

Lord, Where Are You Going?

Տէ՛ր, ո՞ւր կ'երթաս

John 13:36-38; 14:1-11

We are in the Upper Room. Only a few hours remain till they arrest Jesus.

Last Sunday we took the topic: **Betrayal, Love and Denial.**

One of his own betrayed him. Judas chose the darkness.

The next section is the **Farewell Discourses**— Jesus' final teachings before his arrest.

Today I'll continue with Peter.

-Peter will Deny Jesus

³⁶ Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

³⁷ Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

³⁸ Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times! (John 13:36-38 NIV11)

Just after hearing the new commandment "Love one another as I have loved you," Peter jumps into another question:

"Lord where are going? Why can't we come with you?" Typical of Peter.

Jesus will answer (Nerses version)

"*Bedros* Peter, there is time for everything.

For now, you cannot come to the place I will go; first, I should die and rise. Then your turn comes to take the cross and follow me. I'll prepare a place for you so you can come to your home."

I don't know if Peter got it:

Peter asked, "**Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.**" (13:37 NIV 11)

-Jesus challenges Peter saying, "**Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times, Peter...**"

And we all know he did.

There was a major difference between **Judas and Peter**. Although both regreted their actions, but they did choose different paths.

Paul says: "**Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.**" (2 Cor 7:10)

Judas had the choice to repent. He did not. Peter had the choice to repent, and he did.

Peter was on fire after Pentecost as the faithful disciple of Jesus.

According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down.

We move chapter 14. Remember originally there were no chapter numbers.

-I Am Going Home to Prepare a place for you

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14:1 NIV11)

-Comfort: Don't you love this statement? **Do not let your hearts be troubled.**

In the Bible, how many times we find this statement which brings comfort to our heart and soul.

-You Believe in God, Ok then believe also in me.

The better translation would have been with the verbs in the imperative tense:

“Believe in God! Believe also in me!” *(The Greek forms for the indicative and imperative are identical in this case.)*

Jesus is preparing his disciples for the upcoming crisis.

Departure is coming soon. They will be afraid of this major change.

This topic Father and Son relationship appears again and again.

I am taking a course from DTS on John. The teacher Dr Mark L. Bailey summarizes God the Father and God the Son relationship:

1. The ministry of Jesus is the ministry of the Father.
2. To reject Jesus is to reject the Father.
3. The ministry of the Son and the Father are mutually interlocking. (Father in the Son and Son in the Father). What is the Son revealing? He is revealing the Father's will. Who is Father revealing? This is my Son. “I am in the Father and Father is in me.”¹

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (John 14:18 NIV)

Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. (John 14:19 NIV11)

All those verses are comforting. Jesus will die and will return from the grave.

Jesus will appear to the disciples. Jesus is preparing them (and us) that we will not be alone. Jesus' return from grave is a very important reality that until today we

preach, teach and believe. *(In the book of Acts almost every sermon talks about Jesus' return from the grave)*

-My Father's house has many rooms:

² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going." (John 14:2-4 NIV11)

Remembering my childhood in Aleppo, we lived in a home where my extended family lived together. When my brother got married, we opened a room for him and his new bride, the rest of the siblings moved to another room.

My grandma was my roommate for a while. Families used to live together.

Jesus is talking about **the promise of heaven when he says, "my Father's house has many rooms."** (many mansions KJV)

This is about Second Coming of Jesus.

This is marital imagery: the groom is going to prepare the place for the bride in the father's house. One day he will come and get his bride and take her back to the father's house. How comforting is this image for our lives.

"His departure is not simply an exodus from humanity, it is continuation of his work on behalf of humanity."²

What does it mean to have a room in God's house?

The passage does not mean that these rooms need to be built, for the father's house has these rooms already (14:2). Rather, it is in Jesus returning to the Father (a departure through the cross) that the WAY to these rooms will be constructed. And it is in his arrival there that the place will be prepared completely for us."³

Room with Jesus: to live in His presence completely. We will be in complete fellowship with Jesus. I love it... I love it...

