



The Believer's Blessed Eternal Hope
An Exegetical Examination Of
John 13:21 - John 14:6

“What Did Jesus Really Mean When He Said,
‘Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled?’”

by

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Throughout the last two centuries one of the most beloved passages of scripture has been John 14:1-6. In it is delineated the one distinguishing element which separates Christianity from all other world religions, that being, the bona fide assurance of eternal life with Christ in heaven for all who believe in His name.

Background To The Passage:

To fully understand and appreciate John 14:1-6, an examination of John 13:21-38 is essential first, for in it may be hidden the reason for Jesus sharing what He later communicates to his disciples. For approximately three and a half years Christ's disciples have been with Him following Christ, learning from Him the 'lessons of the Kingdom'. By the time they meet with them for this festive meal in the Upper Room, they knew that Christ, "had come from God, for no other man did the things which He did".¹

John 13 informs the reader that Christ and His disciples met, as may have been their custom, at the end of the week, for supper in a large upper room, which may have been provided by an admirer of Christ.² From the disciples perspective, this would be another private gathering during which they would have fellowship a time of prayer, and more in-depth teaching from Christ, their Rabbi. But, much to their surprise, instead of it being one of many fellowship meals, it was the last of all meals Christ and His disciples would ever have. Barry D. Smith has rightly called this supper, "The Last Passion Meal,"³ for during it, the intents of God and man were fully disclosed.

Jesus is the central figure at this gathering. The group is seated at a Jewish triad table⁴ with all the guests being in close proximity one to another, and facing Christ. The disciples give Christ their undivided attention, for every word He would speak would contain special meaning. But Jesus does not speak! Instead, as the disciples begin to take their place, He enacts the first of two servant roles by washing the disciples feet as "he pours water upon them as they are placed over a copper basin, messaging the feet slowly with his hands, and wiping them with a napkin,"⁵ starting with Peter.

Having completed this, Jesus enacts His second servant role by allowing Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon⁶, to unjustly betray Him to the High Priests. Without embarrassing or condemning Judas for his planned, seditious act of betrayal, Christ offers him a piece of dipped fellowship bread which Judas accepts, and then He allows him to leave to

1. John 3:1 & 2 If Nicodemus, as a bystander of Christ's activities, understood this, it can be suspected with certainty that the disciples also recognized this.

2. Mark 14:14 & 15.

3. Barry D. Smith, "The Chronology Of The Last Supper", *The Westminster Theological Journal*, (Vol. 53, No. 1, Spring 1991), 31.

4. Edersheim, *The Life And Time Of Jesus The Messiah*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Associated Publishers & Authors, 1976), 701-703

5. Fred H. Wright, *Manners And Customs Of Bible Lands*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), 75.

6. John 13:29 - 31.

do what he may have planned at an earlier time.⁷ In so doing Christ declares to the disciples the true meaning of the betrayal; He will be arrested, He will be beaten, but He will willingly lay down His life for others as God's servant⁸ so the Father will be glorified, and after this, He will leave them for "a little while".⁹

The Troubled Eleven:

As the impact of Christ's words gripped the disciples, disbelief, consternation, dismay, fear, and immeasurable despair overwhelmed them. Soon everything Christ had told them dissolved into meaningless chatter, and their intense resolve to follow the Master vanished into oblivion. This acute anguish being experienced by the disciples would not pass quickly; rather, it would haunt them for an extended time if they did not find consolation. D. A. Carson comments:

That incredible night indelibly imprinted into their hearts, minds, and souls embarrassment, grief and tension that would be forever visible to the disciples until after the resurrection, when, then, they would be able to put all that Jesus had said to them at this time in proper perspective.¹⁰

Jesus, noticing His follower's excruciating emotional pain, shows empathy to them saying, "Let not your heart be troubled," hoping this would provide them calming comfort and assurance. Nothing else would have been befitting for this moment for Jesus realized that the disciples had lost an objective perspective on what He had earlier said, and had taken "I will leave you" to mean that He was to abandoning them. Now Jesus begins to redress the misunderstanding by saying, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Noticeable in Christ's admonishment, "let not", is His choice of the term *μη* instead of *ουκ*, "which represents strong resistance to negative behaviour based on misappropriated thoughts or emotions."¹¹ Jesus recognized the immense damaging force irrational emotions could have on an individual as they cause him to doubt themselves, their circumstance or their leader. Therefore, He says, "never give room to the destructive emotions of the heart which are troubling you and drawing you away from confidently trusting me. In saying this, Christ is not calling his followers to deny their feelings; He, on the other hand, is inviting them to realize that they are not in charge of the pending

