

If You Know Me

John 14:1-14

Online Sermon:

http://www.mckeefamily.com/?page_id=3567

Today we are starting an exciting series called “IF/THEN.” You might recognize the term “if-then” from computer programming or logical reasoning in which a “conclusion is drawn from two premises, one of which is a condition.”¹ For example, “all humans are mortal, Socrates is a human, therefore Socrates is mortal.”² We find conditional statements connected to promises God made to us all throughout the Bible. Today we are going to review conditional statements in the Bible based on John 14:1-14 that talks about our relationship with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

It is one thing to know about another person but quite another thing to develop a close, personal relationship with a person! Forging a mutually beneficial and all-encompassing friendship can be quite challenging when it requires setting aside disparities in age, race, gender, financial status, and individual preferences. As we contemplate our divine Lord, the Alpha and Omega, our Creator and Redeemer, who is without imperfection, we cannot help but realize, though in a limited manner, the vast chasm that separates us from God. After all, who among us is

worthy to even approach the flawless image of the One in which we were originally formed? And yet while the sin that so easily entangles often means Christians can only receive a glimpse of the glory of God through the crevices of their hardened hearts,



are not those who are enabled to do more than they can ask or imagine and sealed by His Spirit as His treasured possession and children, not also able to have deep relationship with Him that is far greater than just knowing of Him? While it might appear that having a relationship with God is impossible for a sinful person to attain, in today’s IF/THEN sermon we are going to delve into four relational gifts promised to those who follow

Jesus: understanding His path, knowing the way, recognizing the Father, and realizing the empowerment to perform miracles in His name. Let’s begin by looking at where Jesus went and what He has been doing since His ascension.

If You Know Me, You Know Where I Went

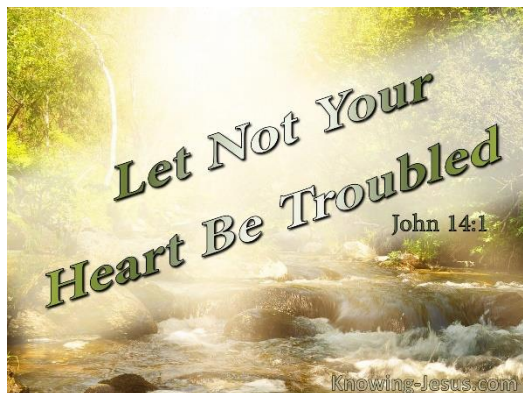
It was the night before Jesus’ crucifixion and the disciples were in “emotional turmoil.”³ Their hearts were

¹ Taken from the IF/THEN series on Sermon Central website.

² Ibid.

³ Paul Barnett, *John: The Shepherd King*, Revised., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2011), 191–192.

stirred up like “ingredients in a mixing bowl of doubt, confusion, uncertainty, and fear.”⁴ Jesus had just told them that one of their own would betray Him (John 13:18-30), another deny Him and that He would only be with them a little longer (13:31-38). Though it must have seemed like the “world had



gone mad”⁵ and worse yet the Master was about to abandon them, Jesus gently “lifts them out of the murky waters of despair”⁶ by reassuring them that their faith in Him would not result in their abandonment.

While the disciples were about to go through trials and tribulations, be persecuted by many, and even John would be present to see the crucifixion, the curtain of the Holy of Holies being torn in two (Matthew 27:51) would signify that Christ’s “departure would be purposeful.”⁷ Jesus laid down His life to atone for the sins of the many (Matthew 20:28) as this anonymous poetic so eloquently states.

*Once my heart was black as sin,
Until the Savior came in.
His precious blood I know
Has washed it whiter than snow;
And in this world I’m told
I’ll walk the streets of gold.
Oh, wonderful, wonderful day;
He washed my sins away.⁸*

To calm their troubled hearts in the fiercest of storms Jesus told the disciples to have faith that He was not abandoning them but instead preparing an eternal home for them at His Father’s house “where God would forever dwell with His people (Ezekiel 43:7, 9; 48:35; cf. Jn 8:35).”⁹

Considering Solomon’s statement that God has placed eternity in the human heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11), it is not surprising that Christ calms their tumultuous souls by pointing them to heaven where God dwells.

