

TBC – 3/2/03 p.m.

JESUS CHRIST, THE WAY

John 14:6

Intro: This year our memory book for the our fifteen weeks of Bible memorization is called, “Bible Verses Everyone Should Know.” We used this book a few years ago, and it was felt important enough so we are using it again this year. Many found the first year we had it that it really contained a lot of verses that we already knew. But it was a blessing to “brush up” on them, and to put the references with them. Many other verses could be added to them, but most of us, if not all, are finding them very, very profitable for us again. I put myself in that category. In fact, they are such a blessing to me that I am planning to speak on many of them.

John 14:6 is such a verse. Many people called John 3:16, “the Gospel in a nutshell.” The same could be said about John 14:6. Lenski, who has written on the entire Greek New Testament, said about this verse, “In simple words Jesus here summarizes all his teaching (doctrine) and all His work” (*John*, p. 977). This was the Lord’s mission, to bring sinners to the Father. This is what salvation means.

Our Lord’s words were spoken when He was speaking to His disciples in a famous Upper Room. The Lord’s hour for coming into this world was upon Him, and He felt that it was extremely important that He spend this time before His arrest, trial, and death, with His disciples. At different intervals during His ministry with them He had spoken about His death, but they really did not understand what He was talking about. They were convinced that He was their Messiah, and they thought that He had come to deliver them from Rome, to set up His kingdom, and to rule as King over all the earth. They did not understand fully what it meant that He had come “to seek and to save that which was lost.” They did not understand why He spoke continuously of His death.

Let’s read the first six verses of John 14 so we can see the setting of this very important verse. (Read John 14:1-6.)

The Lord did not want them to be “troubled.” By this word He meant, *filled with inner turmoil*, or *anxious*, or *distressed*. He wanted them to believe Him, to trust Him. He was not trying to get away from them. What He was doing was for them, and that included all that the Lord would do from that moment on until He would come back for them. He

was going to prepare a place for them, and He assured them that He would return. And then He added in verse 4, “And where I go ye know, and the way ye know.” Thomas objected and said, “Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way.”

Now who are we going to believe, the Lord, or Thomas. Obviously the disciples knew more than they thought they knew, but somehow they had not really put all of the pieces together. But instead of arguing with Thomas, the Lord simply said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

I might say here that this is a verse which those who are enemies of the Gospel really hate. They hate it because it excludes every other way to heaven, and it excludes every other person that they might look to as a Savior. More than at any time that I can remember in my lifetime, the message of this verse is under attack today. But the Lord said this words in a way to indicate that these words were true then, they had always been true even before He came, *and that they would always be true!* “No man cometh unto the Father but by Me,” or *through Me*. He was saying that He was the only way to God the Father Who is in heaven!

People who deny this don't believe two important truths that you and I as Christians believe. There are more that two, but two main truths. They do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God, nor do they believe that Jesus is the Son of God. If you believe those two truths, then you are not going to argue with what the Lord said. And so don't let anyone deceive into questioning what the Lord said. It is very exclusive because there can only be one way to the Father, or to heaven, or, to state it another way, there is no other way to be saved, no other Savior.

Notice the prominence of the words “the way.” The Lord used it in verse 4. Thomas used it in the question he asked the Lord. And the Lord used it again in His response to Thomas in our text, verse 6.

And the Lord gave prominence to “the way” again when He indicated that “the way” that He was talking about when He said, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” So, as I have said, it was “the way” to the Father, and since the Father is in heaven, it was “the way” to heaven, and so that means *the way to be saved*.

Let me point out that the Lord was very emphatic in what He had to say

here. The Greek word which means “I am” is εἶμι. That is what it means even without the pronoun “I” to go with it. But the Lord did not just say εἶμι. He also used the pronoun “I,” which is ἐγώ. This made it very emphatic. It meant that He wanted them to know that He, and no one else, was “the way.”

Now if you wanted to become a follower of the Jew’s religion as it was then, and as it still is, there would be plenty for you to do, and to keep doing. The same is true if you wanted to become a Moslem (May God forbid such a thing.) Name any religion you want to, you make your own way. It all depends upon you.

But if a person really wants to go to heaven, if he or she wants to see God and be where He is, Jesus Christ is “the way.” The way to God is through Jesus Christ, and only through Jesus Christ. It is not by joining a church. There are going to be a lot of church members who won’t be in heaven. It is not available by paying for it with you money. Christ is the way! And when He said, “I am the way,” it was like saying, “I Myself am the way, and there is no other way, and there never will be another way.” The Apostle Peter expressed it like this in another of our memory verses:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other
Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved
(Acts 4:12).