7. Kenneth Hein, "Judas Iscariot: Key To The Last Supper Narratives", *New Testament Studies*, Vol 17, No. 2, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, January 1971), 231 claims that Judas may have arranged the plot at least two weeks earlier. From John we learn that the High Priests were fully cognizant when Christ would be in the garden. This was not by some sixth sense, but because they had already been informed of the scheduled meeting in the garden. The High Priests bring many troops with them because they are frightful that the pre-arranged plot to arrest Christ may come to knowledge of the disciples - it could backfire, and the troops were necessary to counteract any disruption to the arrest plot now in place.

8. John 13:36 & 37 cff Philippians 2:1-13.

9. John 13:31.

10. D. A. Carson, *The Farewell Discourse And Final Prayer Of Jesus - An Exposition Of John 14-17*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1980), 15.

11. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar Of The Greek New Testament In Light Of Historical Research*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1934), pages 328 - 329

matters at hand. YHWH, the Sovereign God is, and despite the fact that the disciples cannot fully comprehend what He has previously said, should not suggest that God has lost control of His divine plan for them.

To best describe the disciple's present emotional state, Christ uses the word *tarasseqw*, which, in its simplest form means "to be troubled", "to agitate or to trouble the waters" or "to distress the mind so it is placed into so great a state of disruption that it no longer thinks logically or rationally".¹² In its secondary extension, the word can also mean "to put things in disarray so that one, without another more superior's help, cannot reorder them aright."¹³

Jesus, deeply concerned about the His disciples' present precarious predicament, advise them to continue trusting God, *pisteuvete eij*" to;n qeo;n and to continue trusting Him, *kai; eij*" *ejme; pisteuvete*. In their weariness of distress, the disciples need to run to God "casting all their cares on Him,"¹⁴ embrace His promises, and rest in then rest in the assurance that He is grace will sustain them in the day of trouble. Once trusting in God becomes the norm of living for them, they will find that it is the most profitable, potent cure for the doubting, questioning heart. Until the disciples implement this prescription, this they will remain being crushed as is a grain of wheat when it is placed under a millstone.

Trusting YHWH would not be a foreign concept to the disciples. From the Torah, they would have learned that trusting God had been the predominant of devout Jews since Abram's¹⁵ call to follow God, and Moses'¹⁶ call to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt. From the Torah, they also learned that the Israelites trusted God for light, food, raiment, shelter, and protection from enemies while in the Wilderness, and God sufficiently provided all their needs were adequately on time, every time. The disciples' forefathers had found YHWH indisputably faithful in the past; now, Christ implores them to do the same, being fully confident that He will work everything to their eternal good end.¹⁷ As the disciples' trust in God matures, their toilsome anxiety will rapidly diminish, and, in its place will come courage, strength, and stamina so they will be able to face the future. Craig Keener adds:

Jesus would invite trust on the basis of His works if necessary. In context they do not constitute so much a summons to proceed beyond sign-faith to enduring faith (as in 20:31) as an encouragement to continue preserving in the face of opposition. The difference between these alternatives is less one of substance than one of delivery style: both are deliberative, but the exhortation to deeper faith may constitute firmer rhetoric potentially evoking the epidemic rhetoric of blame, whereas this passage is closer to the offer of pure encouragement and consolation which the disciples desperately need at this crisis time of their life.¹⁸

12. Samuel Bagaster, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon*, (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Limited, 1952), 395.

13. James H. Moulton & George Milligan, *The Vocabulary Of The Greek New Testament*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton Limited, 1972), 625.

14. I Peter 5:7 My translation from Greek manuscript.

15. Genesis 11:28, 31; Genesis 15:7; Nehemiah 9:7 16. Exodus 2: 17. Romans 8:28.

18. Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel Of John - A Commentary*, (New York: Henrickson Publishers, 2003), 931.

Christ, after having called the disciples to continuously trust God, implores them to also continuously trust Him even though, within a short time, He would be leaving them. Placing their confidence in Christ was not a foreign concept to the eleven. They had done this, without hesitation, when He first called them to abandon everything and follow Him, and this had been their deportment for the previous three years. In light of these previous acts of faith, it should not be difficult for the disciples to now trust God. In intreating them to trust Him He is requesting them to render exact the same trust they proffered to YHWH for, as He had taught them through His words and deeds, He was One with the Father¹⁶ - coequal, co-substantive, and co-participant with Him in everything, and could be trusted to the same capacity as YHWH was. It was for this one claim - "that He said God was his Father, making himself equal with God"²⁰ - that the High Priests wanted to kill Him. Related to disciples also trusting Christ, Carson rightly asks, "If Jesus invariably speaks the word of God, and performs the acts of God,²¹ should he not be trusted like God?"²² Healing consolation is only found in God,²³ and in Christ²⁴ whom God sent.

