

I Am the way the Truth & the Life

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Let's bow together in prayer and ask for the Lord's help as we come to his word just now.

Father, we thank you for the Lord Jesus afresh this evening. We thank you for the one who is the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. We thank you, our Father, for the one who brings us to God. We realize tonight that the Lord Jesus is not the best way to heaven, he's the only way and, our Father, we long tonight that those who are not in the way may get in the way this evening. To that end, we pray that as we come to thy word that we may know thy help. We pray for that fresh infilling and enduing of power from on high. We pray, Lord, that as we preach the gospel tonight, that it may not be with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but, O Lord, that it might be in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. We look to thee in the Savior's name. Amen.

John's gospel, chapter 14, verse 1. The gospel by John 14, and reading at verse 1. We've been looking on Sunday nights at the things that only Christ could say. We've been looking at these "I am's" of scripture. We come tonight to one that's perhaps the most famous of all. The Lord Jesus is in the upper room. He's speaking to his disciples. He's about to go out to Gethsemane and to Golgotha and then to glory, and he's saying to the disciples, whose hearts were filled with a medley of emotions, John 14:1,

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 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. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Thomas must have been daydreaming. The Lord Jesus had just told his disciples that he was going to heaven. Thomas caught the tail end of a paragraph, "whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." He woke up with a start. He said, "Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?" And in response, the Lord Jesus gave to him and to us one of his greatest gospel texts. He is the way. Christ is the way, that's for lost

people. Christ is the life, that's for learned people. Christ, my dear friends, is the truth, and that's for longing people. What we need tonight is reconciliation, and Jesus Christ says, "I am the way." What we need tonight is revelation, and Jesus Christ says, "I'm the truth." What we need tonight is regeneration, and Jesus Christ says, "I'm the life." I wonder, have you come into this service tonight lost, spiritually separated from God because of your sin? Then the Lord Jesus says to you, "I am the way." Maybe you've stepped into the meeting tonight, and you're unsure, you're uncertain where you're going to spend eternity, you're unsure about your relationship with God. Christ says to you tonight, "I am the truth." Maybe you've come in tonight, and you're searching for life with a capital "L." Jesus Christ says to you, "I am the life."

In effect, Thomas asked the question of the ages, "How can we know the way? How can we know the way to life? How can we know the way to heaven? How can we know the way to God? How can we know the way to peace with God? How can we know the way to forgiveness of sins? How can we know the way to glory?" The interview was conducted several years ago in the United States of America, and people were asked the question, what are your chances of going to heaven? A man from the state of Illinois said, "50-50." He said, "The older I get, somehow I think my chances will improve." One thing is absolutely sure tonight, the older you get, the chances that you are going somewhere improve. If I were to ask you this evening, what are your chances of going to heaven, I wonder how you would respond. If I were to ask you tonight, what are you depending upon to get you to heaven, I wonder how you would answer. Here in this divine, dogmatic declaration, the Lord Jesus makes it unmistakably clear that he and he alone is the way to heaven, that he and he alone can meet the deepest needs in the hearts of men.

If I were to ask you tonight, how would you summarize man, how would you summarize humanity? Well, I think we could say tonight that we're pilgrims. You and I are on the move, and though you're sitting still at this very moment tonight, you are still moving forward in time. And when you sleep at night, you do not halt the process. And though you stop the clock, and though you even change the details in your birth certificate, and though you go on a long holiday, and though you go for a complete change, you cannot stop this inevitable movement. Where do I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? I wonder tonight, have you found the answer to those questions? You're on a journey tonight, and Jesus Christ stands before you, and he says, "I am the way, the way to God, the way to heaven, the way to home."

I think we could say tonight that you and I are not only pilgrims, but we're thinkers. We're those who ask questions and demand satisfactory answers. It's a striking fact that two-thirds of the books that have been published in our world deal with the fundamental questions to which the human mind addresses itself with insatiable hunger. A man must be convinced tonight that the one he trusts, the one to whom he submits his will, is utterly reliable and trustworthy and Jesus Christ stands before you tonight, and he says, "I am the truth."

I think we could say tonight that we're not only pilgrims, and that we're not only thinkers, I think we could say tonight that we're corpses. We need life. Some talk about the spark

of divine life that is in man. There is no such thing. There is no spark of divine life in you tonight. You are totally dead spiritually. You're on the mortuary slab, and you need life from God. Your material needs may be met tonight, your physical needs may be met, your financial needs may be met, your social needs, your intellectual needs may be met tonight, and yet you remain hungry for man needs more than existence, he needs more than the means of existence, man needs life, life that is eternal, life that cannot be destroyed by a coronary, life that cannot be canceled out by cancer. Where can such life be found? Jesus Christ stands before you tonight, and he says, "I am the life."

