

John 14:1-14
October 26, 2025

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: In a world that often celebrates tolerance and multiple paths, Jesus's statement "no one comes to the Father except by me" can sound exclusive. How do you respond to those who believe there are many ways to God? [Let people engage]

Transition: Jesus is very inclusive. "Whosoever" believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. We know from 2 Peter that "The Lord is not willing that anyone would perish, but that all would turn to him in repentance." The invitation to be a follower of Jesus is extended to *everyone*! As we turn today's text, we will see Jesus continue to prepare His disciples that He is leaving. He will help them deal with anxiety, on the idea of "a place" that is prepared for them, and the feeling of being uncertain about their future path. There's plenty to process, so let's read the text and then process it.

BOOK:

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. 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."

Jesus the Way to the Father

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 knew me, you would know (trust in) 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 are not just my own. 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 miracles themselves. ¹²I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

“You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” This is not a “magic formula” that we automatically attach to our prayer requests, guaranteeing that God will answer. To ask anything of the Father, in the name of Jesus, means that we ask what Jesus would ask, what would please Him, and what would bring Him glory by furthering His work. When a friend says to you, “You may use my name!” he is handing you a great privilege as well as a tremendous responsibility.

The “whatsoever” in John 14:13 is qualified by all that God has revealed in His Word about prayer; likewise, the “anything” in John 14:14. God is not giving us *carte blanche*; “in My name” is the controlling element. To know God’s name means to know His nature, what He is, and what He wants to do. God answers prayer in order to honor His name; therefore, prayer must be in His will (1 John 5:14–15). The first request in “The Lord’s Prayer” is, “Hallowed be Thy name” (Matt. 6:9). Any request that does not glorify God’s name should not be asked in His name.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 349-352). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.*

According to Jesus, heaven is a real place. It is not a product of religious imagination or the result of a psyched-up mentality, looking for “pie in the sky by and by.” Heaven is the place where God dwells and where Jesus sits today at the right hand of the Father. Heaven is described as a kingdom (2 Peter 1:11), an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4), a country (Heb. 11:16), a city (Heb. 11:16), and a home (John 14:2).

The word *Father* is used fifty-three times in John 13–17. Heaven is “My Father’s house,” according to the Son of God. It is “home” for God’s children! Some years ago, a London newspaper held a contest to determine the best definition of “home.” The winning entry was, “Home is the place where you are treated the best and complain the most.” The poet Robert Frost said that home is the place that, when you arrive there, they have to take you in. A good definition!

The Greek word *mone* is translated “mansions” in John 14:2 and “abode” in John 14:23. It simply means “rooms, abiding places,” so we must not think in terms of manor houses. It is unfortunate that some unbiblical songs have perpetuated the error that faithful Christians will have lovely mansions in glory, while worldly saints will have to be content with little cottages or even shacks. Jesus Christ is now preparing places for all true believers, and each place will be beautiful. When He was here on earth, Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3). Now that He has returned to glory, He is building a church on earth and a home for that church in heaven. John 14:3 is a clear promise of our Lord’s return for His people. Some will go to heaven through the valley of the shadow of death, but those who are alive when Jesus returns will *never* see death (John 11:25–26). They will be changed to be like Christ and will go to heaven (1 Thes. 4:13–18).

Since heaven is the Father’s house, it must be a place of love and joy. When the Apostle John tried to describe heaven, he almost ran out of symbols and comparisons! (Rev. 21–22) Finally, he listed the things that would not be there: death, sorrow, crying, pain, night, etc. What a wonderful home it will be—and we will enjoy it forever!

Thomas’ question revealed his keen desire to be with Jesus (see John 11:16), and this meant that he had to know where the Master was going and how he himself would get there. The Lord made it clear that He was going to the Father, and that He was the only way to the Father. Heaven is a real place, a loving place, and an exclusive place. Not everybody is going to heaven, but rather only those who have trusted Jesus Christ (see Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:4–6).

Jesus does not simply teach the way or point the way; *He is the way*. In fact, “the Way” was one of the early names for the Christian faith (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). Our Lord’s statement, “No man cometh unto the Father but by Me,” wipes away any other proposed way to heaven—good works, religious ceremonies, costly gifts, etc. There is only one way, and that way is Jesus Christ.