Knowing what they already knew, the disciples should have been resolute in their desire to trust Him unreservedly. But they could not because they lacked God's empowerment to know, love, and follow Christ whole-heartedly and unreservedly regardless what oppressed them. The disciples needed to learn that "it is reasonable to believe so that they can move out of themselves into God's real, large world of faith, truth and power,"²⁵ so they would be available to receive the greater, unlimited promises YHWH had in store for them, such as the dwelling place in the Father's house.²⁶

Now somewhat confident that He had allayed the disciples' oppressive fears, Christ now expounds to them His decision, His desire, and His design so the children will know the way to the Father's House.

Message:

Christ's Eternal Covenant Promises Of John 14

I Christ's Decision About His Relationship To His Children:

A) I Am Going To The Father's House: John 14:2 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.**"²⁷

The news that Jesus was going away should not have been a shock to the disciples; He had told them this on many earlier occasions. Now, just hours prior to His death, He clearly restates His destiny so His followers would be aware of what is about to take place, and so their 'clouds of suspicion' would be quickly dispersed. By saying, "I go

19. John 1:1 & John 1:14 cf John 17:22.

20. John 5:15 - 18.

21. John 5:19 ff.

22. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According To John*, (Lencester, England: Apollos Publishing, 1991), 488.

23. Psalm 141:8

24. Matthew 5:36

25. Samuel Hugh Moffett, "An Improbable Model", *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, (Vol. 1, Number 3, New Series 1985), 161.

26. Hebrews 11:6

27. "I go away" - John 7:23; John 12:35; John 13:33; John 14:9; John 16:16 - 18 .

away”, He reveals that He is going back to the Father’s house (o[jikia) from where He originally came.²⁸ The journey will necessitate both a horrid and painful death on Golgotha’s cross, and a glorious bodily resurrection, so eternal life for His children could be inaugurated and, forever sealed.²⁹ With this full disclosure the disciples, instead of being intensely troubled should have rejoiced with Christ,³⁰ for through this one act wthat they will be rejoined with Him, at some future time, in the Father’s house.

The Father’s house is ‘home’; a place of joyful welcome and acceptance regardless how long the separation may have been.³¹ In the Father’s house everyone is valued for their differences, but is treated as equal sons with equal inheritance rights,³² and is invited to the table for intimate, fellowship and rejoicing. The Father’s house is in ‘heaven’, the New Jerusalem, and the City of Our God, which is extant from and beyond the heavens we presently know, “for the earth may be His footstool,³³ and heaven may be His throne,³⁴ but it is not his place of eternal rest.³⁵ Although Christ says, “in my Father’s house”, he does not preclude that it is a private dwelling reserved for He and the Father alone. Rather, use of o[jikia, (plural of o[jikos meaning houses as general residences), signifies that there is room God’s for other sons³⁶ who have been adopted into the family.³⁷ Christ’s Father is also the disciple’s father. Therefore, when Christ stated, “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” He could have added, “and in *your* Father’s house are many mansions” without distorting the truth.

B) I Am Going To Prepare A Place For You:

poreuomai eltoimasai topon uhin

The second significant purpose of Christ’s return to the Father’s house is to prepare his children a place among many dwelling places - ejn th’/ oijkiva/ tou’ patrov” - or in the immediate influence of the Father where the believer’s eternal hope will finally be fully actualized.

As to exactly what Jesus meant by ‘dwelling places’ is not clear; there is no similar concept mentioned in scripture. However from His choice of the word, nomai, meaning “a place where the weary traveller stops for rest at the end of a wearisome day” or “a permanent residence in which one can set down roots knowing full well that he can never be evicted from it,³⁸ it is clear that believers will be have completed their spiritual trek towards heaven, a lavishly extravagant place of rest and peace which they never previously enjoyed.³⁹

Non biblical writings⁴⁰ suggest that the dwelling places represent the Ark Of The Covenant that the Children of Israel carried as an indication of God’s abiding presence and righteousness. Wherever the Ark Of The Covenant was, His presence would be found

28. Philippians 2.

29. John 3:16 & Ephesians 2:16.

30. John 14:28.

31. Luke 15:16 - 30

32. Romans 5.

33. Matthew 5:34 & 35.

34. Isaiah 66:1

35. Acts 7:49

36. John 1:12

37. Galatians 4:6 Consider Matthew 6:9 & Luke 2 Christ’s teaches His disciples to pray, “Our Father, who art in Heaven”.

38. F. W. Danker & W. Bauers, *A Greek Lexicon Of The New Testament And Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition, (Chicago: The Univerity Of Chicago Press, 2000), 658.