You see, ever since the garden of Eden and the fall of man, man has been divided from God, deceived by Satan, and dead in sin, and only Jesus Christ is the remedy to all of those problems and that's why he simply says tonight, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father but by me." I want you to see tonight that Jesus Christ is the way. That's simple. Jesus Christ is the way so you and I can be saved. I don't want you to miss the simplicity of our Lord's words. "A way" links two roads which are otherwise unconnected. If someone was in the center of Belfast tonight, and he asked the way to Dungannon, he would be told that there is a motorway linking the two places, which if no other road existed, that motorway, that M1, would take him to Dungannon, so that the capital, so that Dungannon can be reached from the capital by the M1. A total absence of the roads would mean separation. Here's the Lord Jesus, and he makes this amazing claim, he claims to be the way whereby a holy God becomes linked up with sinful man, so that you and I may not live in a state of separation any longer, but we may know him as Father.

You know, when the Lord Jesus says, "I am the way," these words tell us that Jesus Christ is God for he takes one of the distinctive titles of God in the Old Testament in Exodus 3 where the Lord says to Moses, "Tell them I Am has sent you," and Christ takes that name, and he applies it to himself. When the Lord says, "I am," he tells us that he's God. These words tell us also that Jesus Christ is not only God, but he's unique. He doesn't say, "I am a way, I am a truth, I am a life." He says, "I am the way." And these words not only tell us tonight that Jesus Christ is God, he's unique, but he's unchangeable. He doesn't say, "I was the way, or I will be the way." He says, "I am the way."

Now listen, here's a statement tonight that raises the world's eyebrows: the route to heaven is a person. Did you get that? The route to heaven tonight is a person. It's not a principle, it's not a practice, it's not a philosophy, it's not a precept, the Golden Rule, the 10 Commandments, your church, your religion, prayer, charity, tears. None of these or all of these are going to get you to heaven. Jesus Christ is the way. If you're going any other way, you're on the wrong road tonight. He alone is the way.

I was reading this week that one of the most famous battles in all history, and I was trying to get a date for it, one of the most famous battles in all history was the Battle of the Bulge in World War II. The Allies had made their way a hundred miles inside the Belgian border, and they were moving at tremendous pace until they were ground to a halt, and the Germans had focused all their efforts at one particular point, and a great bulge had become apparent and the counteroffensive almost succeeded because of

something that the Germans had done just before the battle. A few days before the battle began, German soldiers dressed in American uniforms parachuted behind American lines, and they went all over the roads that was going to be used by the Allies, and they changed all the signposts that were pointing to towns and villages; they would either remove the signposts, or they would point it in the opposite direction. And so when the Americans called for reinforcements in the Battle of the Bulge, most of them were losing their way through the country of Belgium because the signposts had been taken down, or else they were pointing in the wrong direction.

Many people tonight are following the wrong signposts and they're going to end up in hell because Christ said, "I am the way." I mean, think of the other ways that lead to hell tonight for when Jesus Christ says, "I am the way," he means, "I and no one else." He says, "no one comes to the Father but by me." Have you grasped that tonight? You can't get to God unless you come through Christ. You ever hear the notion, the idea, "Well, it doesn't matter what you believe, all faiths are equal and will eventually lead men to heaven if they are sincere"? Do you ever hear that? Do you ever hear the notion doctrine is of no importance? Do you ever hear the notion that heaven is a place for all mankind? Do you ever hear the notion that God is the Father of all mankind? Do you believe that tonight? Well, listen, the incarnate God didn't believe it. One sentence from the Savior, and all this is destroyed. With this one sentence, Christ struck a fatal blow and sounded the death knell to that demonic doctrine called universalism that tells us all roads to lead to heaven.

"No man comes to the Father but by me,." and yet so many people tonight are trying all ways to get to God and heaven. You ever think of the many ways? There are some of you tonight who believe that the way to heaven is through right living, the do your best way. It's popular. Many are trying it, but it's not good enough. It's a ladder that's too short. It's a bridge that doesn't reach the other side. Do you actually believe tonight that you'll go to heaven because of your own righteousness, because of your own so-called goodness? Well, Jesus Christ stand before you tonight, and he says, "No, I am the way. You can't get to the Father but by me."

