

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

John 14:1-6

Message 7

Text: John 20:19-29

Word Count: 3680

INTRO: We have last looked at Thomas's response to Jesus words, "Where I go you know, and the way you know." And Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going and how can we know the way?" And then comes this great confession from our Lord, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." To that He adds, "No man comes to the Father but by Me." He is going to the Father. That is where He is going. And He Himself, is the way to the Father. No man can come to the Father but by Him.

Now to go to the Father is the hope of the Church. It was different from the Jewish expectation of the kingdom the Messiah would set up on earth which they had looked forward to and would enjoy, a kingdom which Christ Himself would yet come. But because He knew He had now been rejected by the Jewish nation, and the 70th week of Daniel would be postponed, and the Church would be born just over 50 days from here, He would be going to His Father's house until the Jewish people would be prepared for the long promised kingdom in which He Himself would rule.

And so He told His disciples, "Where I go you know, and the way you know." And to Thomas He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me." And I would read it like this: "I am the way which leads to God the Father; I am the truth which reveals God the Father; and I am the life which comes from God the Father."

And so, it is in response to Thomas's' question that Jesus gives verse 6. And here is His great confession. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me." This morning we will look at these words, "I am the way."

III. THE CONFESSION

A. Jesus: The Manifestation Of The Father

1. I Am The Way (6a) **to God the Father**

So we ask, just what did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the way"? I understand that early Christians were known as 'people of the way'. In Acts 9, Saul, who would become Paul, desired of the High Priest letters, and I quote, "...that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." He knew them as people of 'this way'. Paul later says, "And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:4). And when Paul, now a man of the way himself said to Felix, "But this I confess unto you, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (24:14).

Acts 18:25-26 says of Apollos, "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

And last, when Paul was in Philippi, a certain girl possessed with a demon followed Paul and those with him, and cried, saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17).

And Jesus said to Thomas, "I am that way. You cannot get to the Father unless you come by Me." What He is saying is that He is the only way. And let me say as well that probably no words could be viewed as more intolerant in all the Bible than John 14:6. "I am THE way. There is no other way. You cannot come to God except by Me. I am the ONLY way." And I ask you this morning, do you believe these words?

Ray Yungen, in his book, "For Many Shall Come In My Name", says, "One of the most common New Age attitudes is that there are many paths to God and that it is wrong to judge or condemn another person's path because not all people are suited

for the same one. New Agers teach that each person should find the path best suited for himself" (133).

Now as to the word, *the way*. The word for way is 'hodos'. It is a path or a road. When the wise men came to see Jesus, they eventually got to Bethlehem. And when they had seen Jesus and had brought their gifts to Jesus, they returned another way, another path. They did not go back by the same way they had come, for that would have led back to Herod and the angels had warned them not to go back that way.

Scripture says there is a way that seems right to man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Prov. 16:25). So, Jesus said, "I am the way." The most natural question to that is this: where is He the way to? And the verse gives answer to that. He said, "I am the way...no man comes to the Father but by Me." He is the way to the Father. As I see this verse, it could read like this, "I am the way which leads to the Father, I am the truth which shows us the Father, and I am the life which comes from the Father. To get to the Father, you have to follow My path. To know who the Father is so you can get there, you have to know Me. And to get to the Father, you have to have the life which I have from the Father. Without this path, without this truth, and without this life, you will never see God the Father."

Now, according to today's culture you will not find a more intolerant message than this verse. It is so very narrow minded. It is so horribly intolerant, that I am not sure how long such a message will be tolerated in our country. "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me." That is unthinkably intolerant by today's standards. But it is only intolerant if you define tolerance as meaning one has to accept everybody else's view as true, and that is an impossibility for anybody, including the most tolerant people there are.

