

John 14:1-7 – I am the way, the truth and the life.

Main Idea: Jesus is the only way to the Father; he is truth and life is found in him.

Ligonier

The “I am” saying of Jesus in today’s passage certainly ranks among the most well-known statements of our Lord. Before we look at the statement’s meaning, however, it is worth noting that it appears in what has been called Jesus’ “Farewell Discourse.” Jesus delivered it on the eve of the greatest crisis His disciples would face—His crucifixion. This crisis would pass, but Jesus would also ascend to heaven, departing from them bodily. Christ had to prepare them for the dark days that lay ahead, and He did not do so with a call for them to “man up” or to “just get over it.” Instead, He gave them a theology lesson with key practical ramifications.

I AM Statements

- This I AM statement fits in perfectly and really connects to the rest of the I AM statements:
 - I AM the bread of life
 - I AM the light of the world
 - I AM the door to the sheep
 - I AM the good shepherd
 - I AM the resurrection and the life
 - Tonight, we see I AM the way, the truth and the life.

Introduction and Context

Before we jump into our verse or section of verses for tonight, we need to understand where it is in the Gospel of John, or where it is in the timeline and life of Jesus and his disciples.

- In John 12, Jesus had made his entry into Jerusalem for one final time.
- In John 13, Jesus’ farewell discourse begins, and it will go all the way through John 20:31
 - Why is this important?
 - Our passage’s location clues us into:
 - The emotions that the disciples may have been feeling.
 - The actions that are about to take place.
 - Why the different ideas or topics that Jesus is teaching is disciples are important for the disciples and for us now.
 - It is interesting to note how Jesus begins his farewell discourse, where he will go on to teach the disciples incredible theological truths about himself, the Father, the spirit and the life to come.
 - Jesus begins this farewell discourse by washing the disciple’s feet.
 - This may not seem like a big deal to us, but in the culture that Jesus and the disciples were in, this was a job for the lowly of the low. This wasn’t just about Jesus being helpful or being really nice.
 - He is showing humility and servanthood to his disciples
 - John 13:14 – Jesus gives the disciples a proposition:

- You “ought to wash one another’s feet.”
 - He’s saying that since you’re a disciple of me, you ought to wash the other disciple’s feet.
 - This is an example for them to follow.
 - His washing of the feet is symbolizing the washing away of sins
- After washing the disciple’s feet, Jesus quickly changes direction and foretells that someone at the table, one of his best friends, is going to betray him.
 - Talk about a mood killer.
 - Jesus has just done something astonishing.
 - The king of the universe, the lamb that was about to be slain, got on his hands and knees to wash the disciple’s nasty feet.
 - He tells the one the disciples (Judas), “What you are going to do, do quickly.”
 - What power!!
 - Jesus humbles himself to serve and clean the feet of his disciples, gets up and then looks at the twelve and says, “Oh by the way, one of you is about to betray me. Go and do it.”
 - Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him while he was washing the feet of the disciples.
 - But he washed their feet anyway.
 - He washed Judas’s betraying feet anyway.
 - The same is true for you and me.
- Jesus goes on to teach the disciples the new commandment in John 13:31-35
 - This new commandment tells the disciples, then and now, that they are to love one another, just like Jesus has loved them (and is about to love them)
 - He tells them that this will be their marker that they are disciples of God.
 - Not some sign of superiority or hierarchy, like a black belt in karate
 - No, instead he tells them that in his kingdom, people will know that they are disciples, followers and believers of Christ by how they love others, and how they are made low.
 - That turns our own way of thinking upside down.
- Then Jesus turns to Peter and tells him that where he is going, he cannot go.
 - And he tells Peter, you will deny me three times before the rooster crows.
- There’s a pattern to John 13:
 - Jesus shows humility, service and love to his disciples
 - Then foretells of his betrayal
 - Jesus gives the new commandment to love one another, the same way that he has loved the disciples
 - And then John 13 ends with Jesus telling Peter that he will deny him three times.

John 14:1-7

- The Way
 - I think our natural question has to be: If he is the way, then what is he the way to?
 - **He is the one and only way to the Father**
 - This means that through Jesus we have access to God.
 - Direct Access
 - He is the only way.
 - This is a big deal in the culture that Jesus and the disciples are living in.
 - There are two different types of folks in the culture:
 - Israelites
 - Israelites understood from the OT that in order to come into the presence of God, to be with God was something that only the high priest could do.
 - Gentiles
 - The culture was in the Roman Empire which had numerous gods that they would worship.
 - They were pluralistic and wanted you to worship different gods for different things.
 - So, this message that Jesus is saying “I’m the way” would have rocked their world and been really countercultural.
 - This is should rock our world as well!
 - While we don’t bow down to different statues and gods, we do worship sports, grades, school awards, honor rolls, our jobs, money and other things.
 - Jesus is saying that those things are not what is going to get you to the Father, only HE can do that.
 - There is only one God and He has only one kingdom with only one entrance—Jesus Christ. Only those who rest in Christ alone for salvation will enter heaven. This message was controversial and offensive to the pluralistic pagan culture of the first-century Roman Empire, and it is perhaps even more so today.
 - **He is the way to heaven.**
 - He is the only way we get to spend eternity with him and in his presence.
 - Jesus just talked about the mansion he has gone to prepare ahead of his followers.
 - Jesus is the only way that we get to experience the joy of his presence forever.

