

The Upper Room

Sermon #3: “Jesus, You Should Leave!”

John 14:1-29

Dr. Matt Cassidy ---- March 19, 2023

In studying this passage this week, I was struck by the powerful emotions that are taking place here, the compassion, and the way Jesus is showing compassion, the way He consoles the eleven men who are His faithful followers. When you step back from the details of this and see not just what it says, but what it means and the difference it makes ... I want us to look at that—look at what Jesus is doing and how He’s doing it. It’s breathtaking. I love Him so much more, in other words!

We’re in the Upper Room study together, and the Upper Room is where the last hours, the last teachings of Jesus to His most intimate followers, take place. And in the context of John chapter 14, Judas has already left to go and get his money for turning Jesus in. Now it’s just the eleven who are faithful.

John 13:33

Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, “Where I am going, you cannot come.”

And so, Jesus is going to telegraph what’s going to happen in the next few hours. And He starts that by dropping this bomb on them. He says in chapter 13, verse 33, “My little children, I am with you just a little longer. And you will seek me, and just as I’ve said to the Jews, I’ll say to you now also, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’”

Jesus uses this especially affectionate term “little children” with these eleven grown men, because He knows this news is rattling them. He has turned hardened sailors and religious zealots into toddler boys hearing the worst thing they could imagine, and that is “I’m leaving

you.” And so, they’re in a panic, they’re afraid. And to know what Jesus is saying, we have to understand the audience to whom He’s speaking. You have to understand the audience to understand the message of Jesus. And these men are concussed by that sentence, that “I’m leaving and you can’t follow me.” They are scared, they are confused, they are a little bit angry. And they’re going to rattle Him with questions trying to talk Him out of what He just clearly said.

And Jesus is going to answer their fears. He’s going to say, “Do not be afraid. Here are the reasons you are not to worry.” That’s what I love about this.

So, I’m thinking, is anybody out there wanting to know how Jesus would answer the question, “You don’t need to worry ... why should I worry? How do I stop being afraid?” That’s what we’re talking about today. It could be for you.

John 14:1

Do not let your heart be troubled; [keep on] believing in God, [keep on] believing in me.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world give, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

He sees their fear. This pericope, this section of Scripture, begins and ends with that in mind. Chapter 14, verse 1 says, “Do not let your heart be troubled; [keep on] believing in God and [keep on] believing in me.” The end of this section, verse 27: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled”—there it is again—“nor let it be fearful.”

These two sentences are like the front and back book cover to this section on Jesus helping these men reason their way out of their fear. And there are four chapters with four different reasons that Jesus is going to say, *You shouldn’t be afraid*, and *It’s going to be a good thing that I leave*.

Jesus Responds with Reason Wrapped in Emotion

And I want you to see how reasonable He is and accepting of their emotions. Because their emotions are reasonable. And so, I want you to see how He's going to have reason wrapped in emotion to give to them and say, *Okay, let's change the way you're feeling by the way you're thinking.* And He's going to replace the extremely powerful emotion of fear and turmoil with a greater emotion: peace—a stronger one, a more natural emotion. I'll explain that later, but a truer emotion to us—peace and tranquility.

As a matter of fact, He's going to be so reasonable in explaining why you and I and these men shouldn't be worried and that it's good that He should leave, that by the end of these four chapters, we should say, *You know what, Jesus? You're right. You should leave.*

“Jesus, You should leave”—that's the title of the sermon. I don't think that's ever been the title of any sermon ever—“Jesus, You should leave.”

1. Focus: It's Me. It's God

Watch, the first words to help these men deal with this news that He's leaving—the first point is: *Focus on me; focus on God.*

John 14:1

Do not let your heart be troubled; [keep on] believing in God, [keep on] believing also in me.

Verse 1 says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Keep on believing in God. Keep on believing in me.”

The first part of the sentence is a command: “Do not let your heart be troubled.” A new translation would say, “Hey, just stop worrying.” Now I've tried that at home. It does not work. That way of attacking this doesn't work with the kids, it most definitely does not work with a certain woman to whom I'm married. “Just stop worrying”—don't do that. That's like when Jesus says, “Lazarus, come forth.” He can say that. No one else can.