Some people say, "Well, I'm trying the way of reformation," people turn over a new leaf. But even, my dear friend, if you could turn over a new leaf tonight, what about the old leaves? I mean, are they not bad enough tonight to keep you out of heaven? There are some who believe tonight that heaven is going to be reached through religion. They go to church, they go through the ritual of the church, they go the ceremonies of the church. I wonder tonight, are you trying to make a ladder all of your own? Do you believe tonight that you'll climb to God, that you'll climb to heaven by some other way than Jesus Christ? My friend, you're wrong tonight. "No man comes to the Father but by me."

Think of them many ways, and then think of the modern ways. You know, there are a lot of voices today telling us, clamoring for our attention. The devil says, "Well, this is the way. Walk with me." And the drug culture says, "Well, this is the way. Walk with me." And the cults and the Mormons and the Jehovah Witnesses and Islam tonight says, "This is the way. Walk with me." And the exploiters of sex and the get-rich quick schemers and

the world and the flesh and the devil tonight are saying, "This is the way. Walk with us." My friend, you might think tonight those ways will take you to heaven. Jesus Christ says they'll take you to hell. "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Think of the other ways that lead to hell, and then think of the only way that leads to heaven, Christ. Sidy Sickler was out in the country one day, and he got lost, and he saw an old farmer sitting up on the front porch of the cabin, and he walked up to him, and he said, "Sir, is this the best way to the city?" The old farmer grunted and said, "Nope, it's the only way to the city." One way God said to get to heaven. Jesus is the only way.

Now, if you were in the land of Palestine in the days of Christ, and you lost your way, and finding a man along the way you asked him the direction, if he was going in the direction that you were going and he would say, "Listen, join on to me. I'll take you there. Trust me. I'll take you there." That's what he would mean, and that's what Jesus Christ meant. If we're to get there, we must join on to him. We must trust ourselves to him. We must commit ourselves to him. Listen tonight, Jesus Christ is not a good way to heaven, he's not the better way to heaven, he's not even the best way to heaven, he's the only way to heaven.

A pioneer missionary in Africa tells how he was taking the gospel to a tribe far to the north, and when the bearers of the burdens arrived at a certain village, they decided they would go no further, it was too dangerous, and the missionary appealed to the local chief, and he was asking was there someone in the village who could take him, who could guide him, who could bring him? And the chief summoned a man. He was a very tall man. He was well built. He was battle scarred. He was carrying a large axe, and a bargain was made, and the next morning, the missionary and the man set off through the bush, and the missionary was following his new guide, and the way became increasingly rough, and the path was almost, it was almost obliterated. There was just an odd mark on this tree and that tree, and occasionally a narrow path, and the missionary, he was mystified by it all, and he called a halt, and he said to the guide, "Are you sure you know the way?" The man pulled himself up to his full height, and he said, "White man, do you see this axe in my hand? Do you see these scars on my body? With this axe I blazed a trail to the tribal village to which we go. I came from there. These scars and marks I received as I made the way. You asked me if I know the way, before I came, there was no way. I am the way." My friends, the Lord Jesus came from glory, and now he was on the way back to heaven by the way of the cross, and before he came, there was no way and the scars of Calvary on his body attest to the fact that he blazed the trail to bring us to God. He points to his scars tonight, he points to his wounds tonight, he points to his precious blood tonight, and he says, "I am the way."

When the children of Israel were bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness, how many ways were there of being cured? Only one, look or die. When Naaman was to be cured of his awful leprosy, how many rivers were there that he could wash in? Only one, Jordan for leprosy. When you and I want to be saved from our sin, saved from hell, saved from the fires of hell, saved from the torments of the damned, how many there are who can

save us tonight? Only one, Christ. He's the only one that can save you because he's the only one who is the way. The Lord Jesus is the way that links you and your sinfulness to God and his holiness, you and your needfulness to God in his grace.

Some years ago, a gentleman was driving through Renfrewshire in Scotland, through the town of Kilmacolm. He stopped by the side of the road. He wanted to ask a workman the way to Glasgow. And after giving him instructions, the man who was fixing the road said this, "Excuse me, sir, but do you know the way to heaven?" "No," replied the driver. The gentleman said, "Jesus said, 'I am the way.'" He thanked him, and he headed towards Glasgow. On his way back to London, he had a serious accident which resulted in him going to hospital and eventually dying, but before he died, he made preparations for his funeral and he said to his two sons, "There's a man in Kilmacolm in Scotland who pointed me to Jesus Christ. After my funeral, find that man and tell him I got saved." Ten days later, after the funeral, two sons arrived in Kilmacolm inquiring of a workman who, as a witness for Christ, had told their father the way to heaven. He charged them to take that journey, and when they found that workman, they said to him, "Sir, thank you. He understood what you were saying and now he is in heaven."

