

I Am the Way, Truth, Life

3-18-18

#5 - I AM Series

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-4 Larry: Stir. Safe Families. Employment. Easter (times & Invites) Video/Camp A.
- B. Slide5 Children at Risk: *Camp Alandale* (a christian on-prof camp for children in the foster system, serving abused & neglected kids thru a mountain camp program) *Available after service*
- C. Slide6 Paul, Apostle of Christ: Reading Theater Murr. March 23-28. Tickets, paulmovie.com
- D. Slide7,8 Israel Update: Wed Night. Some pics. New things I learned. *Maybe you'll never get to experience an Israel trip. I'll do my best to take you there.*

II. Slide9 Intro: *I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*

- A. The bible records many *farewell addresses*: Moses (the **longest**, 33 ch's of Deut). Paul (**shortest** Acts20:13-35). Jesus (**deepest**, upper rm discourse, Jn.13-16).
 - 1. Jesus **teaches them** (13-16), **prays for them** (17), then **dies for them** (18,19).
- B. Background:
- C. **The Place**: the upper room. **When**: the eve before the crucifixion.
The Scene: Jesus was speaking of leaving them. **The Setting**: last supper. Judas just left.
 - 1. Pick up story in **13:31-14:6** [read].
- D. Slide10 I think the reply **Thomas** received from Jesus was *far beyond* what he expected.
 - 1. As Jesus *nears the end*, all He could speak of was **His Father** (53 x's).
 And **His Father's house**, where a *perfectly prepared mansion* awaits each of His sons/daughters.
- E. So why would their hearts be *troubled*?
 - 1. **Well**, what was He just talking about? **3 Things** that might trouble them:
 - [1] Jesus was going to leave them [2] Judas was going to betray Him
 - [3] Peter would deny Him. [**fears of death; betrayal; denial**] [if Pete can't make it, how can we?]
- F. These **fears** are often like **hurricanes** sweeping over a **serene harbor**. Anchored in the shallows, *our little boats of faith* are easily dashed against the rocks by **fear's** fury.
 - 1. **But then** came these words of **comfort** from Jesus...*Let not your heart be troubled.*
- G. **Our hearts** - **Not** the physical organ of life, **but** the **seat** of *spiritual life*, the **center** of **feeling** and **faith**, *the focus of the religious life.*

H. **Believe**/trust - They must *continue in* their **belief** in **Him**.

1. **Personal faith** in a **Personal God** brings **Personal strength**.

a) The verbs are *present imperatives*, with the sense of: *Keep on believing in God...keep on believing in Me*.

b) The disciples **had** trusted Jesus to put them in the boat of **salvation**; **now** they must trust Him to bring them **through the storm & safely to harbor**.

(1) **Every test** that blows our way can **either** fill our sails with **faith**, **or** *break our mast* from the strain of **unbelief**.

III. Slide11 **THE WAY**

A. Man has been on a quest to *find his way*. **But** Prov.14:12 says, *There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death*.

B. Rollo May said, *It is an old and ironic habit of human beings to run faster when we have lost our way*. [I always drive faster when I'm lost...*make up time*]

C. We are like **Lil Bo-Peep's sheep** who had lost there way...*leave em alone & they'll come home...Uh, no!*

1. **Slide12a Little Bo-Peep** has lost her sheep, and doesn't know where to find them; leave them alone, And they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them. *I don't think so, read on.*

2. **Slide12b Little Bo-Peep** fell fast asleep, and dreamt she heard them bleating; **but** when she awoke, she found it a joke, for they were still **a-fleeing**.

3. **Then** up she took her little crook, determined for to **find** them; she found them indeed, but it made her **heart bleed**, for they'd left their tails behind them.