But I think the reason I didn't do this right is because He follows it with some really good reasons. Jesus adds reasons to this order. He says, “Don't be troubled, don't be distressed, don't

be in turmoil.” And then He follows it with two imperatives: “Keep on believing in God! Keep on believing in me!”

The context of this story right here is that in the next sixty hours these men are going to be in a slow-motion train wreck where Jesus is going to be betrayed; and then He’s going to be tried, unjustly; and then He will be crucified and buried. And in the context of all that, He’s saying, *No, no, no, don’t be fixated on the story; focus on the storyteller. Keep on believing in God. Keep on believing in me. Trust me. We have history together here. We’ve been living our lives together. Remember the feeding of the multitude? You didn’t think that was going to end well, and it did. Remember the walking on water? Yeah—two weeks ago I raised Lazarus from the dead. These stories start sad and they end happy. You know me. Trust me. Do not get lost in what you don’t understand, what you can’t comprehend or what you can’t even know. Focus on what you do know—me. Continue to have faith in me. Trust in me. “Great is Thy faithfulness”—I’ve been faithful to you.*

This is the key to living the Christian life, living by faith. In the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 8 is a pivotal chapter in the entire Bible. Here’s the outline. If you forget the faithfulness of God, you’ll die. If you remember the faithfulness of God, you’ll live. And you have to remember the faithfulness of God in the least hopeful circumstances like it says in Romans 4 about Abraham: “Though it was against all hope that he could have a baby, he believed.”

The application of this section is like what we sang about—“Great is Thy faithfulness morning by morning . . .” Every morning we should wake up and refocus and continue our faith in God, continue our faith in Christ, keep in mind who we’re talking about, who we’re putting our faith in. Don’t worry, believe in the sovereignty of God. He loves us and He’s in charge of everything.

2. Jesus Must Leave So That We Can Have a Certain, Future Home

The second chapter that’s in this book that’s here is that Jesus has to leave because He’s making a certain home for us—a certain future home.

John 14:2-3

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.

Look what it says in the next two sentences. “My Father’s house has many rooms. If that were not so, would I have told you that I’m going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go there 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.”

Jesus says, *I have to leave to prepare a place for you.* He has a reason and a purpose. He has to provide a secure, certain, guaranteed experience of eternal life in the presence of the Father. “Prepare a place for you” is not the idea of Him building something, but rather, His death on the cross prepares that place for us. He’s the bridge that gets us into the palace of Yahweh God over the moat of justice and the penalty that we have for our sins. He gets us to that place. He’s preparing that place for us.

In the ancient Near East, the way these men might have heard this is that, when you got engaged or betrothed as a man, you and your dad started working on the house. You built another room, you built another wing, you built a second floor. And after the wedding and the reception and those sorts of things, you came back and you lived—feel it—you were living under the same roof as the father. It’s going to be a safe place. It’s a promise of an eternal home to be in the presence of God.

And that’s not all. He says, “And I will come back and I will take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.” Jesus is fighting reasonable emotions that they’re feeling after hearing that Jesus is leaving—they’re probably feeling abandoned or maybe rejected, they certainly feel fear—and He’s going to attack those with reasonable emotions that are deeper still. Home—in a word, home. “And you will dwell in the house of the Father forever.” Think about the power of that word “home.” He’s going to prepare a room for you in the king’s house.

What does it mean—“home”? It’s not a house—it’s more than that. Home means a place where you belong. It’s a place where you’re accepted, where you’re known, where you get to love other people. Home is a place where the sights and the sounds and the smell and the colors all form a collage, and it’s safe. Home.

I think our idealized and romantic views of heaven, or even the word “home”—many of you didn’t have a safe home and didn’t have this Hallmark version. I don’t think the Hallmark version of home comes from Hallmark. I think it comes from our argument from desire, that God makes us desire a place where we are safe. This is God calling us to a place where we walk up and we hear our kind of music playing when we walk up to the door, and we’re greeted there, and there’s nice lighting and a fireplace, and the room smells like our favorite food, and we have a place at that table. *That’s where I sit—that’s my home.* We long for that.