And so, I would like to go on record as saying that those who have truly been people of 'the way' have been as tolerant as any people who ever existed! In the message I did on tolerance I defined tolerance like this: *Tolerance is to allow, endure, or put up with something we do not agree with, approve of, like or enjoy.* You see, if one has to agree with everyone else's viewpoint in order to be tolerant, then tolerance has become obsolete. You do not have to tolerate that which you agree with! And so I ask, what way of spiritual life has allowed those of other persuasions, has endured those of other persuasions, or put up with those of other persuasions with which they disagreed more than true Christians have?

I ask you, has Catholicism been that tolerant? Any wee little bit of research in their history will show you the thousands upon thousands they did away with in the most cruel ways possible. Why? Because they did not agree with their faith. That is intolerance! Consider Islam. How tolerant is Islam? Let me answer that. Just as tolerant as they are forced to be. When they are not forced to be tolerant, they will kill those who do not convert. And why do they force people to convert or die? Because they do not agree with their faith! Some tell us that those Muslims who kill are radical Muslims. No, those are the Muslims who are true to their faith! Their faith is most intolerant. Read the Koran if you have trouble believing that.

I ask you, where has true Christianity gone that they have not been tolerant of those of other persuasions? And I could tell you of place after place where they have brought the teaching of Jesus as being the only way, and the incredible and good changes they have brought to a sin darkened and sin corrupted world. Catholicism, for the most part, has not done this. Islam, for the most part, has not done this. But true Christianity has done this and always they tolerated those who did not accept the biblical way of life.

So Jesus is the road or the path to the Father. He is THE way. There is only one way. There is no other way. I ask you once more, do you believe that? Let us see what that does to the present world population. In 2010 the World Bank said there were 6 billion, 840 million, 507 thousand and 3 people in the world.

It is difficult to get agreeing statistics. But www.adherants.com gives this list of the top 22 religions that have the most adherents.

1. [Christianity](#): 2.1 billion
2. [Islam](#): 1.5 billion
3. [Secular/Nonreligious/Agnostic/Atheist](#): 1.1 billion
4. [Hinduism](#): 900 million
5. [Chinese traditional religion](#): 394 million
6. [Buddhism](#): 376 million
7. [primal-indigenous](#): 300 million
8. [African Traditional & Diasporic](#): 100 million
9. [Sikhism](#): 23 million
10. [Juche](#): 19 million
11. [Spiritism](#): 15 million
12. [Judaism](#): 14 million
13. [Baha'i](#): 7 million
14. [Jainism](#): 4.2 million
15. [Shinto](#): 4 million
16. [Cao Dai](#): 4 million
17. [Zoroastrianism](#): 2.6 million
18. [Tenrikyo](#): 2 million
19. [Neo-Paganism](#): 1 million
20. [Unitarian-Universalism](#): 800 thousand
21. [Rastafarianism](#): 600 thousand
22. [Scientology](#): 500 thousand

In all of what I say next, let me say I am not including innocent children or those who have become Christians out of these groups. When you become a Christian you are no longer any of these. So, let me take that in reverse now. Scientology has 500 thousand. They all do not believe in this only way. Do you think all 500 thousand will go to hell if they die without the way of Christ? Rastafarianism has 600 thousand.

Are they all lost? Unitarian-Universalism has 800 thousand. Do you think they are all lost? Neo-Paganism has 1 million. Do you think they are all lost? Tenrikyo has 2 million, do you think they are all lost? Zoroastrianism has 2.6 million. Do you think they are all lost? Cao Dai has 4 million. Are they all lost? Shinto has 4 million. Are they all lost? Jainism has 4.2 million, are they all lost? Bahai'i has 7 million, are they all lost? Judaism has 14 million. Judaism does not believe Jesus is the only way. Are they all lost? Spiritism has 15 million. Are they all lost? Juche (yoochey), this is the official state religion of North Korea. It has 19 million. Do you think they are all lost? Sikhism has 23 million. Do you think they are all lost? African Traditional& Diasporic has 100 million. Do you think they are all lost? Primal-indigenous has 300 million. Do you think they are all lost? Buddhism has 376 million. Are they all lost? Chinese traditional religion has 394 million. Do you think they're all lost? Secular/Nonreligious/Agnostic/Atheistic has 1.1 billion followers. Are they all lost? Islam has 1.5 billion. Do you think any of those are saved? No! If they were they wouldn't be Muslim any more.

