Unlike any other emotion, fear paralyzes us. It robs us of our strength and confidence. Fear has the power to sway, distort and distract our human hearts like nothing else in the world. We can rage with anger, we can weep in sadness, but what in the world do we do with our fear?

With the uncertainties, pain and confusion of life around every corner, it is a guarantee that fear will try to be our constant companion. In the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus talks about giving us peace. He leaves us with peace; He gives us His peace, a peace we can't find in this world.

Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in Jesus -- the way, the truth and the life.

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later." ³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you!" ³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? I tell you the solemn truth, the rooster will not crow until you have denied me three times!" (John 13:36-38)

Fear and anxiety are rapidly building in the disciples and we hear their fearful hearts through their questions: 1) Peter: "Lord, where are you going?" (13:36), 2) Thomas: "How do we know the way you are going" (14:5) and 3) Phillip: "Show us the Father." (14:8).

Peter still is envisioning a physical battle (Matt. 16:22) and doesn't realize this is a spiritual battle (Matt 16:23-24). Peter still draws the sword when Jesus is arrested (Matt 26:52). Peter says, "I'll follow you! I want to follow you! I'll lay down my life for you!" Peter doesn't know what he is saying. Jesus says, "Will you, Peter?" You can picture the soft, sad smile of the Son of God. Oh Peter, you will deny me three times. Matthew tells us that all the disciples fall away (Matt 26:31). Jesus is surrounded by all his friends in this moment, but in a few hours He will suffer alone.

"Do not let your hearts be distressed. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² There are many dwelling places in my Father's house. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going away to make ready a place for you. ³ And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (John 14:1-5)

The term *tarasso* (John 11:33, 12:27, 13:21) is a present imperative, where Jesus is saying, "Stop being troubled". Trust Me, and when you trust Me, you trust the Father.

Luke 9 describes Jesus and His disciples walking through a village. Someone from the village shouts, "I will follow you wherever you go!" Jesus says to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Luke 9:57-58) During most of Jesus' ministry with the disciples, they were camping in some challenging circumstances. What Jesus is promising His disciples is a dramatic improvement.

Some think Jesus is talking about his power to walk someone through death or maybe the second coming, but there is good evidence here this might be talking about the rapture (1 Thes. 4:13). Whatever it is, the focus of the end time events isn't the dwelling itself, but Christ coming again and His promise is that we will be with Him for all eternity. Jesus is our alpha and omega. He is our Moses who takes us out of Egypt and He is our Joshua who takes us into the Promised Land.

⁶ *Jesus replied, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)*

Many believe that this statement is the height of arrogance. How dare the Apostle John, or the church or anyone else put such words into Jesus' mouth? The insistence that Jesus says this has done untold damage around the world! It is true – Jesus' statement is narrow and exclusive, but it is inclusive and broad in its offer to everyone who believes (Gal 3:28-29, John 3:16).

To really believe that God or the divine is really not knowable is the way of our world. The prevailing themes of our culture proclaim that neither Jesus nor Buddha nor Moses nor Krishna can give us direct access to God. It's not just the Gospel of John, but the whole New Testament, the whole Bible that insists that the one true and living God, the creator, is the God of Israel and that the God of Israel has acted decisively within history to bring Israel's story to its proper conclusion to rescue all of humanity in the person of Jesus Christ.

This is not an issue of personal opinion and preferences. Try to refute the claims of Christ and Christianity, but don't say it is one of many paths to some nebulous God.

The Way	The Truth	The Life
It's not that Jesus just knows the way -- He is the way. God does not allow men to earn their way out of their condemnation, because it is impossible. In Acts 4, before all the Jewish leaders, Peter proclaims, "There is salvation in no one else. One name will save and only one name under heaven and that is the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 4:12).	All truth has its source in Christ. Paul says in Christ are "hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3). Paul was so convinced of this that He said I am a one hit wonder, I have one message. My one and only message, "Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2).	All life was created by Jesus. In Him was life and this life was the light of mankind (John 1:3-4). All things were created through Christ and for Christ and all things are held together in him (Col 1:16-17).

Jesus doesn't want us to be afraid!

In the Upper Room we don't find an arrogant Jesus proclaiming He is the way, the truth and the life. Instead we find the Son of God humble, compassionate and full of love. Jesus weeps at his friend's tomb; He washes His disciples' feet; His objective is to give us peace and take away fear.

Over 150 times in Scripture, God says: I DON'T WANT YOU TO BE AFRAID!

- The Psalmist proclaims, the LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Ps. 27:1)
- Joshua says, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go." (1:9)
- God says in Isaiah, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine... Fear not, for I *am* with you; Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." (Isa 43:1, 41:10)
- Moses says, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." (Deut. 31:6)
- Paul says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind... For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" (2Ti 1:7, Rom. 8:15)

A person once said that "fear is the heartbeat of the powerless". Nothing could be further from the truth for Christians.

Jesus says: "*Do not let your hearts be distressed. You believe in God; believe also in me . . . I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" (John 14:1, 6)