What a claim! "I am the way." Jesus Christ is the way out. People are looking for a way out tonight. They do drugs, they do drink, they do illicit sex, but Jesus Christ is the way out of the burden and guilt of sin. Jesus Christ is the way in. "No man comes to the Father but by me." He's the only way into the presence of God now and into the paradise of heaven after. Jesus Christ, as Graham has been reminding us tonight, he's the way through. Wonder you need someone tonight who'll take you through the uncertainty of life, someone who'll be with you in the storms and the valleys. The Lord Jesus will take you through. He's the way out. He's the way in. He's the way through. He's the way up, up to the Father, up to heaven, up to home. One old country preacher said, "He's the escalator to glory."

Jesus Christ is the way, that's how you can be saved. Notice quickly, Jesus Christ is the truth, that's how you can be sure. You remember Pilate's question, "What is truth?" The Lord says, "I am the truth." He sums up all that is eternal and absolute in himself. The Lord Jesus reveals God. He exposes man. He says, "He that has seen me has seen the Father." Paul says, "In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge." In writing to the Corinthians, he refers to the Lord Jesus, Paul, as the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Listen, to know Christ tonight is to know enough to take you to heaven. Do you know him? What good will it do in hell to know that you've mastered the sciences of man? What good will it do in hell to know that you were well-acquainted with the events of history? What good will it do you in hell to know that you were versed in all the languages of man, that you were well-informed in the politics of the day? How you will wish on that day that you had read your newspaper less and that you had read your Bible more, that with all your learning you trusted Christ who is the truth. Did you know that when I was in secular school, I had a very dogmatic and narrow-minded person? Teachers are a bit like that, aren't they? Do you know what this teacher insisted on? She

insisted on that $2 + 2 = 4$. It didn't matter what, any difference to her what two you had off, whether it was 2 apples or 2 oranges or 2 bananas or whatever. She insisted. It was dogmatic. $2 + 2 = 4$.

The Lord Jesus is so dogmatic. He says, "I am the truth." Truth is always exclusive. Truth is always dogmatic. Truth is always intolerant of non-truth otherwise it would not be truth eternal and absolute. It doesn't matter whether the truth tonight is a mathematical truth, a scientific truth, or a spiritual truth. Now, since Christ is the truth, he excludes all other. No matter how popular, how clever, how widespread it may be, Christ says, "No man comes to the Father but by me." And because he's the truth tonight, you and I can be absolutely sure of glory. You see, the person Christ is tonight makes me sure. If the Lord Jesus was using this term tonight in its Hebrew sense, he probably meant this, that he's utterly reliable and trustworthy. You see, a road between two places, sometimes that road can be treacherous, sometimes that road can be dangerous. Some years ago, the Ohio Bridge, which was very stable, which was very safe, one Friday morning as people and traffic were crossing it, it gave way. Sometimes a road can be all right until pressure is put upon it. Or a road may be as reliable as as far as it goes, but it may stop short of your desired destination. In contrast to all of this tonight, Jesus Christ is utterly reliable and trustworthy.

I wonder, are you hesitant to trust Christ? Are you fearful that he'll not keep you, that he'll not save you? My friend, if you come to him tonight by faith, you'll discover he'll never give you up. He'll never let you down. He'll never write you off because of who he is. The person who he is, the person Christ is, makes me sure. Listen, the promise Christ gives makes me sure. Indeed, he himself said, "Thy word is truth." Now remember, what Christ says is true, for he's the truth. You know what he says tonight? He makes a remarkable statement in John's gospel. He says, "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death to life." He says, "I give unto my sheep eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

You remember that night in that Israeli home, when the Lord said he was going to pass through the land of Egypt, he was going to destroy all the firstborn? Can you imagine the firstborn in an Israeli home and saying to his father, he said, "Dad, I don't feel so safe." Can you imagine the father taking him out and showing the lintels and the doorposts and saying, "Son, listen, it's the blood of the Lamb that makes you safe." But can you imagine that little fella saying to his father, "But, but Dad, okay, I feel safe, but I'm not sure." And can you imagine the father saying, "Well, listen, son, it's God says, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.'" Listen, my friends, tonight, it's the blood of the Lamb that makes you safe. It's the word of the Lord that makes you sure. Is he the truth tonight? Of course he is. Then away with your doubts, your fears, your uncertainty. If you come to Christ tonight, you're as sure as heaven as if you were there.