Are not our troubles “light and momentary” in comparison to the eternal glory we are about to receive (2 Corinthians 4:17)?

⁴ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, [Exalting Jesus in John](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 281.

⁵ George R. Beasley-Murray, [John](#), vol. 36, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1999), 249.

⁶ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, [Exalting Jesus in John](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 284.

⁷ Gary M. Burge, [“Gospel of John,”](#) in *John’s Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 126.

⁸ R. Kent Hughes, [John: That You May Believe](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 337.

⁹ Craig S. Keener, [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Jn 14:2.

And while the treasures and crowns of righteousness stored in heaven are to be a source of great rejoicing, does not reflecting on being in the presence of the Lamb who was slain bring upon us unspeakable joy?

If You Know Me, You Know the Way

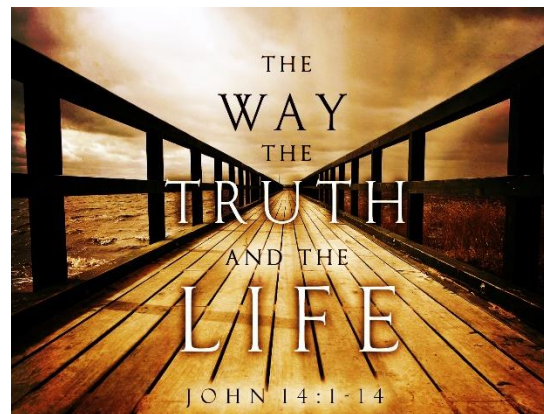
While the promise of reaching heaven through having a relationship with Jesus was undoubtedly Good News indeed, the problem was that this glorious place was not only unknown to Thomas but also the way of getting there!¹⁰ Jesus responded by saying, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” These words would have been profoundly offensive, not just to the Mediterranean society during Jesus’ time,¹¹ but also to our contemporary postmodern culture,¹² which values the acceptance of multiple deities and various avenues to connect with divine presence. Stating that the sole path to God is through faith in the atoning sacrifice of His Son Jesus, rather than relying on “good works, charitable acts, penance, last rites, karma, reincarnation, or martyrdom,”¹³

¹⁰ Gary M. Burge, “[Gospel of John](#),” in *John’s Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 126.

¹¹ Craig S. Keener, *John*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, vol. 2A, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 147.

¹² Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 292.

is a truth that numerous “religious” individuals, even among God’s own people, were unwilling to embrace. Did not God’s own reject Him and cried out for His crucifixion because they heard Jesus proclaiming salvation through belief in Him, rather



than salvation tied to temple rites, strict adherence to the Torah,¹⁴ or Jewish genealogy? And yet despite society’s objections, Christ who is the “embodiment of the truth, God’s covenant faithfulness (John 1:17),”¹⁵ remains the one and only way to spend eternity with the Father in heaven! What prevents humanity from being adopted into God’s family is not the absence of good deeds or the performance of “correct” religious rituals, but rather the “veil of sin”¹⁶ that ensnares every individual. This means to bridge the chasm between a sinful

¹³ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 291.

¹⁴ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 289.

¹⁵ Craig S. Keener, *John*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, vol. 2A, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 147.

¹⁶ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 291.

person and a holy God is through the mediator Jesus,¹⁷ who is both divine and human. His atonement paves the way for reconciliation between God and those who have faith in His Son, Jesus. This Good News may be unsettling to some, yet it is within God's prerogative to define a singular path to approach Him. Although it may appear religiously exclusive to have just one way to but one God, it is a universal offer that transcends ethnicity and culture (as indicated in 3:16; 4:42; 8:12; 10:16; 17:20–21).¹⁸

The offer of salvation is all-inclusive, for Christ's sacrifice was made on behalf of all, leaving no one excluded.