And if you read the verses before that you will find that He was speaking of “Jesus Christ, of Nazareth.”

Jesus Christ is the Way because Jesus Christ died for sinners. He took our sins upon Himself, and removed that which would keep any sinner out of heaven, which is their sins. And by His death those who believe on Him are covered with the righteousness of God.

Christ is the way because He has done what we could never have done for ourselves. He has paid the penalty for our sins, and those who believe in Him, trusting Him for their salvation, are guaranteed that they will be in heaven some day. And there is no other way. Jesus Christ is the way because He is the Savior.

When the Philippian jailor asked Paul and Silas what he needed to do to be saved, how did they answer him? “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). Jesus Christ is the Way. And I want to mention also that when the Lord said the words in

John 14:6, He said “the Way.” He is not just a way, one of many, but He is the only way.

But the Lord went on to say also that “I am . . . the truth.”

Now we all know that the Lord Jesus Christ always told the truth. You can absolutely depend upon the truthfulness of everything that He ever said. But that is not what He had in mind here, as true as all of that is. He said, “I am . . . the truth.” He is what one writer calls “the actual embodiment of the truth” (Lenski, p. 979). He is the truth about God. He is the truth about salvation. The Scriptures are a revelation of Christ, Who is the truth. If we were to take Christ out of the Scriptures, it would no longer be the truth.

Twice in Proverbs Solomon wrote, “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). If you want the truth about salvation, how to get to heaven and to God, fully accepted by Him, then know beyond any doubt that Jesus Christ is “the truth.” “The truth” helps us to understand “the way.” All doubt is removed in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our assurance of salvation. He is “the truth.”

But we still have another word in the series. Jesus Christ is “the life.” This, too, sheds light upon “the way.” Jesus Christ is “the way” also because He is “the life.”

You see, the people who are on their way to the Father’s house, on their way to heaven, are people whose lives are different. And why are they different. They are different because when Jesus Christ saves them, He becomes their “life.”

Notice those wonderful words Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia in Gal. 2:20. (Quote.) How do you explain the sudden and permanent change that took place in the life of Saul of Tarsus after the Lord saved him? Christ not only saved him from the penalty of his sins, but the Lord Jesus became his life. Judaizing teachers had come to Galatia and they were trying to put people under the Law. Why? To make themselves acceptable to God? That had already happened if they were truly saved. Then it must have been so they would live to please God. But Paul knew that Jesus Christ was not only “the way,” and “the truth,” but also “the life.” Listen to Paul’s words in Col. 3:1-4:

- 1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
- 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Col. 3:1-4).

Before you and I knew “the way,” we were dead in our trespasses and sins, hopelessly in bondage to that which would lead us ultimately to an endless hell. But the Lord came saying, “Come unto me . . . “ (Matt. 11:28-30). But we didn’t come until we were drawn to Him. See John 6:44). Notice how that verse takes you all the way from your coming to Christ to “the last day.”

Are we saved, or even kept saved, by our works? No. We are saved by Him Who is “the way, the truth, and the life.” The Lord Jesus told that Pharisee named Nicodemus those great words found in John 3:16.

And so the Lord would have us know that there is only one true way to the Father, and that is through Christ. When we come to Christ, trusting Him as our Savior, our arrival in heaven is guaranteed by Him.

Concl: Let me conclude with words of the Lord Jesus Christ found earlier in John’s Gospel, and spoken to Martha after her brother Lazarus had died. He had told her, “Thy brother shall rise again” (John 11:23). And she responded to the Lord with these words, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24). And then most of you know how the Lord responded to her. Listen to His words once again which are found in John 11:25-26:

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

And then the Lord added this question: “Believest thou this?”

How would you answer that question? It is a question for those of us who are believers to answer. It is one thing to believe in the doctrine of the resurrection; it is quite another thing to believe that Jesus Christ is “the resurrection and the life.”

In John 14:6 the Lord was speaking about deep, deep truth – wonderful theology.

John 14:6 (6)

But if you don't know the Lord as your Savior, let me ask, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is "the way, the truth, and the life"? If so, the Lord may be calling you to Himself. Don't let another hour go by before you respond to His invitation to "come."

Let me close with words of Richard Lenski who is probably enjoying the place which the Lord went to prepare for all of us. This is his comment about John 14:6:

Take away Jesus, and the way, the truth, and the life are gone; no way, no truth, no life are left. . . All hope of God and heaven outside of Jesus is vanity and worse. "But by Me" is absolute and final (Lenski, p. 981).

May the Lord use this short verse in each of our hearts as He sees our need tonight.