4. It happened one day, as Bo-Peep did stray into a meadow hard by, there she espied their tails side by side, all hung on a tree to dry. (almost lost their rear ends)

5. She heaved a sigh and wiped her eye, and over the hillocks went rambling, and tried what she could, as a shepherdess should, *to tack each again to its lambkin*.

a) Like mankind, they weren't looking to **get back** after **losing there way**.

b) They had to have been sought out. Jesus said, *I came to seek & save those who were lost.*

D. Jesus we need *a way, a path, a road, a map, the coordinates...* to the Father.

E. In the 1st cent you know the title *Christian* was used as a Pejorative (used in derision).

1. Slide13 Maybe the best term was given & used in **Acts**, where they were called people of **The Way** (6x's, 9:2; 19:9,23; 22:4; 24:14,22). I believe the church received this *important title* from our passage in John. [followers of **The Way** show-er]
2. I've always liked, *Follower of Jesus* because it states *you're going somewhere & following someone.*

F. Slide14a E. Stanley Jones told of a **missionary** who lost his way in an **African jungle**. He could find no landmarks and the trail vanished. Eventually, stumbling on a small hut, he asked **the native** living there if he could **lead him out**. The native nodded. Rising to his feet, he walked directly into the bush. The missionary followed on his heels. For more than an hour they hacked their way through a dense wall of vines and grasses. The missionary became worried: "*Are you sure this is the way? I don't see any path.*" The African chuckled and said over his shoulder, Slide14b "Bwana, in this place there is no path. *I am the path.*"

1. We ask the same questions, don't we? We ask God, *Where are you taking me? Where's the path?* Oh, He may give us a hint or two, but that's all. If he did give us more, *would we understand?* No, like the traveler, we are unacquainted with this jungle. So rather than give us an answer, He gives us a far greater gift...Jesus gives us Himself. He says in Matthew 28:20, *I am with you always to the very end of the age.* We need that reminder.

G. Slide15a Jesus is the Way to the **Knowledge** of God

H. Jesus 1st reveals Himself as **The Way**, **not** one of several. [bodacious claim/bold & audacious]

1. Some say, *but He's a narrow way? Yes, but a sure way.*

I. Those who want to be w/**Jesus** hereafter, must be w/Him here. **And**, those who want to be w/**the Father** hereafter, can only gain this thru the Son. [No one else has a sure & certain path into the future]

J. Slide15b Jesus is the Way to the Favor of God

K. Jesus is the Divinely appointed way to reconciliation & harmony w/Him whose laws all men have broken.

1. (Pulpit) He removes obstacles otherwise insurmountable, bridges chasms otherwise impassable, makes of himself a path of **safety** and of **progress**, so that the passage to the Divine friendship becomes **possible** and **safe**.

L. Slide15c Jesus is the Way to the Fathers Presence & Home

M. This is the ultimate & 1st meaning attached to it. [see last phrase...*no one comes to the Father but by me*]

N. Just as He was about to go to the Father, He was to not go alone, **but** in due time they were to follow.

O. James M. Gray wrote, *Who could mind the journey when the road leads home?*

1. 11 hours + 5.5 hours on the plane from Israel Friday. **But who could mind the journey when the road leads to my own bed/pillow? I love Israel, but there's no place like home.**

P. How does this effect me?

1. 1st for the path unto Salvation. [Have you found this path yet?]
2. Slide15d Also, for our daily path.
 - a) *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* Ps.16:11
 - b) *Teach me Your way, O LORD, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.* Ps.27:11

IV. Slide16 THE TRUTH

A. This speaks of Jesus **utter reliability**. This isn't merely saying Jesus **proclaims** the Truth (of course He does that). Truth is a very large word...**but** all that it suggests is **amply comprehended** in Jesus.

B. The one way man can **learn God**...was by **God becoming man**.

1. In **Jesus**, **God** became quite personally **audible**.

a) He is *the way* to God, He is *thoroughly Reliable*, & He stands in relation to *Truth* as no one else could.

C. How do you find *comfort* in this Truth? Well, I have someone I can 100% rely on. Jesus is immutable/*unchanging*...what stability this brings.