If You Know Me, You Know the Father

Following Jesus' declaration to Thomas, where He proclaimed Himself as the way, truth, and life, Jesus continued by stating, "If you truly know Me, you will know the Father as

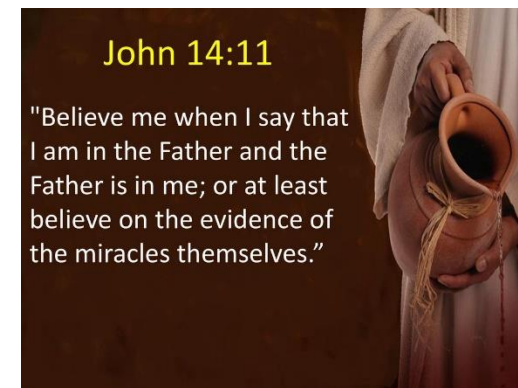
¹⁷ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 290.

¹⁸ Craig S. Keener, *John*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, vol. 2A, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 147.

¹⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John," in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*, ed. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2020), 988.

²⁰ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1089.

well" (7a). In response to this, Phillip implores, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us" (8). It seems that Phillip is seeking a manifestation God, akin to the theophanies experienced in the OT¹⁹ such as when God consented to give Moses a glimpse of His back from the cleft of a rock as He



passed by (Exodus 33:18-23), or when "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy elders went up and saw God" (Exodus 24:9), or when Isaiah saw a vision of God on His throne (Isaiah 6).

"None of these passages meant that the persons involved actually saw God as He is in Himself,"²⁰ for God clearly told Moses "No one may see my face and live" (Exodus 33:20)! Only God can reveal Himself to us and that is done solely through His Son Jesus.²¹ Christ transcends being just a virtuous individual, a spirit guide, or a prophet;²² Jesus is Divine! His true nature extends beyond the conventional depictions found in

²¹ Gary M. Burge, "Gospel of John," in *John's Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 127.

²² Gary M. Burge, "Gospel of John," in *John's Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 127.

paintings with “shafts of heavenly light falling on Him.”²³ As the Son of God, He possesses the authority to act and speak on behalf of His Sender. Jesus told Phillip, “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’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me” (14:9-10a).

Jesus urged Phillip to transcend mere physical observation and to comprehend and recognize God through the words and actions of His Son, who shares in unity with the Father.

If you cultivate a personal relationship with Jesus, you concurrently establish a relationship with the Father and come to know Him as well.

Reflection. There is a vast realm of the unknown when it comes to God, who is entirely distinct. Despite our inability to physically perceive either the Father or the Son, we can gain knowledge of them through the study of the Scriptures, communion with the Holy Spirit, and prayer. Upon experiencing the transformative rebirth, we are adopted into God’s family, allowing us to confidently approach His throne of

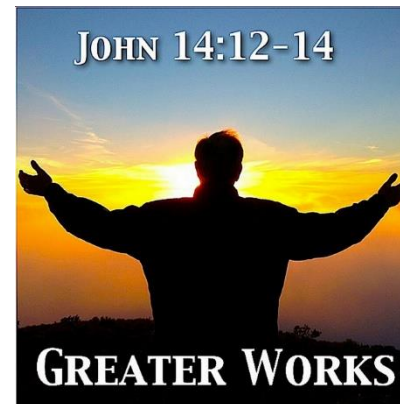
²³ Paul Barnett, [John: The Shepherd King](#), Revised., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2011), 193.

²⁴ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, [Exalting Jesus in John](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 293.

grace. It is indeed an indescribable gift for sinful beings, created in His image, to intimately know their Creator!

