

Know the Father – John 14:5-14

Read John 14:1-5

We continue this series, looking at the last words Jesus shared with His disciples before His crucifixion. Last week, we looked at Jesus' encouragement for the disciples, that He was going to prepare a place for them and they would follow Him. Thomas responds, on behalf of the others, "We do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (John 14:5). The disciples had spent years walking with Jesus, seeing the miracles, signs and wonders, learning from Jesus' teaching, listening to His parables – yet still they don't appear to understand what Jesus is saying.

As we read on Jesus explains to His disciples who He is, and what this has all been leading to. The Holy Spirit has come to reveal God the Son that we might know God the Father. He is the Spirit who Reveals - and the Spirit who empowers - the way, the truth and the life.

Read John 14:6-14

The Way

The first thing Jesus highlights here is that He is the way to God. The disciples would have followed the Jewish traditions. They would have known the way to God through the temple. They would have understood the atoning work of sacrifices and the rituals of the priests that allows Israel to follow God. As we discussed last week, the Holy of Holies – the dwelling place of God – was separated from mankind by a thick curtain, which was torn in two. Goats for sacrifice and scapegoats took the punishment of sin so that Israel could come to God. Where Jesus says: "I am the way", they would already think they know the way.

Q. What are the common ways your friends/family/colleagues pursue things only God can provide?

Q. Consider the two goats used in Jewish atonement – how is Jesus the fulfilment of these sacrifices?

Jesus is talking about a different way – the fulfilment of the promise in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit comes to reveal that Jesus is the way, that nothing we can do could ever match the Holiness of God – but that Jesus has made the way for us. The Holy Spirit reveals our need for One without sin, to pay the price for our sin. Unlike the goat sacrificed in the temple, Jesus has defeated death and provides the way to the Father. Unlike the scapegoat who took our sins at one point, Jesus has removed our sin from us – once and for all. Jesus has dealt with the thing that has kept us apart from God – sin – so that through Him we can come to the Father.

Q. In what ways can we help people find the way to God through Jesus?

The Truth

The Spirit comes to make alive in us the truth of who God is, and of the truths that God has spoken over us. This is a difficult concept for many in today's society. Many people today would argue that what is true for one group is not necessarily true for another group. Our understanding of God and our belief of what is true appears to be subjective. What you believe to be true will not change someone else's hair colour, height or nationality. What we believe about God will not change the truth of who He is. If we want to know the truth of who God is, we need to look at God, not our beliefs.

Q. How do your friends/family/colleagues view God? What is this view based on?

To know the truth of God we need to look at God Himself. God is the invisible God and we cannot see Him, but Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15). To know God the Father, we look at God the Son. To know God the Son, we need God the Holy Spirit to reveal Him to us. "...the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth." (1 John 5:6). The Spirit will reveal the truth of all that God brings.

Q. What challenges do we face when sharing truth, as revealed by the Holy Spirit?

Q. Our society rejects truth being imposed. How can we share the truth in an attractive way without compromising it?

Q. What truths has God revealed by the Holy Spirit and His Word that you need to hold onto?

The Life

We have life as a gift given by God. Jesus doesn't just *have* life, but *is* the life. Many people will try to give reasons for life, the meaning and purpose, but Jesus is the life and the meaning and purpose. In Him, our lives find their true meaning and purpose. If we pursue Jesus, lay down our lives for Him, we will lift our lives back up again.

Q. What things do we rely on to give our lives meaning and purpose? How do they compare to Jesus?

When the Spirit reveals in us to live for Christ, the Father is glorified. When we keep Jesus at the centre, as we follow Him in what He has called us to, we bring glory to the Father, empowered by the Spirit. If we give our lives – give our all – to anything else, it will fail. If we give our all to Christ, we will know the true meaning of life, and have eternal life with God. We are called to live lives empowered by God the Holy Spirit, to know God the Son, to glorify God the Father.

Q. How would ChristCentral fulfilling its purpose – enjoying God and glorifying Him – affect the communities and lives around it? How does the Holy Spirit enable us to live this?