When I was in college, I saw a horrific auto accident. And when they were putting these various young men on stretchers, one of them, as he was being put into the ambulance, kept yelling, “Just take me home! Just take me home! I’ll be all better, just take me home!” That’s a longing inside of us. We just want to get back.

And Jesus says this: “I’m preparing a room for you.” *And the next three days and the years after that, you are going to be persecuted unjustly. You will be beaten. All but one of you will be martyred. And the one who doesn’t get martyred will wish he was. And then you’ll be home. No matter what happens to you, I promise you a secure room in the King’s house.*

Peter Kreeft is a philosophy professor at Boston College. I love this book—for its content—but the title alone won me: *Heaven, the Heart’s Greatest Longing.* It’s home. And Jesus says, I have to leave to make sure you can get there.

Job explains this in his prayers: “I know that my Redeemer lives, and after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. I myself will see Him with my own eyes, and how my heart yearns within me for that.”

Jesus says, “Don’t let your heart be troubled. Don’t be worried.” And then He says, “Heaven is real. It’s a real, concrete place. And there is love there and there is laughter and there’s learning and there’s communion with one another. And in the Father’s house, heaven is so beautiful that its glory cannot be enjoyed or understood in this life.

Have you ever read these three passages in the Bible where someone gets taken up into heaven, or into the third heaven, or whatever? And then they come back and describe it and it

sounds like they're kind of drugged out, really bad. And the reason is because they can't find words to describe it. And even in Revelation (oh, the streets are gold), gold makes a terrible asphalt. So, He's just trying to put words to something that we can't understand, as in Corinthians it says that the mortal cannot inherit immortality. We can't even comprehend the glory that we'll be enjoying. It is such an upgrade that we can't even take this body with us, thank God. We get a glorified body that Daniel says will shine like the stars. And Jesus is saying right here, *I promise you, that's waiting for you. I have to make that happen. I've got to build that bridge, and that's why I have to leave. I'm going to the cross. There's no other way to get there.*

And the people in the early Church and the saints throughout the years that sincerely believe this to be true live supernatural experiences. And they live without fear. Especially in the early Church, the Romans could not grasp what these Christians were believing, because they were singing on the way to becoming lion food. And they were praising God for the ability to suffer for Jesus' name. They felt like they were getting a shortcut to an eternal room that was waiting for them, prepared by Jesus.

Paul said it succinctly in Romans chapter 8. He says, "I consider the current suffering nothing compared to the glory that awaits." No matter what the current suffering is, there's heaven in the Father's house, and Jesus will be there. When He says, *I'm going to come back and get you*, the feeling is, *I'm not leaving you; I'm making our relationship permanent. I'm not going to leave you; I'm going to leave for a while, I'm going to come back and I'm going to make sure that you know that I'm with you forever. I've got to leave. Don't worry. Trust in me. I have to leave to get you an eternal home.*

3. Jesus Must Leave: We Get to Do Ministry and Prayer

John 14:12-14

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

The third thing He says here is that Jesus has to leave so that we get to do the ministry and enjoy a vital prayer life. Verse 12 through 14 say, “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I’ve been doing, and they will do even greater things than these ...” And here’s why. “... because I am going to the Father.” *I have to leave so that you can do the ministry, see?* “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.”

