

John 14

Written by K B Napier
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At this stage, just before He would be arrested, Jesus took the opportunity to teach His apostles as much as possible. He concentrated on vital core matters – the Holy Spirit would continue His teaching after Jesus' death. Yet, even at this very late stage, the apostles were still unsure about so many things.

Verses 1-4

1.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

The severity of the situation seems to have dawned on the apostles and they became anxious. (I suggest this anxiety was based on their inability to understand what was happening). Jesus told them not to be troubled; if they believed in God (and as serious Jews, they did) then they should also believe in Him. After all, He had shown them He was God by many signs and words.

Jesus encouraged them by saying that no matter what happened in this world, they would find a place in Heaven, in their own mansions. This has two meanings – the promise that the Holy Spirit would live within the believer (thus 'bringing Heaven to earth'), and also that every believer will have a place in Heaven. Jesus would leave this earth so that He could prepare

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such a place for the apostles (and all believers).

I believe it is not fully correct to just say this means the Spirit indwells us. The tenor of the passage appears to speak of a separate place (Heaven). The words “I go”, “I will come again”, and “where I am, there ye may be also” strongly imply that Jesus is mainly speaking of a place, Heaven. The ‘mansion’, *monē*, refers to an abode, or, where one makes his abode. The meaning of the indwelling Spirit is metaphorical.

Where Jesus will go they will eventually know. This is an advance on His previous comments, that they could not follow, and did not understand where He was going. They would also know the ‘way’, or path they must take in this life.

Verses 5-7

1.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

2.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

3.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

One of the apostles, Thomas, asked Jesus to explain, because they did not know where He was going or the ‘way’ they must follow. Jesus told them that HE was ‘the way’ (*hodos*), so they simply had to believe and follow Him. As their spiritual mentor and leader He WAS ‘the truth’ (*alētheia*) Who determined what was true in every situation, whether earthly or spiritually. He was also the life, *zōē*

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, Who gave every believer genuine life of vitality, fullness, and Himself as the *logos*

. All who claim Christ as Saviour will show their genuineness in their Christian path and activities. Only by following Christ would the apostles know God the Father, and enter Heaven.

Very clearly, then, Jesus told them that they had to follow Him in every way, because by knowing Him they also knew the Father. Indeed, they could physically see Jesus on earth – therefore they also saw the Father, for both are equal.

Verses 8-14

1.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

2.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

3.

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

4.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

5.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

6.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the

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Son.

7.

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

After Jesus told them these things, Philip makes an ignorant request: 'Just show us the Father and that will satisfy us!' Given their previous clueless minds, you might think this could be excused... but, I think not, for Jesus told them moments before that He was God and that they had already seen the Father, because they could see Him! Sadly, many believers AND unbelievers continually seek more and more proofs, when proof already stands before them. Their constant seeking is not a genuine search for truth, but sin and unbelief.

Jesus chided Philip for his silly question, saying that the apostles had already been with Him for three years, yet they still asked inane questions. Jesus asked him a direct question: 'Do you believe I am in the Father and the Father is in me? I tell you truth from the Father, not from myself – the Father is in me and it is His works that I do.' He had told them this time and again.

Jesus summed up: 'Believe the Father and I are One. But, even if you doubt this, believe Me because the miracles proclaim Who I am.' It is rather sad that the apostles needed these comments, but many believers today are similarly handicapped by their pseudo-beliefs that prevent them from believing and obeying as they should. Many quote "Show me proof and I'll believe". Jesus told one such critic that they did not even believe Moses, so the promise was void. Today, people make the same promise... if only God showed them this or that miracle'. Not so! They would not believe, even if there was a miracle-a-minute!

Jesus added an amazing statement: 'Believe in me and you will do the same miraculous works'. In fact, they would do 'greater' works. *In this context* Jesus is speaking to the apostles, not to the general succession of future believers. Thus, charismatics today cannot lay claim to Jesus' words *in this text*. We do not have a right to project onto ourselves what was meant for a limited number: "I say unto you", so, therefore the following "You" applies to them only.

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The second point to make is that by 'greater' Jesus did not mean of more value or of a better quality... He simply meant that as the apostles would travel to spread the Gospel, their numbers (twelve times more than Jesus as a single person), would obviously mean their miraculous acts would exceed the number performed by Himself. This should be rather obvious and logical: the quality remains the same, but the number of acts would be more.

The apostles would be enabled in this special way so that the truth of Jesus' words would be self-evident. And whatever they asked God to do for them would come about, so that the Father would be glorified, through His Son's own work. They could ask for anything in Christ's name and "I will do it". That is, He would do it through the Holy Spirit, to verify the authority given to the apostles.

Verses 15-18

1.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

2.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

3.