39. W. F. Arndt & F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek Lexicon Of The New Testament And Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1957), 529.

40. R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and The Pseudiepgripha of the Old Testament In English*, Vol. I, (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1973), 24. IEsdra1:51 & I Enoch 39:4

there also. Others suggest that it represents the present earth in a new reconstituted structure in the post-millennium age where God's creation will be restored to its original pre-Adamic condition.⁴¹ And still others present the view to mean "intermittent steps taken by believers on their way to spiritual maturity"⁴² as they are helped by the Holy Spirit. The most commonly accepted view, however, is that these dwellings are in heaven, separate and apart from this universe, where intimate fellowship with the Father and His sons, "in the Spirit constituted by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead"⁴³ will exist forever. Unquestionably, the abodes being prepared are sharply contrasted to the disciples' present abode as 'pilgrim tent'⁴⁴ dwellers on earth, as they move towards this reward.⁴⁵

The word 'many' cannot be overlooked. It does not mean separate apartments as found in a western housing complex, and neither does it mean different levels of intimacy the saints will have with the Father based on the rewards they receive. Rather, "since the Father and the Son are not content to dwell alone,"⁴⁶ it most appropriately should be translated "much room for many dwellers," for the Kingdom is open to the countless millions who have believed, and who who will believe in His words and His works.⁴⁷ As the sole proprietor⁴⁸ of these abodes, God has full authority to declare who may take residence in them. Everything that Christ will do as He is with the Father is for His children, which, again demonstrates His boundless, ever giving, servant love for them - "those that trust in God will never be disappointed."⁴⁹ Believers throughout all generations can place their complete confidence in these promises of God, for if they were not a true representation of who He is, He most certainly would not have made such preposterous, fraudulent statements as these, thereby placing His integrity in jeopardy.

II Christ's Delight In His Children:

I will come again, I will receive you unto myself, I will take you to be with me.

A) I will come again

pal in eῤcomai- historic present.⁵⁰ As such, it not only predicts what will happen, but it tells what is certain to happen as if it is already taking place. All doubts about the promise are permanently nullified.

The disciples' greatest fear appears to be that Christ was abandoning them as orphans to a life of difficulty, and a meaningless death. But Christ's compassion guarantees eternal life together with the Father,⁵¹ and to call Him to fulfill such a promise is

41. R. Paul Stevens, Christian Life Class, Regent College 2003.

42. Leon Morris, *The Gospel According To John*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1975), 638.

43. Leslie Newbigin, *The Light Has Come - An Exposition Of The Fourth Gospel*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1982), 180.

44. I Corinthians 5 delineates that we are presently in tents of flesh. It should not be a 'leap' to conclude that we then could be called 'pilgrim tent' dwellers.

45. Matthew 5:21 & 23.

46. W. H. Van Doren, *The Gospel Of John - Expository and Homiletical*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1981), 1097.

47. Not reserved to 144,000 spiritual and heavenly class as the Jehovah's Witness suggest. *Watchtower Magazine*, (Jan. 4, 1972), 197-98.

48. Hebrews 11:6

49. Romans 9:33

50. A. T. Robertson, *Ibid.*, 869 & 870.

51. John 3:16.

not too onerous a demand to place on the Son. He must come again, and He will come again!