Don’t be troubled that I’m leaving. Be glad that I’m leaving, because I’m going to turn the ministry over to you. That’s the reason, but look what He’s saying. There’s a ministry vacuum that’s going to take place. This is the beginning of “Every believer’s a minister.” I love this—*You’re going to be the ministers.*

And going back to the theme here, He’s going to take a very strong emotion—fear and terror that Jesus is leaving—and He’s going to reasonably replace that with a better emotion. And what’s the emotion? It’s joy. It’s purpose. *I’m going to leave so that you can have a better expression of what your life is for.* There is nothing like being used by God to do good works in Jesus Christ that He prepared before the beginning of time. And when you find yourself in that moment when you’re living a series of God stories and being directed and guided by the Holy Spirit, and you’re speaking into people’s lives or repenting with courage—whatever it might be—but you’re in the will of God, you’re going to love that, He says. *You’re going to love that I’m gone. I’m going to turn the ministry over to you.*

Well, in the context of being in the will of God and doing these things that are even greater than what Jesus is doing, you’re going to need to talk a lot. You’re going to need ministry cues. That’s why He says two times, “You pray anything in my name, it’s yours. Just ask.” And

what that means is this; there are two ways of looking at it; they both work, don't get me wrong. "Pray in my name"—because Jesus allows us to have this exciting prayer life; He's the phone company that makes this whole thing work. And the second one is a more profound definition here. You're signing something or saying something in someone's name, you're signing it on their behalf. Like, *he's not here, so I'll sign it for him.*

In other words, this is what Jesus would pray. I'm praying the prayers of Jesus. That's why I'm saying, "In Jesus' name." And whenever you ask in that way, your prayers will be granted. I don't want to turn this into a lesson on prayer, because that's not the bigger picture here. That's not the meaning of what's happening. It is answering the question why not to be afraid and why it's good that Jesus leaves. And the answer is so that you can do the ministry of Jesus, so that you can have an ongoing contact with Jesus and enjoy that.

The problem is that reasonable emotions are making them afraid, terrified, confused. And the consolation is just as sentimental, but with better reasons and better emotions. *While you're doing the ministry, we'll be talking all the time.* It sounds like Jesus is leaving, and He keeps coming back and saying, *Nah. I'm going to take you to heaven and we'll be there together forever. And while you're here, we'll be talking all the time.*

I was reminded of the contrast of when I moved out to California for about four years in the eighties—four years. I got one call from home. And it probably had a lot to do with the fact that those were long distance calls, and if you're old enough to remember, those were real money. And so, *I'll see you in the summer maybe.* We just didn't talk much.

I have two daughters out there now and we talk all the time. And a lot of my phone calls to them I'm saying, *I just wanted to hear your voice. I just want to talk. You don't even have to say anything important. I'm just here to be with you.*

That's the emotion—that's the picture here, that we're always talking to the Father, because of His Son and the power of the Holy Spirit. In the words of Jesus, "Ask, seek, knock." *Come on, let's talk!*

And it's not long distance. *You'll be glad I left. Trust in me. We've got history together. I'm leaving to prepare an eternal home for you. That's why you'll be glad I left. You'll be able to do crazy ministry, and we'll talk all the time about it.*

4. Jesus Must Leave: So That the Holy Spirit Will Indwell Us

And the last thing He says is that He must leave so that the Holy Spirit will indwell us. He's giving us a constant companion. This is radical in theology.

John 14:15-17

If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you.

Verses 15 through 17 say, “If you love me, you’re going to keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate (or Helper) to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you.”

“If you love me, you’re going to keep my commandments.” It sounds very old covenant, Old Testament. *Just obey*. But this is radically different, because Jesus is saying now, *I’m going to partially fulfill the new covenant. By me leaving, the Father will be able to send the Spirit, and He will live inside of you*. It says, “And He will live with you and be in you forever.”

And these eleven men—I think if they were astute on how the Holy Spirit works in the older Testament, they’d think, *What just happened here?* What happened was that because Jesus was going to go to the cross, He’s going to change the very essence of our spirit and make it completely righteous. We’ll inherit the righteousness of Jesus. And because of that new status the Holy Spirit can move in. He won’t live somewhere that’s not clean with the righteousness of Christ. And He’s transformed us, so now the Spirit will come into us and seal himself within us—lock the door.

In the Old Testament, all you could experience were these temporary come-and-leave situations, usually for a particular purpose. And now, because of the righteousness of Christ, we’re going to have the Holy Spirit live in us.

