

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life
John 14:1-7

Our life is a journey. It's a journey toward our God. It's a journey toward God's Kingdom. It's a journey toward our sanctification. That is why Jesus said, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).

In Israel's tradition, when a couple was engaged, the groom was supposed to prepare a place in his father's house so that he and his bride could live together. Then, the bridegroom took his bride to the new place, which means bringing her to himself for eternal union in marriage.

The Scripture is about our salvation. Our salvation is not only freedom and liberty from our sins; it is our union with God. It is a new and intimate relationship with our Lord.

"You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself" (Exodus 19:4).

That is why God told the Israelites through Moses how much He loved them and that their salvation was meant to be a union with their Creator. In that union, they could enjoy their lives, experience His blessings, and live in the fullness of His presence.

"For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God." (1 Peter 3:18)

Thomas, one of the disciples, asked a crucial question when Jesus said to them, "You know the way to the place where I am going" (John 14:4). As you might know, Thomas was a person who was very honest and straightforward when he was in doubt. So, he asked, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" I am so glad he asked the question, as we have a wonderful answer from Christ about who he is. Here is Jesus Christ's answer for all of us and for all the people in the world: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

I'd like to share with you three important lessons about this statement from Jesus.

From the beginning, God has revealed Himself as the only Way, the only God, and that there are no other gods.

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.” (Deuteronomy 6:4)
The Hebrew word for “hear” is **“Shema.”** It means to **“take to heart”** or **“obey.”**
Yahweh is our Elohim. Yahweh alone. Yahweh is the name of God who has a covenant relationship with His people. Elohim is a general noun for god. This word was used widely in other Gentile nations. Israel’s God is the only God for the world. It negates the existence of all other gods that the people in Egypt (Ra, Osiris, Isis, Horus, Hapi), Canaan (Baal, El, Asherah), Babylon (Marduk, Nebo), and other parts of the world worshiped.

The first command in the Ten Commandments is this: **“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me”** (Exodus 20:2-3).

It means that, because I have brought you to myself for an intimate relationship with me so that you can enjoy your life fully and abundantly, your first obedience must be to recognize me as your exclusive and only God. No other gods give you salvation and freedom.

Repeatedly in Isaiah, God unveils that He is the only God, and there are no other gods. **“I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides me there is no god.”** (Isaiah 45:5 cf. Isaiah 44:6 & 8). This statement was a prophecy given to the Israelites as they would return to Jerusalem after 70 years of exile in Babylon and Persia, where pagan idols were everywhere, and the Israelites were exposed to all kinds of idols.

Secondly, we will face criticism, misunderstanding, and even persecution because of Jesus’ statement, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

It is because this statement commands us not to compromise with other ways, other truths, and other lives that do not lead to God.

One of the criticisms we hear as Christians is this: Why are Christians myopic and narrow-minded, not accepting other religions and other voices? It is because of this “I Am” statement by Jesus. We, Christians, do not follow other ways, only the Way of Jesus Christ. We do not know the truth other than the Truth of Jesus Christ.

Let me quote Billy Graham on truth: **“Truth is timeless. Truth does not differ from one age to another, from one people to another, from geographical location to another. The great all-prevailing Truth stands for time and eternity ... Where there is Truth and error, there is always compromise. Within some churches, there is a movement to reshape the Christian message to make it more acceptable to man ... If our minds and hearts are not filled with God’s Truth, something else will take His place: cynicism, occultism, false religions and philosophies, drugs—the list is endless.”** (Billy Graham)

Last but not least, Jesus’s statement focuses on our Kingdom life through Jesus Christ.

In Revelation, we see those who follow the Way standing before the slain Lamb at the center of the Kingdom. At the center is the sacrificed Christ, symbolizing the Gospel of Christ, which is the Truth. People from every nation, tribe, and language worship the King—the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Rev. 5:6; 7:9, 17). This is the ultimate picture of the Kingdom of Heaven.

If we carefully read the word “life” in the New Testament, we can find these phrases: **Abundant Life (John 10:10), Newness of Life (Romans 6:4), True Life (1 John 5:20), Life of God (Ephesians 4:18), and Eternal Life (John 17:3)**. These are different expressions of our salvation, which is our union with God through Christ. In the Bible, our abundant, new, true, and eternal life is closely interwoven with our obedience to God.

“Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. **This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)**

The Book of Deuteronomy is Moses’ three sermons to the new generation who would go into the Promised Land. In his final sermon, he preached that there are only two ways we can choose from: the way of life or the way of death. In other words, the way of blessing or the way of curse (death). It is Moses’s last will not only for the new generation but also for all of us. He encourages us to love our God, which means to obey our God and to commit ourselves firmly to Him. He said that is the key to our life, not only for our life here on earth but also for our life in eternity.

If we know the Way and the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ, we must share the way of life and the way of blessing with those around us. That is the reason Jesus came to us: to give us life, an abundant life. That is why he commissioned us to be his missionaries in the world.

Let me finish my sermon with the following quote from John Wesley: **“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on Earth.” (John Wesley)**