

# Is Jesus The Way? (John 14:1-31)

Preached By Aaron Youngren on July 27th, 2007

## 1. Is Jesus the only way to the Father? (14:1-7)

Jesus knows that the deepest eternal pleasure for His disciples (and for you and me) would be to be in the presence of God. It is to this deepest hope both of their historical culture and of they themselves in that moment that Jesus lovingly speaks. Most people in the western context have no conception of an everlasting emotional, sensual, intellectual ecstasy that could come simply from being with a person infinitely greater than oneself.

The average Jew would have known what it would mean to be eternally in the presence of God the Father, at least from a certain standpoint. Even though it is obvious that they don't understand the true nature of God the Father, the disciples would have known that to be with God the Father was the ultimate pleasure, especially after being taught by Jesus for three years about him. True Christianity fundamentally hangs on this truth.

And so, for Jesus to claim that he was *the* way to the Father was certainly extraordinary, in light of Jewish tradition

## 2. The Way to the Father is knowing and loving Jesus for who He is (14:8-11)

The burden of being misunderstood and maybe betrayed as a result of godliness is a heavy one for Christian leaders, and an almost unthinkable heavy if you are *the* Christian leader, Christ himself.

Jesus came down from a glorious community where He was regarded by all creatures as the ultimate being. He left His throne, where His glory was plain as sight. While He was on the earth, His motivations and His character and even His intelligence were continually questioned.

- By His mother and brothers, his family
- By His critics who called Him a bastard, a liar, a drunkard, and a heretic
- By His betrayer, Judas, a man He shared countless meals, stories, and journeys with
- By his best friends
- For being lazy in a boat on a lake when there was a storm
- By Philip for leading a whole group of people to a hill without any food
- By Peter, who rebuked Jesus for going to the cross

Knowing fully that He was about to die a hideous, untimely death, and that each and every second with his friends was absolutely precious, Jesus' character and intelligence was again and again questioned by His disciples. Though Jesus submits His very life to them as proof of His divinity, the disciples still do not believe.

The problem for the unbeliever really isn't that He cannot find the true God, it is that He cannot love the God who He finds sitting next to Him at the dinner table.

## 3. Loving Jesus is impossible for the natural man

The disciples' questions come from their fallen, natural minds and hearts. (Psalm 53:2-3) In our natural hearts, we are in rebellion against God. Unless we love Jesus for who he really is we will never see the Father.

Who is Jesus? Jesus is the untamed God who created the heavens and the earth. Since He is God, and the ways of God transcend our ways, and we are sinful, can we say that to the natural man He is an uncontrollable being. As C.S. Lewis writes of Aslan in *The Chronicles Of Narnia*, "He is not a tame lion."

Those who want God to bring an absence of conflict are asked by Jesus to make war on sin and confront lies? Those who want God to bring a sense of self-worth or be freed from an addiction will find themselves asked to humiliate themselves. In short, the natural, fallen man will not find in Jesus the God he is looking for because the desires of the fallen heart are fallen.

Jesus isn't far off, guessing at what it is to be a human, leaving us alone but making us feel warm inside. Jesus knows you intimately, and speaks such shocking, penetrating truth into our lives that we will either love Him or hate Him.

This Jesus knows the difference between the widow's mite and the riches of the young ruler. This Jesus sees Zacheus in the tree. This Jesus knows us.

#### **4. Loving Jesus is the only thing that can change the natural man (14:10-13, 15, 21-24, 28-30)**

The rest of this passage primarily deals with a main concept that seems to make things worse for us.

Action, Jesus tells us, is proof of true Love. True love is revealed by action. Or, we might say True Unity is revealed by action. The things that are deeply desired and longed after will inform action and reaction. Jesus' love for the Father is revealed by His actions, and to these actions He appeals for proof of His divine unity with the Father.

Jesus also tells us that our actions reveal our love of Him and the Father. Your love for me, he tells the disciples who now question Him and who will for the most part abandon Him, will be the thing that changes your actions. The disciple's actions however are proving that they do not truly love Jesus for who He is.

This leaves the reader in a precarious place. If as natural men and women we cannot love Jesus, but love for Jesus is the only thing that will change what we do, what can be done?

#### **5: Loving Jesus is inescapable for the natural man whom Jesus loves. (14:16, 18-20, 25, 27)**

The Bible tells us that while we wanted anyone but Jesus to be God, while we were betraying and disowning him, while we judged and hated His character, Jesus humbled Himself and revealed the wonder and majesty and glory of God. In dying on the cross, Jesus made it possible for us to love Him.

Not only has Jesus made it possible for us to love Him, he has also made it easy for us to love Him by sending the Spirit of God to us. By dying on the Cross for us, Jesus has made a way, the way, to the Father. We *love* Jesus *by* the Spirit, and so *see* and *dwell with* the Father.

By Christ's blood, we become everlasting participants in the Divine community of perfect Love.