How would this assurance of going to heaven help to calm the disciples' troubled hearts? Dr. James M. Gray put it beautifully in a song he wrote years ago: "Who could mind the journey, when the road leads home?" The assurance of a heavenly home at the end of life's road enables us to bear joyfully with the obstacles and battles along the way. It was this assurance that even encouraged our Lord, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (Heb. 12:2). Paul had this truth in mind when he wrote, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

You Know the Father Right Now (John 14:7–11)

We do not have to wait until we enter heaven to get to know the Father. We can know Him today and receive from Him the spiritual resources we need to keep going when the days are difficult. What does it mean to "know the Father"? The word *know* is used 141 times in John's Gospel, but it does not always carry the same meaning. In fact, there are four different "levels" of *knowing* according to John. The lowest level is simply knowing a fact. The next level is to understand the truth behind that fact. However, you can know the fact and know the truth behind it and still be lost in your sins. The third level introduces *relationship*; "to know" means "to believe in a person and become related to him or her." This is the way "know" is used in John 17:3. In fact, in Scripture, "to know" is used of the most intimate relationship between man and wife (Gen. 4:1).

The fourth use of "know" means "to have a deeper relationship with a person, a deeper communion." It was this level Paul was referring to when he wrote, "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). Jesus will describe this deeper relationship in John 14:19–23, so we will save any further comment until we deal with that section.

When Jesus said that knowing Him and seeing Him was the same as knowing and seeing the Father, He was claiming to be God. From now on, they would understand more and more about the Father, even though Jesus was leaving them.

I appreciate Philip's desire to know the Father. He had come a long way since that day Jesus found him and called him (John 1:43–45). The burning desire of every believer ought to be to know God better. We read and study the Word of God so that we might better know the God of the Word.

The Greek construction of the question in John 14:10 indicates that the Lord expected a yes answer from Philip: he *did* believe that Jesus was in the Father and the Father in Him. That being the case, Philip should have realized that the words of Jesus, as well as His works, came from the Father and revealed the Father. Believers today have not seen the Lord Jesus in the flesh (1 Peter 1:8), but we do see Him and His works in the Word. The emphasis throughout John's Gospel is that you cannot separate Christ's words and works, for both come from the Father and reveal the Father.

The "believe" in John 14:10 is singular, for Jesus was addressing Philip; but in John 14:11, it is plural and He addresses all of the disciples. The tense of both is "go on believing." Let your faith grow!

Four hundred years before Christ was born, the Greek philosopher Plato wrote, “To find out the Father and Maker of all this universe is a hard task, and when we have found Him, to speak of Him to all men is impossible.” But Plato was wrong! We *can* know the Father and Maker of the universe, for Jesus Christ revealed Him to us. Why should our hearts be troubled when the Creator and Governor of the universe is *our own Father*?

The very Lord of heaven and earth is our Father (Luke 10:21). There is no need for us to have troubled hearts, for He is in control.

You Have the Privilege of Prayer (John 14:12–14)

“Why pray when you can worry?” asks a plaque that I have seen in many homes. One of the best remedies for a troubled heart is prayer.

“O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear;
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.”

However, if God is going to answer our prayers and give us peace in our hearts, there are certain conditions that we must meet. In fact, the meeting of these conditions is a blessing in itself!

We must pray in faith (v. 12). This is a promise for us to claim, and the claiming of it demands faith. The double “*verily*” assures us that this is a solemn announcement. The fact that Jesus did return to the Father is an encouragement, for there He is interceding for us. He will have more to say about this intercessory work later in His discourse.

The “greater works [things]” would apply initially to the Apostles who were given the power to perform special miracles as the credentials of their office (Rom. 15:18–19; Heb. 2:3–4). These miracles were not greater in *quality*, for “the servant is not greater than his lord” (John 13:16), but rather in scope and quantity. Peter preached one sermon and 3,000 sinners were converted in one day! The fact that ordinary people performed these signs made them even more wonderful and brought great glory to God (Acts 5:13–16).