If You Know Me, You Know Your Empowered

Jesus was returning to the Father to prepare a place for them but also to “actively work in them” and “supply them with infinite resources.”²⁴ His purpose was to enable them to continue to do greater works than He had done on earth, as well



to fulfill their prayer requests.²⁵ The promise of “greater works” by Jesus is not to be interpreted that believers will perform more spectacular miracles than their Master had done. After all, what could ever be more spectacular than the miraculous acts performed by Jesus, such as turning water into wine, feeding five thousand, healing of the sick, blind, and lame, casting out demons, and raising the dead back to life? So, what then does Jesus mean by “greater”? The miracles that Christ will perform from heaven through believers will be

²⁵ Gary M. Burge, [“Gospel of John,”](#) in *John’s Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Buebeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 127.

quantitatively greater in number and will extend far beyond the “land of Israel to the ends of the earth.”²⁶ While nothing compares to the atonement of Christ in the depths of significance, the conversion of the spiritually dead to life is still a great reason to rejoice, isn’t it? As “ordinary” people²⁷ “under the dispensation of the Spirit”²⁸ doing miracles is truly spectacular, for it was the ordinary that Christ promised, “And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it” (14:14).

This promise does not imply that we can simply ask for material luxuries like a fancy car, an expensive yacht, or a fat bank account on our knees. Nor does it suggest that we can whimsically “play the flute” and Christ will perform a healing dance (Matthew 11:17), removing all trials and ailments from everyone we encounter. For Christ to say “YES” to a prayer request it must be in the will (1 John 5:14) of and for the glory of the Father!

John Piper writes, “Prayer is the open admission that without Christ we can do nothing. And prayer is the turning away from

²⁶ Paul Barnett, [John: The Shepherd King](#), Revised., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2011), 196.

²⁷ Gary M. Burge, “[Gospel of John](#),” in *John’s Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition., The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Paris, ON; Eastbourne: David C Cook, 2005), 127.

ourselves to God in the confidence that he will provide the help we need. Prayer humbles us as needy and exalts God as wealthy (*Desiring God*, 160–61).”²⁹ When payer requests are made in Jesus’ name and according to His will they are always granted!

Reflection. To truly know God’s will requires one to have an intimate relationship with Him. When through the power of the Holy Spirit we start thinking with the mind of Christ and accept His ways as being higher than our ways, then prayer time becomes not a greedy person trying to rub Christ like a genie in a bottle to satisfy one’s temporal desires, but instead an opportunity to put to voice kingdom requests that are always joyfully granted!

Conclusion

In today’s sermon I talked about four conditional promises that come to fruition to those who have a personal relationship with the Lord. Though living in a fallen world often means our hearts are stirred up with doubts, confusion, uncertainty, and fear, if we know Jesus then we can take great solace in knowing that He has not abandoned us but instead is preparing an eternal home for them at His Father’s house where God will forever dwell with His people. And if we know Jesus

²⁸ Marvin Richardson Vincent, [Word Studies in the New Testament](#), vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887), 242–243.

²⁹ Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, [Exalting Jesus in John](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 295.

then thankfully, we know how that Christ who is the only way, the truth, and the life. What prevents us from being adopted into God's family and going to heaven is not the absence of good deeds or the performance of the correct religious rituals but the lack of faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Son. While declaring but one way to the Father might appear to be religiously exclusive and offensive to many, God alone has the right to assign a singular path to Him by faith in His Son which transcends ethnicity and culture. If we know Jesus, then we also know the Father as well because Christ is in the Father and the Father is in Him. While we cannot physically see God, we can come to know Him through the words and actions of His Son Jesus, through communion of the Holy Spirit, and through prayer. Ultimately knowing Jesus empowers us to surpass the works He performed on earth, not in quality of miracles but in terms of quantity. This remarkable feat is achieved by ordinary individuals like us, making it a truly astounding miracle. And finally, we are promised that anything we ask in Jesus' name, that is according to His will and for the glory of the Father, Christ will grant the request! So, in knowing Jesus there are many promises that are granted to His own. Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior and if so, are you standing on these promises?