

Easter 5 Year A

John 14:1-14

Opening Prayer

(based on Psalm 31)

Praise the Lord,
who has shown us the wonders of his unfailing love;
and who, for the sake of his name,
leads us and guides us.

In you, O Lord, we put our trust.

You are our God,
and our lives are in your hands.

*Lord, let the light of your face shine on us
as we celebrate together in your presence. Amen.*

Hymn: Surrender All

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

Refrain:

*I surrender all, I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

All to Jesus I surrender,
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;
Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power,
Let Thy blessing fall on me.

Author: Judson W. Van DeVenter (1896)

Tune: SURRENDER (Weeden)

Window of Wonder

Jesus' Words of Peace.

Creative response:

You may like to reflect on a picture of Jesus this week and what it tells you about the Heavenly Father.

Closing Prayer

(based on John 15:1-8, 1 John 4:7-21)

*Go now, and love one another,
because love is from God.
Proclaim God's salvation to every generation.
Remain in Jesus Christ,
and like branches of a vine, draw your life from him.*

*And may God the vine grower tend you
and make you fruitful;
May Christ Jesus abide in you and give you life;
And may the Holy Spirit cast out all fear
and fill you with God's love.*

*We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
...In the name of Christ. Amen.*

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Devotion - Bush Chapel – The Way, Truth and Life

The passage before us today is really a message for troubled hearts. This is how this passage begins. There are many things that trouble us in this life, for which we often seek answers, and when we think that we have found those answers, often our hearts are left just as empty and troubled as ever before.

The problem in this passage is that the disciples were confused and afraid with the thought that Jesus was about to leave at any moment without any direction and hope for the future. We all know what it is like when someone close to us suddenly leaves us. They leave us with broken hearts and gaps within our lives that we never seem to get recover from.

In the case of the passage before us, Jesus begins by saying that Heaven, the place to which he was about to go to, is a home which is permanent. Unlike our fleeting homes on this earth, which are here one minute, and gone the next, the Father's house has many rooms or dwelling places. When the Authorized Version says "In my Father's house are many mansions", we find an interesting meaning for the word "mansion." The Greek word used does not mean an imposing house, or a Mac Mansion, but rather a resting place, or as the American Standard Version translates, "abiding places." This meaning is supported by verse 23 further on in this chapter, where the same Greek word is used by Jesus, when he says, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them, and make our home or "dwelling place" with them."

And so the disciples should not be “troubled” about Jesus’ departure, because he has not only gone ahead to prepare a place for them and for us, but that very act also means that he will come back and personally take us to be with himself, in order that we may finally dwell with him forever. It was as if Jesus was saying, “We have no lasting home here on this earth, but my father’s house is home where we will be together for all eternity.” Bishop Ryle has put it this way: “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, and they that enter shall find that they are neither unknown nor unexpected.” Finally, Thomas questioned whether it is humanly possible to know the Way to the Father’s house, since they didn’t really know where Jesus was going. To this Jesus answered, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through me.”

This could be rephrased this way: “I am the Way, in that I am also the Truth and the Life, which further supports my claim of being the only Way to the Father, for he that has seen me has also seen the Father, in terms of his character, glory, words, and deeds. Jesus is saying ‘Look at me and follow my ways which are true and bring life. When you see me and what I say and do, you have also seen your Heavenly father. We are here with you.’ Jesus is the way to our Heavenly destination.

May our troubled hearts find joy, peace and hope, in this message today. Amen.

Rev Dr Ted Woods.