-Jesus is the Way and the Truth

⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." ⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." (John 14:5-8 NIV11)

Let us start with **Thomas**.

“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” (5)

Peter asked the same question:

Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” (13:36)

Jesus said: “Hello”? Come on guys, all this time I am teaching you don’t you get it?” (my translation)

⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (14:6)

This is it:

Jesus’ answer in 14:6 is the **best expression of the theology of this entire gospel** ⁴
The only way to God.

This is it. **If you recall, the purpose of this gospel is that we Believe in the Son of God and have life in his name. This is it. Jesus is the WAY and the TRUTH.**

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John 20:30

“Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?”

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

“The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.” (14:9-11)

Please notice the theme is coming again and again. You want to know God, look at me. God the Father and God the Son working together. You cannot understand, or experience God without His Son Jesus Christ. (*We will see also later in the role of the Holy Spirit.*)

Jesus is The Way not a way.

Jesus is The Truth not a truth.

This has created and until now it creates problems for different people saying, “How dare Jesus or the church declare that Jesus is the only way to find God!”

Unfortunately, there are some Christians who reject this statement, the idea of Jesus’ uniqueness.

I don’t see another way to reach to God.

Let me quote from N.T. Wright

If you dethrone Jesus, you enthrone something, or someone, else instead. The belief that “all religions are really the same” sounds nice and democratic — though the study of religions quickly shows that it isn’t true. What you are really saying if you claim that they’re all the same is that none of them are more than distant echoes, distorted images, of reality. You’re saying that ‘reality’, God, ‘the divine’, is remote and unknowable, and that neither Jesus nor Buddha nor Moses nor Krishna gives us direct access to it. They all provide *a* way towards the foothills of the mountain, not *the* way to the summit.⁵

Jesus is not just a moral teacher; “Jesus does not merely point the way, he is The Way; Jesus does not just teach us truth, he is The Truth; he does not represent one avenue to life, he is The Life.”⁶

Jesus is not just the means to reach to God, he is also God, the end. God himself was in Christ.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. (John 1:1,2 NIV11)

Now, I like to present also arrogance of the church people when they present this concept to the world. “We know the Truth, not you guys...”

This is very dangerous. Note the way Jesus teaches us how to interact with the World.

The church needs to humble herself when we are preaching the truth about Jesus Christ.

Who is Jesus? He is the one who washed the feet of people that would deny, betray, doubt, or leave...

He is the Good Shepherd who will leave the 99 and go and find the lost one and bring it back home.

He is the Good Shepherd who will lay his life to rescue the sheep.

Jesus told us to copy his example in serving, loving each other and witnessing to the world.

Application:

1. Peter denied Jesus.

How do we deny Jesus today?

Do you live a double life? Do you change your identity depending on the crowd?

In Luke we read:

When Peter denied Jesus for the third time:

Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter... And he went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:60,61 NIV11)

What was that look?

Jesus came to save the world not to judge.

2. Jesus prepares a room for each person who believes in Him. This comforts and encourages us. If you are despaired and tired of this life, focus on Jesus and his teachings about life. Being in his room means to be in his presence.

But you know the day I accepted Jesus in my life, I am already a citizen in his Kingdom which starts from this world. I am in His presence. One day I will be in that "room" totally in his presence.

3. Jesus is the Way and The Truth and the Life; it is an invitation to find the way to God and to embrace the truth of Christ and to live an abundant life with Him.

Here is my prayer based on Paul's prayer to the church of Ephesians

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3;14-19 NIV11)

1. Dr. Mark Bailey, Dallas Theological Seminary, online course, Gospel of John, Lesson seven

2. Gary M. Bruce, *John, NIV Application Commentary* p406

3. *ibid* p406

4. *ibid* p392

5. N.T. Wright *John For Everyone* (book2), P 59

6. Gary M. Bruce, *John, NIV Application Commentary* p 407