**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes from 10-30-2022
I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life**

One of the hobbies that my family recently took up is geocaching. I mentioned this a few weeks ago. If you are unfamiliar with geocaching it is kind of like going on a scavenger hunt. Someone hides a little capsule or container somewhere and the goal is to find it.

Geocaching actually began in the year 2000 with a small group of people that started it with 70 geocaches and now there are millions of them all over the world.

One necessary tool in finding success in geocaching is a GPS. Most phones nowadays have GPS’s built right into them, but without a GPS, it would be virtually impossible to find these items. But GPS’s can now take you to within feet of finding them.

Yes, they’re still hidden. Yes, you will still need to look. But with a GPS, you are most of the way there.

And it is a fun hobby. It is fun not just because you can do it with friends and family, but it can take you into places that are unfamiliar. Like recently, when we found ourselves walking through the nearby game lands and feeling like we are in our own little world.

And then there is celebration when someone finds the item.

Friends, there are many things in the natural world that remind us of spiritual realities, spiritual truths. And geocaching is just another example.

With that in mind, let us turn once again to John’s Gospel and our next “I Am” saying of Jesus. Each of these statements is so profound and so significant in better understanding who Jesus is and what He came to do. Today is arguable perhaps the most important of them all.

Like last week’s message on Jesus saying “I Am the Vine,” today’s words of Christ come from that same unforgettable night, only just a little bit earlier. It would be this night that Jesus’ passion is about to begin, as He would be betrayed, arrested, and tried before the Sanhedrin --- which was the Jewish religious leadership council.

Shortly before our passage, Jesus did something amazing. He had taken the position of a servant and washed His disciple’s feet; all of them, including Judas, who would betray Him later than night. Then He shares in the Passover meal with them.

But then things begin to become very troubling. First, Judas leaves them during the meal to betray Jesus. Then, Jesus tells Simon Peter that before the rooster crows, he will disown Him three times.

Just picture how these words would have been received. Confusion and fear would be abounding. And then Jesus begins to speak these critical words to His disciples. In the midst of their troubled minds, He seeks to comfort them. We find this in today’s passage from John 14:1-11.

**1 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26670a)**]; believe also in me. 2My 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? 3And 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. 4You know the way to the place where I am going.”**

**5Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”**

**6Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you really know me, you will know[**[**b**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26676b)**] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”**

**8Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”**

**9Jesus answered: “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. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? 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. 11Believe 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.**

Again, in this passage we find this amazing “I Am” saying of Jesus – “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” There is so much in that statement to process. What all is Jesus saying here?

First, He tells His disciples to believe in Him as they believe in God. He is telling them to trust in Him as they trust in God. To put their hope in Him as they put their hope in God.

Why did He do this? Because their trust and faith and belief in Jesus would be crucial to them having peace in the midst of their deeply unsettled hearts. They didn’t know what was going on, but the most important thing was to believe in Jesus as they believe in God.

What would it mean to believe in Jesus as they believe in God? It would mean to worship Jesus and to put their confidence in Jesus and it would mean to live each day to bring glory to Jesus, just as they would do for God.

Then Jesus tells them that He is going to prepare a place for them in His Father’s house and He will come back to take them to be with Him. This sounds like wedding imagery at that time.

And Jesus says, **“You know the way to the place where I am going.”**

Then Thomas speaks. Thomas kind of acts like Simon Peter at times. He speaks what probably most of them are thinking. And Thomas says to Him, **“Lord, but we don’t have a GPS, let alone a map, how can we know the way.”**

Well, not exactly. Thomas says, **“Lord, but we don’t** **know where you are going so how can we know the way.”**

And this question is helpful, because it leads to Jesus getting to the heart of the matter.

Jesus says, “**“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

So who is the way? Jesus is the way. Jesus is the way to the Father.

The way is to believe in Him. The way is to trust in Him and to surrender to Him.

It is so important that Jesus says “the” way rather than “a” way. Jesus doesn’t tell his followers that He is a way to God, but that He is the way to God.

And if that wasn’t clear enough, Jesus goes on to say, **“No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

Friends, this is quite a statement from Jesus, isn’t it? It is a very exclusive claim. Jesus is the way to God. As impossible as it is to find a geocache without a GPS, it is even more impossible to come to the Father without Jesus.

Jesus is making it crystal clear to His disciples that even though they are confused and do not see what is happening this evening, if they keep their faith in Jesus it will all be well in time.

Many believers in Jesus are not aware of it, but before Christians were called Christians, they were called followers of The Way.

For example, in Acts 9:1-2 we read about Saul, whom we know as Paul the Apostle, as he would later go by his Gentile name as an apostle to the Gentiles. But at this time Saul/Paul was persecuting the followers of Jesus. And we read that he went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to The Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

So to be a Christian is to be a follower of Jesus, the Way. Jesus is the way to the Father. And why is Jesus the way? It is because He is the truth and He is the life. Jesus revealed the truth about God perfected. He helped people to understand the Scriptures and to know the heart of His Father. Again, He is not just a truth, He is THE truth.

And finally, He is the Life. What Jesus did from His miraculous conception in the womb of Mary to His soon coming death and resurrection, that life lived as God in the flesh was what was needed for people to find the way to God.

Jesus then states, **If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”**

**8Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”**

**9Jesus answered: “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. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? 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. 11Believe 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.**

Sisters and brothers, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, because He is One with God the Father. If someone sees Jesus, then they’ve seen the Father. If someone responds in faith to Jesus, then they respond in faith to the Father. If someone rejects Jesus, they are rejecting the Father.

Friends, several times there is one word that Jesus is emphasizing to His disciples. And that word is BELIEVE.

This word, believe, is so important. What Jesus is saying as He speaks about belief in Him, is far more an acknowledging that He exists or that He made some profound claims about Himself.

No. This biblical belief speaks about belief in, trust in. This is why Jesus said, **You believe in God[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26670a)**]; believe also in me.** In light of this profound and remarkable statement of Jesus, how are we to respond today?

The biggest takeaway is to remember that Jesus is the only way to the Father. He is the only way for us and He is the only way for anyone and everyone.

Jesus is not just another option along with Mohommed and Buddah and Harry Chrisna and whatever else.

Jesus is the way because He is the truth and the life. Because Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, we are to give Him our complete allegiance.

We are to put our full trust in His grace alone to prepare a place for us in heaven, to forgive our sins, to give us true peace and joy in life.

Friends, do any of you feel troubled today? Troubled by stress? Troubled by talks of disaffiliation? Troubled by health or work challenges and concerns. Remember that Jesus offers us peace in Himself, as we believe in Him.

And this should also lead us to share Jesus with others. Our vision as Chestnut Grove Church is to be a light on a hill sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

Why are we to share Jesus with others? Because He is what they need. He is their Savior. He is the Way for them to have peace in their soul. He is the One who can give them eternal life.

In this world there are so many things that people try to fill that void that only God can fill. People try all different things. False religions, sports, music, you name it. Everyone leaves you empty if it is not Jesus.

Why? Because Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. We were made by Him and He alone can restore us and make us whole.

And finally, the next time you are out geocaching or simply using a GPS or map, may we remember that Jesus is the way. The way to God. The way to Heaven. The way to peace. The way to life in all its fullness. Amen.

Resources:

[www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com)