Now I found numbers on internet regarding how many people there are in the world and how many profess to be Christians. I wanted to give you some stats, but the numbers were too big for me. I have some geniuses in the family who know bigger numbers than I do and they did the calculations for me. The world population is 6,840,507,000. 2.1 billion are called Christians. Our previous stat said that of 6.8 billion, 2.1 billion are Christians. But of that 2.1 billion, almost 1.18 billion are Catholics. So now we are down to 920 million. According to the stat I gave, included in that 2.1 billion are all the cults, J'W's, Mormons and a host of others. So, you have to subtract them. Let us guess that 25% of those are cults. That leaves 690 million.

So, we now are left with a mere 690 million who claim to be Christians after the Catholics and

cults are subtracted from the original 2.1 billion. But now we have another problem. Jesus said that not everyone who said, "Lord, Lord" was truly a Christian. As a matter of fact He said that He did not know MANY of those who claimed to be Christians.

Recently in the 'Friday Church News' put out by David Cloud was an article titled, "Pastor Warns That False Conversions Are Suicide For Churches," he quotes Dever, the senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church, who said, and I quote, "thousands, if not millions, of church members sitting in America's pews aren't really born-again Christians. The problem I am pointing to is not just that of the occasional hypocrite lost in their own unrepentant sin," Dever said. "I'm talking about systems which seem to produce false converts so much that it's not just one man ... but whole congregations that like Israel of old are typified and characterized not by holiness but by worldliness" ("False Conversions," Associated Baptist Press, April 11, 2012).

So, let us subtract a very conservative number, 25%, of those who claim to be real Christians. That leaves us with 517 and 1/2 million true Christians. That is a mere **7.6%** of the world population at this time, and I would guess that that number is still too high.

I ask you, do you still believe Jesus is the only way? Now let me read a few Scriptures that support such a number. Luke 10:2, "Then He said to them, 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'" So if the laborers are few, that already tells us something. Then in Matthew 22:14 Jesus said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." So if the laborers are few, and they call many but few of those are chosen, that still leaves but only a few. Then in Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus said, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to

life, and there are few who find it." And last, Luke 13:23-24 says, "Then one said to Him, 'Lord, are there few who are saved?' And He said to them, strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able."

But there is good news. I want to commend our librarians for having the book, "Operation World" in our library, though none have signed it out yet. There is a reason for that. First, it is a big book, and second, it is a book that stresses prayer for the world. This book gives stats on every country in the world.

In the midst of a rapid decline in true evangelicalism in North America by the seeker friendly movement and now a much more threatening movement, the emergent church movement, there is good news in other parts of the world. It is estimated that in 1960, 50 years ago, 2.9% of the world population was Christian. That was a total of 89 million Christians. In 2010 the percentage was up to 7.9% according to the book, 'Operation World', with a total of 546 million evangelical Christians (pg. 6). That is very close to the number of 7.6% I gave earlier.

There is one more bit of good news for Christians according to the book, 'Operation World'. With regard to unreached peoples groups this book says, "In many cases, peoples with no known believers ten or twenty years ago now have churches within them, some of them thriving, growing churches now involved themselves in the great commission!" (pg. 6). So, in places where a few years ago there were no believers, today there are believers and they are already involved in sending out missionaries! That is very encouraging news!

Another bit of good news is that prayer efforts are expanding by believers around the world. I am wondering if we should not expand our present prayer meeting next year to having one section just praying for various countries of the world. Then we need one group praying consistently for

the persecuted church. Though the number of true Christians is small, it is on the move all over the world. In by far the majority of countries there are evangelicals in almost every strata of life. Oh, we need to pray for the world. Our Lord said in Luke 10:2, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." Oh that our prayer meeting might grow! Pray that it will grow next year.