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

4.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

The previous words were for the apostles only. Now, Jesus broadens His statements to encompass all believers. We know this because the instruction to obey God's commandments is universal. So, by keeping God's/Jesus' commandments, we prove our love for Him. This is a very simple but effective yardstick. Unfortunately, I do not see many Christians obeying God's commandments, yet they claim to love Jesus!

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Bear in mind that by 'commandments' Jesus included every word delivered by Himself and God in general. The Comforter would be with them "for ever" (within on this earth, and by their sides in Heaven). Though Jesus was soon to leave them, He would send "another Comforter", the Holy Spirit, to stay with them throughout this life on earth.

He would be the "Spirit of truth", because God IS truth. Whatever He demands of us is always for our good and for His own glorification. Note the next comment automatically rejects the notion that unbelievers can in any way know God... they cannot 'see' Him and so cannot know Him, whereas the apostles could see and know God, because, in our language, they were 'saved'. For this reason the Comforter (*paraklētos*) would live within them and be their guide. Believers who reject parts of God's word, or misinterpret, will know a reduced 'potency' of the Spirit, just as amounts of water will reduce the taste of wine. And their wrongness can lead other believers to question their claimed salvation.

Jesus promised the apostles that He would never leave them. When He left this earth He would send the Comforter. In this sense, then, He would be with them, just as the Spirit comforts us today. (But, so many refuse this comfort, by fretting, becoming anxious, and looking for their own ways to live and solve life's problems).

Verses 19-21

1.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

2.

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

3.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

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In a very short while, said Jesus, the world (all people) will not see Him again in His human form. This definitely rejects the spiritualistic idea that people see Jesus in human form today. However, the apostles would 'see' Him because He is eternal and lives within them as the Spirit. And, because He still lives, even through and after death, so they will continue to live also, even after their own deaths.

"At that day" denotes a very special day, which, in context of His soon demise, refers to His death and resurrection. At that time the apostles would be convinced that Jesus is 'in the Father' and that they were themselves in Christ, and He in them. They would 'know' automatically. No unbeliever or very weak Christian can understand this truth, which is hard to teach to others who are not of the same frame of mind or heart. Instead, they know only misery.

Jesus then repeated His words, that if they loved Him they would keep His commandments/teachings. And if they loved Jesus, the Father would love them in return... God's love is not given unconditionally! Jesus, too, would love them, in recognition of their obedience. He would show Himself to them in every way. Today, the answer to every plea is to love Christ, and He will then love us.

Verses 22-24

1.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

2.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

3.

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

Judas (not the treacherous one) asked why Christ would reveal Himself to them but not to the

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world. Jesus repeated Himself: 'If someone loves Me he will keep my words (commandments) and the Father will love him.' When that happens they (God as a trinity) will come to him and live within Him. Those who do not keep His words are unbelievers, whereas the apostles believed the words of the Father. That is, unbelievers CANNOT see Christ or the Father, nor can they receive His love. Their unbelief prevents any such special relationship. The warning for believers today is that the more they sin, the weaker becomes the link between them and God. At some point He may even cast them aside in this world.

Verses 25-27

1.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

2.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

3.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Jesus told them that He spoke to them this way during the closing moments of His earthly life. However, the Comforter/Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit will come in His place and would teach them everything they needed to know. In that post-resurrection time they would remember everything Jesus had told them whilst on this earth. Indeed, this is how they wrote the Gospels. Even today, those believers called to teach are taught by the Holy Spirit, and do not need others to influence them.

As some of His last words, Jesus promised them peace – His peace. This peace would give them salvation, with harmony amongst themselves, safety, and a coming firm contentment in the face of distress. Thus, they need not be afraid, for God was with them. Most believers today forget this promise, and so they degenerate into a fear that they try to dispel with human thoughts, or even psychiatric nuances. This is like asking the cause to cure the effects!

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Verses 28-31

1.

Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

2.

And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

3.

Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

4.

But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

Jesus reminded them that He told them He would go away and then return (as the Comforter). If they truly loved Him they would be joyful at that news. After all, He would go to be with His Father in Heaven, Who is greater. The word 'greater' is not the same word as we came across above. It is *meizōn*, referring to the Father's stature. This cannot refer to power, for all three are equal. It must refer to the will of the Father, because He sent the Son. It is more to do with His role rather than with a 'greater' power or importance.

Jesus said that after He left them the apostles would remember what He said about these things. And such memory would strengthen their belief. After this teaching session, He said, He would be unable to speak with them much, because Satan was coming to do his worst. He would find nothing in Jesus to accuse Him of before the Father, but he would still continue to send Him to His death. That is, he would continue in his murderous aim only because the Father purposed for him to do so.

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So, the only result would be that the world (particularly those who believe) would know that He loved the Father enough to die, for this was the Father's will. Jesus then told the apostles to get up and go out with Him. As they went out Jesus continued in His teaching; the clock was ticking and He had to meet those who Satan led to arrest Him.

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