It could be conjectured that this commitment was a direct promise applicable only to the eleven disciples.⁵² This, however is not conjunct with Scripture, for Jesus has already stated that all who “believe in His name will have eternal life”⁵³ with Father. It, therefore, can be concluded that this return will be a cataclysmic event by which Christ, Himself, will return bodily,⁵⁴ unexpectedly as a thief in the night,⁵⁵ to take unto Himself both the living and the dead,⁵⁶ who have their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life⁵⁷ because they have been born from above.⁵⁸ Paul tells believers that they should be continuously looking for Christ’s return⁵⁹ for this sure hope is immanent, it is important, it is immutable, and it is implicational!⁶⁰ No one, except the Father, knows exactly when Christ will come again, but because of Christ’s words ‘if it were not so I would have told you’, “the disciples should receive this promise as being so solid and certain that any doubts that the plans for Christ’s return are not fully laid would be abject foolishness to them.”⁶¹

B) I will receive you unto myself:

kai; paral hmyomai umas pros ejnauton - as before a historical present indicating the plan is irreversibly already in motion

These words are exactly what the disciples needed to hear; now, any fears of being left as orphans is removed. The term used by Christ is a relational term and may be best translated, “to take one along side close by as a well known and cherished friend”⁶² who has a common identity with the one receiving him. In receiving the disciples they will come as friends, and will be welcomed before the Father, as Christ’s equals. The disciples may pass from life one by one, but the reception by Christ into the Father’s home will be common to all as Christ says to them, “You have fought a good fight, you have finished the course, you have kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge is ready to give you, and all those that love His appearing.”⁶³

52. John 6:47

53. From Christ’s statement “in a little while” some have conjectured that Jesus is planning to return to the disciples and take them into a secret hiding place until the political stirring His death and resurrection has caused dies down. But there is a problem with this; Christ tells them specifically He also wants them to take them to His Father. The Father is in heaven, so this must refer to a later, more meaningful event.

54. Acts 1:11.

55. I Thessalonians 5:2.

56. I Thessalonians 4:16 - 20.

57. Revelation 3:5.

58. John 3:3 & 5.

59. I Thessalonians 1:10.

60. For some it will be unto eternal life, while for others it will be unto eternal damnation. One cannot read the story of Lazarus, the beggar, and the unnamed rich man, (Luke 16:19), without coming to some conclusion about the two eternal destinies open to humanity once they have passed from this life to the next.

61. W. Robertson Nicholl, *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Vol. I (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1967), page 822.

62. G. Delling, “Paral ambanw”, *Theological Dictionary of The New Testament*, Vol. IV, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1969), 13 & 14.

63. II Timothy 4:8-10. G. Delling, “Paral ambanw”, *Theological Dictionary of The New Testament*, Vol. IV, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1969), 13 & 14.

63. II Timothy 4:8-10.

C) I will take you with me so where I am, there you may be also:

ifha opou eijmi; egw; kai; uheis hte - as a historical present indicating the plan is irreversibly already in motion.

Jesus finally declares openly and forthrightly the real purpose for his temporary leaving the disciples - it is so that the Father's redemptive plan could be fully inaugurated thereby ensuring that "those that would come to the Father by Him,"⁶⁴ would know experientially the good end of believing together with Him. Jesus, throughout Scripture, promises He will "never leave nor forsake His children,"⁶⁵ but in this passage, the disciples are promised that they will stand before Him, as God, face to face which has never been done before.⁶⁶ Here, as in other passages, John uses e[gw e]jimi, a term of emphasis that indicates that Christ is very God. Therefore, when they come to Him they can be certain that He genuinely will be God and Father to His people!⁶⁷

III Christ's Design For His Children:

They will know the way to the Father. - ⁴kai; opou »egw¼ upagw oi]date thn odon

Jesus demonstrates His desire that His children be with Him by concluding this final, intimate evening of fellowship by saying, "And where I am going, and the path you are to continue following, you already know." By choosing oi]da, "knowledge gained by divine revelation,"⁶⁸ instead of ginwskw, "knowledge gained by experience,"⁶⁹ Jesus indicates that, based upon everything He has been teaching them in the past, the disciples should be well taught, well prepared, and well assured of their final eternal destiny at this, His certain departure back to the Father.

But, in spite of all that Jesus has taught his friends, Thomas, unabashedly, tells Jesus that the disciples have not comprehended the divine knowledge⁷⁰ about the way or the goal He has been attempting to inform them. And then, unexpected, and possibly embarrassing to the other disciples, Judas asks the pointed question, "How can we know the way?"

64. John 14:6 65. Hebrews 13:5.

66. John 1:18 & I John 4:12

67. Genesis 3:8 Even though Adam and Eve sinned, God still came to walk and talk with them in the cool of the evening.

Genesis 5:24 Encoch walked with God, and was not, for God took Him to Himself

II Kings 2:11 Elija was taken by God in a chariot of fire as he and Elisha walked together.