Of course, it is not the believer *himself* who does these “greater things”; it is God working in and through the believer: “The Lord working with them” (Mark 16:20). “For it is God which worketh in you” (Phil. 2:13). Faith and works must always go together, for it is faith that releases the power of God in our lives.

Both love and obedience are part of effective prayer. “If I regard [see and approve] iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Ps. 66:18).

We do not obey the Lord simply because we want our prayers answered, somewhat like the attitude of a child just before Christmas. We obey Him because we love Him; and the more we obey Him, the more we experience His love. To “keep” His commandments means to value them, treasure them, guard them, and do them. “I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food” (Job 23:12).

Believing prayer is wonderful medicine to soothe a troubled heart. Meditate on Philippians 4:6–7—and then put it into practice!

We must pray in Christ's name (vv. 13–14). This is not a “magic formula” that we automatically attach to our prayer requests, guaranteeing that God will answer. To ask anything of the Father, in the name of Jesus, means that we ask what Jesus would ask, what would please Him, and what would bring Him glory by furthering His work. When a friend says to you, “You may use my name!” he is handing you a great privilege as well as a tremendous responsibility.

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Blum, E. A. (1985). John. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 322-323) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

C. Jesus, the Way to the Father (14:1–14)

The disciples were completely bewildered and discouraged. Jesus had said He was going away (7:34; 8:21; 12:8, 35; 13:33), that He would die (12:32–33), that one of the Twelve was a traitor (13:21), that Peter would disown Him three times (13:38), that Satan was at work against all of them (Luke 22:31–32), and that all the disciples would fall away (Matt. 26:31). The cumulative weight of these revelations must have greatly depressed them.

14:1–2. To comfort the disciples, Jesus gave them several exhortations along with promises. **Do not let your hearts be troubled**, He said. “Troubled” is *tarassesthō* (“stirred, agitated”) from the same verb translated “troubled” in 11:33; 13:21; 14:27. One’s heart is the center of his personality. Each believer is responsible for the condition of his heart (cf. Prov. 3:1, 3, 5; 4:23; 20:9). By a firm trust in God the Father and Jesus the Son, they could relieve their soul-sorrow and be sustained in their coming tests. When Jesus said, **Trust in God; trust also in Me**, He was probably giving commands, not making statements. Death should not be a terror to them because Jesus was leaving **to prepare a place for them in heaven, the Father’s house**.

14:3–4. **I will come back** refers here, not to the Resurrection or to a believer’s death, but to the Rapture of the church when Christ will return for His sheep (cf. 1 Thes. 4:13–18) and they will be **with Him** (cf. John 17:24). Jesus said nothing about the nature of the place where He was going. It is sufficient that believers will be with the Father and Jesus (cf. 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thes. 4:17). The disciples knew how to get to heaven. He told them, **You know the way to the place where I am going**. Throughout His ministry, Jesus had been showing them the way, but as Thomas indicated (John 14:5), they did not fully understand.

14:5–6. Thomas’ statement (**We don’t know where You are going**) and his question (**So how can we know the way?**) reflected the perplexity of the Eleven (cf. Peter’s similar question; 13:36). They would remain puzzled until His death and resurrection and until the advent of the Spirit. They had all the information, but they could not put it together.

Jesus’ words, **I am the Way and the Truth and the Life**, are the sixth of Jesus’ seven “I am” statements in the Gospel of John (6:48; 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). Jesus is the “Way” because He is the “Truth” and the “Life.” As the Father is Truth and Life, Jesus is the embodiment of God so people can come to the Father (cf. 1:4, 14, 18; 11:25). By His words, **No one comes to the Father except through Me**, Jesus stressed that salvation, contrary to what many people think, is *not* obtainable through many ways. Only one Way exists (cf. Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5). Jesus is the only access to the Father because He is the only One from the Father (cf. John 1:1–2, 51; 3:13).

14:7. The first sentence in this verse may either be a promise (“If you really knew Me, you *will* know My Father as well”) or a rebuke (**If you really knew Me, you would know My Father as well**). The Lord seems to be rebuking them for a failure to understand His person and mission (cf. 8:19). The following dialogue (14:8–9) indicates a failure on the disciples’ part. **From now on, you do know Him** is a promise, which looks beyond the Cross and the Resurrection (cf. 20:28, “My Lord and my God”).