1. Where did you used to try to **get truth** before you were saved? [news, TV, friends, church dogma]

V. Slide17 THE LIFE

A. Slide18 Robert Ingersol (the bold & brilliant agnostic) on his death bed uttered, *Life is a narrow veil between the cold & barren peaks of 2 eternity's. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, & the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry.*

1. What a sad & bleak outlook on life.

B. Interesting, Jesus in these *I Am statements* triples up *Life*. He revealed Himself as *the Bread of Life*, *the Res & the Life*, & now once more as *the Way, Truth, & the Life*.

C. Jesus' *life* is unique: He is self-existent like the Father. Jn.5:26 *The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son.*

1. He not only *is the life*, but *the source of Life* to others - Jn.3:16 *...everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

a) Jesus then becomes the *existence* of the believer, *In Him we live, move, & have our being.*

2. Slide19 *Christianity made people who were things into real men and women, more, into sons and daughters of God; it gave those who had no respect, their self-respect; it gave those who had no life, life eternal; it told men that, even if they did not matter to other men, they still mattered intensely to God. It told men who, in the eyes of the world were worthless, that, in the eyes of God they were worth the death of his only Son. Christianity was, and still is, the most uplifting thing in the whole universe.*

D. Slide20 *Thomas à Kempis* (a late Medieval Catholic Monk; 1380-1471) said it so beautifully, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no going; w/o the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which thou shouldst*

pursue; the truth which thou shouldst believe; the life which thou shouldst hope for."¹

E. Remember the story of the *Prodigal Son*? The boy was lost, ignorant & dead.

1. **Slide21a Lost** (Lk.15:24 for this my son...was lost and is found)
2. **Ignorant** (15:17 when he came to himself/his senses)
3. **Dead** (15:24 for this my son was dead and is alive again)
4. **So, he was lost, ignorant, & spiritually dead, but he came to the Father.**
 - a) **Slide21b** He was lost, but Christ is the Way.
 - b) He was ignorant, but Christ is the Truth.
 - c) He was dead(sp.), but Christ is the Life.
5. And he arrived at the fathers house when he repented & returned.

F. *Slide22 Bwana, in this place there is no path. I am the path.*

G. Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled...

1. Let not your heart be troubled...because there's a place for you in my Father's house.
2. Let not your heart be troubled...because Jesus prepared the place for you. He opened the way. He is the way.
3. Let not your heart be troubled...because Jesus himself is your dwelling place and He will come and take you to himself.
4. Let not your heart be troubled...because Jesus and the Father are one, so that if have Jesus you have the Father.
5. Let not your heart be troubled...because Jesus has come in the Holy Spirit. He is with you now, and will be with you always, not as an observer, but a Helper.

H. *Slide23 3 Questions:*

1. Do you need Jesus to show you **the way** into the boat of salvation **or** to bring you through a storm and safely into the harbor?

¹ Thomas à Kempis, "Imitation of Christ," iii., 56

2. If Jesus is utterly reliable when it comes to **truth**, what truth are you seeking after? What do you desire to know?
 3. Put this verse in your own words, *In Him we **live**, move, and have our being.*
- I. **End Story** - *Take me to the cross.* Officer Peter O'Hanlon was patrolling on night duty in northern England some years ago when he heard a quivering sob. Turning in the direction that it came from, he saw in the shadows a little boy sitting on a doorstep. With tears rolling down his cheeks, the child whimpered, "I'm lost. Take me home." The policeman began **naming street after street**, trying to help him remember where he lived. When that failed, he repeated the names of the **shops** and **hotels** in the area, but all without success. Then he remembered that in the center of the city was a well-known church with a large white cross towering high above the surrounding landscape. He pointed to it and said, "Do you live anywhere near that?" The boy's face immediately brightened. "Yes, take me to the cross. I can find my way home from there!" :)