

## BUMC Weekly Bible and Sermon Study

**Sermon: "A Place for You"**

**Scripture: John 14:1-14**

### **Key take-aways from the Scripture**

- In this section of the Gospel of John, Jesus is comforting His disciples after telling them of His impending departure, and that Peter will deny Him three times before the rooster crows.
- In verses 1-4, Jesus is telling the disciples to continue to have faith in Him and not let their hearts be troubled. They became overcome with grief when Jesus said that He would be departing from them. Trusting in God is what will help them get through the anxiety and pain they will soon experience.
- In verse 2, Jesus speaks of "many rooms" in His Father's House. This alludes to the dwelling places fixed in heaven for all who believe.
- Verses 5-14 speak to Jesus being the Way to the Father, Truth and Life. The NRSV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible explains, "In Jewish literature, God's true path of righteousness could be called "the way". Some scholars also think of the way of salvation in John 1:23."
- Verse 6 says, "No one comes to the Father except through me." Here, Jesus is not saying that He is one of several ways to God but is *the way* to God.
- In verse 8, Philip says to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Some scholars believe Philip's request echoes that of Moses in Exodus 33:18-23.
- Jesus replies to Philip in verses 9-14. Notably: (1) "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?'" and (2) "Believe 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 works themselves."
- Finally, in verse 14, Jesus says, "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

### Key take-aways from the Sermon

- This section of John begins with the apostles grieving the arrest of Jesus, and the events that had led to it. Jesus is aware of the grief and anguish these apostles are experiencing.
- When we lose a loved one and grieve, the world thinks we are just grieving the *person*. We are grieving several things, namely: our person, the person we used to be before they passed away, the dynamics with everyone else in our life, the milestones that person will never achieve, and conversations we wished we had with them. Jesus understood the hearts of His disciples and knows their complex and messy grief. Chapter 14 begins with “Do not let your hearts be troubled!”
- This text from John is read at many funerals and this text meets many troubled hearts who are in attendance (those sitting in the front pews).
- Verses 2-3 is the part of the story that we assume assures us (when we are at a funeral, for example) that our deceased loved ones have a room in heaven and were welcomed to eternal life by God. This idea gives us comfort and assurance! However, when Jesus says, “My Father’s House”, it is not simply a synonym for heaven.
- The term “My Father’s House”, in John’s Gospel, is a closeness that we can know right now. Jesus is saying that His return to God will make it possible for us to join in the relationship that He and God share. Here, the disciples (and us) can move into a place that God has prepared for us to be closer to God. God is assuring us that a place is not merely being prepared for us in heaven but is prepared for us right now...the kingdom of heaven that is at hand! Everywhere around us! The place for us is ready and all we need to do is nestle into the heart of God and find rest.
- In this story, Philip and Thomas are struggling to understand how to obtain this and get there. Jesus tells them that He is the way...Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life!
- There are two people that come to mind that share in the work of Christ with those they serve...hospice nurses and labor/delivery nurses. These are people who bring in life and assist with those who pass on. These are people who assist us in the new phase of our journey in life and a time of transformation. Jesus is asking His disciples to be like these nurses for the world.
- Do not let your hearts be troubled! There is a place for us right now in the presence of God. Jesus has already prepared a place for us, and we do not have to wait to go to it!

### Questions for Personal Reflection or Group Discussion

- What were your key take-aways from the sermon? How can you apply this to your everyday life?
- In verse 14, Jesus says, “You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” Was Jesus saying that we have an invitation to have anything that we want, as long as we ask “in His name”? What do you think this verse means?
- Rev. Casey Orr shares that there are two people that come to mind that share in the work of Christ with those they serve...hospice nurses and labor/delivery nurses. These are people who bring in life and assist with those who pass on. Can you think of other “angels” that serve us in similar ways?
- In what ways can we experience the “dwelling places in the Father’s House” here and now?
- For us today, we are called to share in the life of Christ and are dispatched to do the work of Christ. In what ways can we step into this call?