14:8–9. **Philip** expressed a universal desire of mankind: to see God (cf. Ex. 33:18). In a perverted form this desire leads to idolatry. Philip was probably longing for a theophany (cf. Ex. 24:9–10; Isa. 6:1) or some visible display of God’s glory. Jesus’ statement, **Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father** (cf. John 12:45), is one of the most staggering claims He ever made. The Father is in Jesus and Jesus perfectly reveals Him (1:18). Hence no theophany was necessary, for by seeing Jesus they *were* seeing **the Father!**

14:10–11. The proof of the union of Jesus and His Father is threefold. They should **believe** Jesus (a) because of His character (**I am in the Father** [cf. v. 20] **and ... the Father is in Me**); (b) because His words are the Father’s (**The words I say to you are not just My own** (cf. 7:16; 12:49–50; 14:24); and (c) because the miracles reveal God’s working through Him (**the Father, living in Me ... is doing His work.... believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves**; cf. 5:36). One of the key elements in John’s Gospel is the stress on the signs as gracious pointers to faith (cf. 5:36; 10:25, 38; 11:47; 12:37; 20:30–31).

14:12–14. The apostles would not necessarily do more stupendous miracles than Jesus did (e.g., feeding 5,000) but their outreach would be greater (e.g., Peter in one sermon had 3,000 converts). This was possible **because** Jesus had gone **to the Father** and had sent the Spirit. Miracles are important, but some evangelists have done **even greater things than these** by preaching the good news to many thousands of people.

In My name (vv. 13–14) is not a magical formula of invocation. But the prayers of believers, as Christ’s representatives doing His business, will be answered. John expanded this teaching in his first epistle. He wrote, “If we ask anything according to His will ... we have what we asked of Him” (1 John 5:14–15). To **ask Me for anything in My name** means to ask according to His

will (cf. “in My name” in John 15:16; 16:23–24, 26). The word “Me” is omitted in some Greek manuscripts but it is probably correct here. Prayers in the New Testament are usually addressed to God the Father, but prayer addressed to **the Son** is proper also (e.g., Stephen’s prayer to the “Lord Jesus” [Acts 7:59]). The goal of answered prayers is to **bring glory to the Father**. Also bearing fruit glorifies the Father (John 15:8).

White, J. E. (1998). *John*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (p. 483). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Remedy for Anxiety (14:1–4)

Such words from Jesus regarding His upcoming departure, not to mention the forecast of Peter’s betrayal, cast a net of depression upon the meal. Now come words of comfort from Jesus: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me” (14:1). Trust in God is the one true remedy for anxiety. Jesus completed the remedy for their concern by painting a beautiful portrait of the life that awaits them upon their reunion (14:2–4).

Way, Truth, Life (14:5–14)

Jesus responded that a life given in belief and faith in Him will pave the way to eternal fellowship with Him (14:6). Jesus’ claim to be the way, the truth, and the life is of great importance. Jesus is not one among many ways to God but the only way to God. The early church was even called “The Way” because of its insistence upon this point (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23). That Jesus embodies and proclaims the truth is a theme throughout the Gospel of John. Jesus also offers life itself, life through God the Father, the Creator and Giver of all life.

The last verse in this section has been fuel for much debate regarding proper interpretation and application. Was Jesus saying that we have unlimited power over God in determining what He will or will not do for us if we simply pray in Jesus’ name? Clearly not, for this would be out of accord with the rest of the scriptural witness. God is sovereign over all and subject to none. We are to pray in accordance with the will of God as exhibited in the life and teaching of Jesus. When we pray in that manner, surely it will be answered. To pray in Jesus’ name is to pray in accord with Jesus’ will and mission. Such a prayer request is far different from an idea of prayer as some type of shopping list handed to God that He is then bound to perform. Yet the enormous spiritual power that courses through the spiritual veins of the believer should not be underestimated in light of our involvement with the growing kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit empowers believers to do and to be all that Christ would have us to do and to be.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). John 14:1-14. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.