John 15:8

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Jesus is reading their thoughts. He knows their emotions. Listen how He's speaking what they're already thinking. "I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you." That's what they feel like. There's no mother in this story. It's just Jesus. He says, *I'm leaving.*

We're going to be orphans.

No. I don't do that. That's not who I am. I'm Yahweh. I will never leave you nor forsake you. And now I'm going to give you the Spirit that will be sealed inside you.

John 14:25-26

All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

He goes on and tells more about the Spirit, verses 25 and 26. "All of this I have spoken to you while still with you. But the Advocate (the Holy Spirit), whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you."

A helper's going to come. The word is "paraclete," the way we can transliterate it. The prefix "para"—like paralegal, paramedic—means "a person who's next to." This "next to" helper is like a coach, a personal coach who's right next to you, counseling you, telling you the way you're supposed to do it, telling you how you're doing it wrong, guiding and directing you. And the purpose of that is to become mature in Christ. He's going to help get you there.

At Grace we say a person that's holy—that's our ambition, to help people become holy. Holiness is becoming like Christ in all of life. We've come up with a pretty concise formula. It's the Spirit + Truth + Relationships. Well, here it is.

It's the Spirit, because becoming like Christ in all of life, mature and complete and lacking in nothing, that's going to be a supernatural event. We're all going to need supernatural help.

Truth: we mean the Bible, because the Bible is God's original heart language. That's His native language. That's the primary way He's going to speak to us.

And in relationships, we just learned last week—love one another. So now we have the Spirit, and it says here that the Spirit is going to remind us of everything, the truth. And now with relationships, He's saying, *You're going to be glad I left.*

Besides "Helper," newer translations sometimes now are translating the word as "Advocate." The reason is that it's more specific for what the Holy Spirit is doing for us. Advocate was a legal title for what we would call a lawyer today. And the idea is that he's standing next to us (think about you in trouble—imagine that—some of you, not so hard). And you're standing before the judge and he's speaking to the judge for you. And he's speaking to you what the judge says. So, you're asking him to speak all the legal talk, and when the judge says something back with all the fancy words, you look at your advocate and say, "What just happened?"

"You're going to jail."

"Oh."

So, in the context of the Spirit, He speaks for us. He's our advocate. Sometimes we don't know how to pray. In Romans chapter 8, it says specifically that this is what the Spirit does. "And in the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses; when we don't even know how to pray as we should, the Spirit himself intercedes as our advocate. He intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words, and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is." He knows how you meant to pray, He knows the darkness that's keeping you from being sober enough to put words to what your longings are. He'll pray for you. He's translating what you said into what you meant to say to the Father.

Also, He's our advocate when the judge speaks to us. And since the native tongue of Yahweh is the Bible, when you memorize and meditate on holy Scripture, you'll be walking down the road, maybe feeling hopeless or gloomy, and then ... Bam! Passages just come to your mind. Romans 8—here we go again—"If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His only Son, but freely gave Him and graciously gave Him up for us, how will He not

give us any good thing? Who's going to bring a charge against God's chosen? Only God judges. Only God justifies. Who condemns? No one. In fact, Jesus Christ died—no more—He rose again and He's sitting at the right hand of the Father as our advocate, interceding for us.”

That's why it says that the Spirit is another advocate. We have the Spirit and the Son talking to the Father for us. I'm glad Jesus left so He could send the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a power; He's a person. He's the third person of the Trinity. You don't try to get more Spirit in you. The real question is how much of you is in the Spirit. It's about submission to that. That's another day.

We're looking today at the existential needs of these men and us and how God is answering those. The passionate promises of Jesus Christ, the reasonable things that He's given us give us consolation and peace when we are experiencing life. We're reminded that Jesus says, *It's me that you're trusting in, remember? Don't trust in what's going on around you. I'm going to leave, and it's purposeful—so that I can prepare a place for you, a room in the palace. And that will give you peace. And I'm going to leave so that you can enjoy ministry and a conversation, because you're going to have a lot of questions about that ministry you're in. And so, we're going to have purpose.*

And then finally, He says, *I'm going to leave so the Spirit can come and live inside of you. And that will give you power.*

All of these appeals are reasonable and rational and they give us a better emotion to enjoy.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Look what He says in verse 27: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.” The word “peace” there is not the absence of war; it is being whole and complete and tranquil, being right with God, the way you were meant to be. And what's great about that passage is that it's just a classic understanding of God.