He's the way. That's how we can be saved. He's the truth. That's how we can be sure. He's the life. That's how we can be satisfied. He says, "I am the life." At the beginning of the gospel, John says concerning the Lord Jesus that he's the source of all life, in him was

life. But Christ is saying something more than that, for he claims to be the one who imparts eternal life. I want to tell you tonight, that we can be satisfied with nothing less than this life, a full-on, vibrant, happy, joyful life down here, eternal life up there. Was that not Solomon's quest? You remember, he writes the book of Ecclesiastes, and he tries all the things in life, the things that you've been trying. Solomon tried drink. He tried drugs. He tried women. He tried illicit sex. He tried the materialism of his day. He was a man who was the Bill Gates of his day. He tried it all, and he said, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the preacher." He discovered what you and I have discovered, that the pleasures of this world can never satisfy the deep longing of the human soul. And here's the Lord Jesus, and he's standing before you tonight. He's offering you a new quality of life for a person who comes by faith to Jesus Christ is a partaker of the divine nature. Think of it tonight. Those of us who are saved, we have the very life of God beating within our soul. In a word, it means fellowship, love, joy, peace, satisfaction, a life that is different in quality from that which marks this present age.

Some years ago, someone reported that the British entertainer Tony Hancock, who had performed before millions, committed suicide. In Australia, he left a note and he said, "This true happiness is impossible to find." How tragic that he didn't know the Savior for he's offering you tonight is the life, a new quality of life, a new quantity of life. John calls it everlasting life. You see, my dear friends, that body may crumble in the dust of death, but life, this life, eternal life, is not lost. It spans, it out-spans the time of this human life. It's not tied to time. It is forever.

Now let me ask you as I close tonight, do you have this life? If death were to come to you tonight, if you happen to be one of those people, precious people, who lost their lives in London last night, death came to you, and you were hacked into eternity, I wonder would you enter into the fullness of life which is heaven, or would you enter into the darkness of eternity which is hell? You see, tonight you can go to heaven without wealth. You can go to heaven tonight without health. You can go to heaven tonight without a name. You can go to heaven without fame. You can go to heaven without learning. You can go to heaven without a big job. You can go to heaven without duty. You can go to heaven without beauty. But you'll never go to heaven without Christ.

He's the way. That's how you can be saved. He's the truth. That's how you can be sure. He's the life. That's how you can be satisfied. And he presents himself to you tonight as the way without which there is no going, as the truth without which there is no knowing, as the life without which there is no living. Come to Christ. Believe in Christ. Live through Christ.

I was reading the story this week that James Murray tells. It's the story of Leon Winters, a brilliant Chicago surgeon, and one night he was in bed, and the phone rang at one o'clock in the morning. It was his hospital telling him that a young boy had been in an accident, and he was mangled badly. And Dr. Winters' hands were probably the only ones in the city of Chicago that had skill enough to save that boy's leg. And so quickly he put on his clothes. He jumped out of bed. He put on his clothes. He jumped into his car, and he decided that the nearest way to the hospital would be through a very dangerous area but

since time was of the essence, he decided to take a chance. And so he was driving through this dangerous area, and he came to traffic lights and when he did, a man in a gray hat and a dirty flannel shirt opened the door and pulled him out of his seat and screamed, "Give me your car!" The doctor tried to explain, the consultant, the surgeon tried to explain that he was on an emergency call, but the thief refused to listen. He threw the doctor out, and he jumped into the car, and he drove off. The doctor wandered for more than 45 minutes looking for a phone whereby he could call a taxi, and when he finally got to the hospital, more than an hour passed, and he ran through the hospital's doors, and he ran up the stairs, and he ran to the nurse's station, and the nurse on duty looked at him and shook his head, "Doctor, I'm sorry, you're too late. The boy we rang you about died 30 minutes ago. His father is in the hospital church. If you want to see him, he's awfully upset. He can't understand why you didn't come to help." Dr. Winters walked down that hospital corridor, and he walked into that little hospital church, and weeping at the front of that building was a man dressed in a dirty flannel shirt and a gray hat. His eyes were blinded by tears. And that boy's father looked up in horror at the doctor and realized his tragic mistake. He had foolishly pushed away the only man in that city who could have saved his son.

Dear sinner friend tonight, do you realize there's only one who can save you this evening? There's only one who can save your soul. There's only one who can satisfy your life. There's only one who can secure your future, secure your eternity. The Lord Jesus is the way. Take him. He's the truth. Try him. He's the life. Trust him. And then you'll not only know the way to heaven, you'll be on it.

Let's pray.