Narnia Story: Conversation between the Lion and Jill

““Are you not thirsty?” said the Lion.

” I am dying of thirst,” said Jill.

” Then drink,” said the Lion.

” May I — could I — would you mind going away while I do?” said Jill.

The Lion answered this only by a look and a very low growl. And as Jill gazed at its motionless bulk, she realized that she might as well have asked the whole mountain to move aside for her convenience. The delicious rippling noise of the stream was driving her nearly frantic.

” Will you promise not to — do anything to me, if I do come?” said Jill.

” I make no promise,” said the Lion.

Jill was so thirsty now that, without noticing it, she had come a step nearer.

” Do you eat girls?” she said.

” I have swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms,” said the Lion. It didn’t say this as if it were boasting, nor as if it were sorry, nor as if it were angry. It just said it.

” I daren’t come and drink,” said Jill.

” Then you will die of thirst,” said the Lion.

” Oh dear!” said Jill, coming another step nearer. “I suppose I must go and look for another stream then.”

” There is no other stream,” said the Lion.””

- So just as there was no other stream for Jill, there is no other way for you and me.
 - Nothing we do ever do will ever be enough.
 - We will never find another stream. It doesn’t exist.
- Jesus is the only way to the Father and to an eternity with him.
- The Truth
 - Jesus is truth personified.
 - Jesus is the truth of scripture.
 - Jesus as the truth fulfills the teaching of the OT (John 1:17).
 - All of the OT has been working to one point and that point is Jesus. It was all pointing to him.
 - Remember back to how Jesus was washing the feet of the disciples, while knowing that Judas would betray him.
 - The Old testament scriptures foretold that he would have to be lifted up as a sacrifice and this is how it was to be done.
 - His birth, life, death and resurrection serves as a truth-bearing mark for the scriptures.
 - Jesus reveals the true God.
 - and reveals the true God (cf. 1:14, 17; 5:33; 18:37; also 8:40, 45–46; 14:9

- The Life
 - Jesus is the life.
 - John 11:25-27 says this:
 - Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believe in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”
 - Take a look at John 1 again.
 - Pay attention to Verse 4:
 - “In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”
 - When Jesus came into the world, he was the life.
 - Jesus gives life.
 - Life in Christ
 - Fulfilling the life given by God
 - John 10:10 says, “The thief comes only to steal, and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”
 - Eternal Life
 - Jesus alone is the life who fulfills the OT promises of “life” given by God (11:25–26), having life in himself (1:4; 5:26), and he is thus able to confer eternal life to all those who believe in him (e.g., 3:16).
 - The New City Catechism says it like this:
 - Question: What is our only hope in life and death?
 - Answer: That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ.
 - “The way of Jesus cannot be imposed or mapped — it requires an active participation in following Jesus as he leads us through sometimes strange and unfamiliar territory, in circumstances that become clear only in the hesitations and questionings, in the pauses and reflections where we engage in prayerful conversation with one another and with him.” – Eugene Peterson

Closing

- **So why does it matter that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life?**
 - Take a look at Thomas’s question in verse 5, “Thomas said to the Lord, ‘we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’”
 - Thomas was worried! The Lord just told him that he was going to go away and preparing a place.
 - Thomas is like, “That’s all wonderful and nice, but how in the world do we get there?”
 - Jesus responds by telling him that HE is enough.
 - HE is the way.
 - HE is the truth.
 - HE is the life.
 - Jesus is saying that he is enough to get you to the mansion. He isn’t going to let you down.
 - Just like Thomas, you can trust these truths as well!

“The way” is not centrally belief in certain principles and execution of particular actions but trusting and treasuring a living person. At the heart of Christianity is not pillars to follow, but a person to know and enjoy.

Jesus is the way. By all means, contend for this precious truth in the classroom, over coffee, and on the street, but don't miss its sweetness first in the depths of your own soul.” – David Mathis

Application

1. Believe that Jesus is the only way.
2. Trust that Jesus is the truth and gives real life.
3. Remember that Jesus is enough.

Questions:

1. What stood out from the sermon tonight?
2. What does it mean that Jesus is the only way?
3. How is Jesus the truth?
4. How does Jesus bring life?
5. Are you trusting in Jesus?

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