You don't earn this. You don't fight for this peace. He says, *I'm just going to leave it here. I'm going to give it to you.* Because grace transforms. Gifts from God are really what change the human soul from the inside out. If you understand this section of the book that begins and ends with "Do not be afraid", those four chapters, and you believe that to be true and you think they make sense, you would say, *Jesus, I think You should leave.*

John 14:28-29

You heard me say, "I am going away and I am coming back to you." If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

Look what he says in verses 28 and 29: "You heard me say, 'I'm going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe." ... and not be afraid.

John 16:6-7

Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. ⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

Two chapters later He says, *Quit asking me about where I'm going and why you can't come and follow me.* In verse 6: "Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate (the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I do go, I will send Him to you."

Jesus, You should leave.

When I was looking at these many verses, one of the things I walked away with is that I love how Christianity is the thinking person's religion. And not just a thinking person's religion, but I love how holistic it is—body, soul, spirit, intellect, emotion, and will. And again, Jesus is

saying, *Hey, look, I understand that you have reasons to believe and have these emotions. Again, it's a faith that acknowledges the way we think and the way we feel. And then Jesus comes in and says, "Well, come, let us reason. Let's talk about why you have those beliefs that lead to those emotions, and I'm going to tell you why you ought to have these beliefs and greater and deeper and truer emotions."*

And I say greater, deeper, and truer, because fear and shame cannot be found in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Think about that. Shame and fear come in Genesis chapter 3 after the Fall. They are not part of our original design. And becoming like Christ in all of life is getting us back to the Garden of Eden where these two plagues no longer rule our lives. And how do we get there? "Great is Thy faithfulness"—knowing who we believe in, knowing the sovereign plan; that in the middle of the chaos, whatever that chaos is, there is a tranquility knowing that we're going to end up with a room with the King.

But until then, we're going to have ministry. We're going to have great conversations about that purpose. And the Holy Spirit the whole time is supernaturally empowering us to become like Christ in all parts of our lives.

I'm glad Jesus left. How about you? I love how it's a thinking faith. I love how He appreciates our emotions and then makes them true.

Well, I wouldn't be doing justice to the passage without bringing up a section that's in this when Thomas says, "Hey, where you're going, we don't know the way to get there." And Jesus says, "No, you do. I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No one comes to the Father but through me."

If you want what Jesus is promising here—an eternal home, a ministry and purpose, and a prayer life that's vital—between now and then, that the Holy Spirit would dwell inside of your spirit, there's only one way that happens. Jesus is the only way because He's the only one to build a bridge over sin to get us into the presence of the righteous, holy God. He is the truth because He's the ultimate expression of the revelation of God. And He is the life because He killed death, and no one else has.

So, if you've never trusted Jesus Christ for the cost of your sin, the death that you owe the Father, that He might replace your guilt and shame with His honor, maybe today's that day for you. It's a gift. He leaves it, like He does peace, just for us to take. That's what faith means, and believing in that.

What a great God we serve. I love how deeply He cares for us. That's today's message.
Will you join me in prayer?

Lord, for those men and women, boys and girls, who You're calling and pulling and courting to become one of Your children, I ask that they would respond; that they would desire a home with You and know that there's no way they can get there without Your provision of Jesus Christ's death. And His resurrection proves that You received that and accepted that.

Lord, for us that know these things to be true, we are so grateful for this interaction; how personal and personable and fully loving to the whole man You are, to make us well, so that we wouldn't fear and be anxious and we'd be believing and focusing on the right things. We are so grateful for how gentle and caring You are. And we can see that in this life with Jesus.

Lord, help us live that way before our friends, our family, before our enemies, that we might become like Christ in all of life. And all God's people prayed, in Jesus' name. Amen.