Let me give you some stats from our own prayer meeting last year. We had an average of 14 in the adult group. We had an average of 12 in the youth group, with several adults in that group. We had an average of about 24 in the children's prayer meeting with 2 or so adults in that group each week as well, for a total of about 42 on average. Maybe I could encourage those who are in house churches and others who view these services to start a prayer meeting.

We were discussing Jesus as the only way a while ago, and Trent, my son said, "If a person were to leave the Christian faith, where would you go? What is there with the kind of proof Christianity has?"

In the course I have taught a number of times called GBI, which deals with how we got the Bible I begin the course with this paragraph, "Try to think of life for a moment, as to how it would be without the Bible. No divine direction in life. No personal relationship with God, as Paul describes us before salvation, "...having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). That's how it was with the great Greek thinkers in the past. The following is a discussion of Socrates with some of his students regarding immortality. "In the course of the conversation one of them, Simmias, made the following statement: 'I think a man's duty is one of two things: either to be taught or to find out where truth is, or if he cannot, at least to take the best possible human doctrine and the hardest to disprove, and to ride on this like a raft over the waters of life and take the risk; unless he could have a more

seaworthy vessel to carry him more safely and with less danger, some divine doctrine [or, as Jowett translates it, 'some word of God'] to bring him through." (The Bible: The Living Word of Revelation pg 13).

And I am telling you this morning, we have just such a more seaworthy vessel. Available on sermonaudio from this church is a message called, "Ten Proofs That The Bible Is The Word Of God." We have a seaworthy vessel to give us divine doctrine that will bring us safely to God. It is the Word of God. And in this Word of God is this word, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me."

Turn with me to John 6. During the life of Christ, many people began to follow Him. And as He taught, He became less and less popular and people began to leave Him. And in chapter 6, we find these words (read 66-68).

And now I want to very briefly explain the way to the Father as I understand it from Scripture. In the doctrine of salvation there are numerous smaller units of doctrine such as election, predestination, calling, sanctification etc... And of all those smaller units of doctrine, there is one that is most crucial from man's point of view in getting saved and that is the doctrine of conversion.

To understand Jesus as the only way to God, we must get this doctrine right. Let me say here only this, that the doctrine of conversion means to turn. The Bible tells us in no uncertain terms that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is not unbelief that is the cause of our being on the way to hell. It is sin. If we had not sinned we would not be on the way to hell. It is sin that must be dealt with. Sin is the primary problem. Until we recognize that we are sinners and that we are on the road to hell, we will never get saved. Sin is the problem. So, it is sin that calls for conversion.

Now, conversion means to turn. And within this doctrine of conversion are two more smaller units of teaching. Both are requirements man must meet. And before we can convert, we must be given the message that Jesus died for my sin. And in order for my sins to be forgiven, I must repent and believe in Him. To repent I must confess my sin and my sinfulness to Him. So, when we turn, we must first turn away from sin. That is repentance. Then we turn to Christ. That is the faith part. When we have repented we now believe His Word that He has forgiven us on the basis of that repentance and our faith in Him.

So Jesus said in Mark 1:15, "Repent and believe in the Gospel." The Gospel is the good news. The good news is that He came and died for my sins, was buried and rose again. And now, if I will repent and believe, He will forgive me of my sins and cleans me from all unrighteousness.

Then when I have done that, according to the Bible, I am saved. It is then that it becomes very important that I read the Bible and learn to pray and attend a godly church. To enter this narrow path I must repent of my sins and receive Christ by faith.

CONCL: Well, we conclude. Jesus said, "Where I go you know, and the way you know." And Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus' answer to that was, "I am the way... no man comes to the Father but by Me." Jesus also said that the way to death is broad, and the way to life is narrow and difficult. According to present statistics 5-7 of every 100 could be Christians.

Let me encourage each believer here. If you are on the narrow road, you are on a difficult path. But as I go along life's way and as I study the Bible, more and more I am learning a little of what God gets out of one person that trusts Him by faith.

And I want to challenge those of us who are Christians to share the message of the Gospel with others.