68. W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966), 298.

69. Richard C. Trench, *Trench's Synonyms Of The New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 283-284.

70. ouk oi]daen we are not having from Thomas, as contrasted to oi]date you are having from Christ's. The truth of Christ's going away may have been too difficult for the disciples to understand at this moment, and so Thomas has no other alternative to respond by saying, "we have no insight as to where you are going, and even though you intensely want us to be with you, we really don't know how to get there. This is not a condemnation of Christ or the disciples. The emotional impact of Christ's soon departure has clouded their understanding for the moment. However, after Christ returns for His intermittent encounters with the disciples, then, they remember, with clarity, everything Christ had earlier taught them about this matter.

To this question Jesus responds with three exclusive 'I am' statements which unqualifyingly demonstrate that He, Himself, is the way to God, "there is no other God, but Him,"⁷¹ and "there is no other name given on earth among men by which they must be saved."⁷² In the discussion so far Christ has been integral and explicitly clear about where He is going, and why He is going there. Now, with the same integrity, He explains that the 'route' the eleven must follow to arrive at the Kingdom is through Him as the "one mediator between God and man."⁷³ If Christ's word has been trusted beforehand without question, there is no reason why His word should be doubted now, and Thomas's question is uncalled for. D. A. Carson comments:

Thomas needs to understand that the way to the Father is through Jesus. This is the answer to Thomas's question. Jesus will no longer focus on the way He, himself, must go. The continuous questioning of Thomas and his colleagues turns on their failure to perceive who Jesus really is, and the nature of the mission He has set out to perform. Therefore, when Jesus states 'I am the way, the truth, and the life', He is really saying, 'if you knew me, you would know the my Father as well.'⁷⁴

Jesus provides the simplest, yet most powerful answer to Thomas. He says that He, Himself, is the way, the truth, and the life. In announcing these three claims, Christ uses the idiom, e[gw e[imi which is best translated, "I am that I am", and as an idiomatic construction the subject/object are regarded as being metaphorically equal.⁷⁵ Therefore, when Jesus makes these claims, Thomas can be assured Christ is not giving an opinion about the way one can get to the Father, or an opinion about the truthfulness of the Father, or an opinion about the kind of life the Father provides. Rather, He is saying that He, Himself is the way,⁷⁶ the truth, and the life by which those who desire to know and see the Father need to come for He, Himself, is the Father to whom everyone will come!

Christ has taught this before, but the disciples did not 'connect' with what He had then said. Now, if they could believe what He had earlier said, and what He is now saying about the path to the Father's house, they would be assured of a welcome into it along with the many millions who will receive the same warm welcome when He, the Father, returns to bring them home!

When Jesus says He is "the way", any Jew hearing Him would recognize the "the way" refers to the safest, most direct, and sure path to a destiny. The way may narrow,⁷⁷ but those that defer from turning off it always arrive at their destiny safe. As the righteous

71. Deuteronomy 3:29 72. Acts 4:12

73. I Timothy 2:5 Christ qualifies Paul's statement in John 4:16 by saying, οὐδεὶς ἐφ' ἑταίῳ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰσέρχεται διὰ ἐμοῦ - "no man comes to the Father but by me." As in John 14:1 the negative μή is employed here. When μή + δε are used connected one to the other, the translation best reads, "absolutely no one is coming to the Father except through me."

74. D. A. Carson, *Ibid.*, 31.

75. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Of The Greek New Testament*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 3.

76. Would be best defined as the 'type of behaviour' or 'type of spiritual conduct' that is required. Writings in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Proverbs, and Isaiah strongly suggest that the way refers to righteousness from which the people are not to stray. (Isaiah 30:21).

77. Mark 7:14.

way, Christ will bring those that follow Him home to the Father secure and safe. When Christ says He is the truth, any Jew hearing Him would recognize that He is the complete meaning of all that is said. Opinions are arguable and contestable, but truth stands absolute and accepted by all without dispute. Christ, as the truth, is indisputable, and no man “finds fault with Him”⁷⁸ or with what He says for He, without ambiguity or deceit, brings man to the full knowledge of God. When Christ says He is the life, any Jew hearing Him would recognize Him as the source of life, able to raise the dead⁷⁹ and to triumph over death Himself.

But all these things are not given by Christ as an ego-maniac in order to draw attention to Himself. Rather they are given, that those that see His works, and hear His words would believe, and in believing, have eternal life. The truth of the matter is Christ has come to be the saviour of the world and give eternal life to all those that call upon His name. His call still remains, “Whosoever will, let Him come to the water of Life and drink”

78. John 19:4 & 6.

79. John 11

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