

Christ The Way

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If it were not for our vision and our hope of the house of many mansions of which the Lord Jesus speaks in the beginning of this chapter, that means all of us, children and parents, young and old, whether we are temporarily healthy or whether we walk in ways of distress and suffering and sorrow, and whether we are in a condition of prosperity or of adversity, whether we are in the experience of peace as the world calls peace or of war, it really makes no essential difference whatsoever, all these things are of no avail and are of no account and no value unless all these experiences end and lead to the house of many mansions. If that's the case, all is well. If that is not the case, all is evil without any question. And because that is so essential, the Lord Jesus comforts, I would almost say himself as well as the disciples because of the way at which he must travel and because of the darkness and gloom and suffering and trouble of that way. Therefore he says to his disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled," and tonight, beloved, I want to say that to you and to myself. Let not your hearts be troubled no matter how dark the way may seem. There is no reason for our hearts as the people of God in Jesus Christ our Lord to be troubled.

"Let not your heart be troubled. Behold," he says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." There is room for all of us, for all the people of God. Many mansions. "Not only for myself, I go there to be sure. I go there in the way of darkness, in the way of suffering and the way of the cross. There is no other way but I do not go there alone, I go there with you. In my Father's house are many mansions and all those many mansions must be filled and must be occupied before the end can ever come, and," the Lord says, "because the disciples do not understand." Beloved, they did not understand then as they do later, and we cannot be surprised about that.

But in order to test them, or rather in order to draw out a question from them, he says to them, "where I go ye know, and the way ye know." That was to test them and especially to evoke from them a question and the question came, of course, from a man like Thomas, the pessimist. He says to the Lord, "Lord, that's not true. We know not where thou goest; and how can we possibly know the way? If we do not know the goal, how can we know the way?" It is in answer to that question that the Lord says to Thomas and to all the disciples and to you and to me tonight, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Therefore, beloved, the thought of the text is: Christ the way. We ask the way whither? The way how? And the way, how can we walk in it? What is the way? Where does the way lead? How is Christ the way? And how can we walk in that way of Christ? I say, beloved, that the main thought of the text is that Christ is the way. It's true that that is not the only conception that's found in the text. Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and it seems almost as if those three conceptions, the way, the truth, the life, are to be considered as coordinated, as of equal value. Yet that is not the case. I'm sure I translate my text and how many with the meaning of the word of God when I will translate the text this way: I am the way because I am the truth and because I am the life therefore no one cometh unto the Father but by me. And that "the way" in the text is really the main conception as evident from the context as well as from the text itself.

From the context, it is evident that the Lord speaks of the way. He said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. I go to prepare a place for you." And again he says, "and whither I go ye know and the way ye know." And it is in answer to the question of Thomas, "Lord, we do not know whither thou goest and how can we know the way?" that the Lord says, "I am the way." That is undoubtedly the main conception also of the text. Not only the beginning of the text where the Lord says, "I am the way," but also from the end, "no one cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus is the way to the Father and therefore I say again, I'm undoubtedly in harmony with this sense of Scripture when I would translate this particular verse in this way: I am the way because I am the truth and because I am the life and therefore no one can possibly come to the Father but by me as the way.

Now the question is, of course, first of all, the way whither? And the answer is, the way to the house of many mansions. What is that house? When we think, beloved, of that house of many mansions, we must not think primarily of the external beauty and the external glory of that house. Oh, there's no question of it, that heaven is beautiful even in the external sense of the word; the Bible almost exhausts itself to impress upon us as much as possible the beauty of heaven and of the heavenly city, the beauty of the house of many mansions. It speaks of the pearly gates and of the streets of gold. It speaks of it as a perfect city in form even, perfect in every sense of the word. It tells us that there shall never be any night there; it's a city full of light. And even when you look at the house of many mansions from the external point of view, beloved, our hearts may well burn with desire and longing for that house, nevertheless, that is not the real idea and the real essence and the real glory of that house of many mansion.

If you want to understand a little of the beauty and the happiness and the blessedness of that house of many mansions, you must not think of a house but we must rather think of a home. The house of many mansions is a home, beloved, and the home is not something that is characterized by external beauty, first of all, but that is essentially characterized by communion, fellowship, love, friendship. That's the home. And the house of many mansions is indeed a home, a beautiful home; a glorious home because it is characterized by the highest and the most intimate and the most blessed fellowship conceivable. There in that home is the Father. Oh, he's here too, as you know. The Father is not confined to the house of many mansions, I would even say, beloved, the house of many mansions is

not confined to heaven. The house of many mansions is already in principle established with us but, nevertheless in the house of many mansions as the Lord speaks of it here, as it stands here in the eschatological sense of the word, in the final sense, in the perfect sense, in that house of many mansions is above all Father and that Father is the Triune God, not the Father as the first person of the Holy Trinity but the Father in our Lord Jesus Christ, of all his people. The Triune God as the Father of his home is there, is there in perfection, in eternal perfection; is there in eternal perfection as the perfect revelation of the God of our salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord. In that home, beloved, in that home we shall see him. We shall see him face-to-face. No question about it. As we never see him here, we cannot see him here, but there in the house of many mansions, we shall indeed see him. In that house of many mansions is Christ.

"I go to prepare a place for you. And when 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." Think. Think of it. Christ, the Son of God in the flesh as we never saw him before, who died and rose again, was glorified, and in all his glory as the complete revelation of the God of our salvation. Christ is there forever in the house of many mansions, and again I say, we shall see him. We shall see him everywhere in the house of many mansions. Don't have to go somewhere to find him, he's there. He's always there. He's everywhere there. The face of our Lord Jesus Christ is everywhere in that house of many mansions. We shall see him face-to-face.

There, beloved, in that house of many mansions, all the brethren, none others, all the saints in Christ Jesus. No one else. No enemies. No Satan. No devil. No demon. Only the saints and the saints in Christ shall have in that house of many mansions perfect fellowship. Perfect fellowship so that there is undisturbed eternal, undisturbed communion. Not in a mystical sense but in the sense, beloved, that all the saints, the millions upon millions of saints know the Father. Know him as they never knew him before in perfection. Walk in the light. Love the Father. Let me therefore say, beloved, so that all the millions of millions of saints know that the Father loves them without any shade of doubt from moment to moment, so that they are always perfectly assured and perfectly conscious that the Father loves them in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And in that house of many mansions, the saints shall have perfect fellowship with one another. There shall be no more sin. No more darkness. No more separation. No more enmity against one another. What a blessedness, beloved. We cannot even conceive of it really. The communion of the saints so that they have perfect love between one another in Christ, so that they love Christ and Christ's love is continually and undisturbedly poured in their heart. And through Christ everlasting fellowship with God the Father. That is the blessedness of the house of many mansions. Christ is the way.

Notice that Christ says not, it is a way, is THE way. There is no other way to the house of many mansions than Christ. He is the way. And nor does Christ tell us here, "I show you the way," he says, "I am the way." Christ is the way to the house of many mansions because the principle of that house of many mansions is fellowship with the Father and no one can possibly come to the Father but through Christ.

Let's think about that a moment, beloved, the way. The way is Christ. Why? Because, beloved, the way in the first place implies separation. The way is separation between us and the house of many mansions. The house of many mansions is there, is in the future, in the glory, we are here.

But that's not all. The way even implies that there is not only separation as to distance, but that there is spiritual separation. That means, beloved, that by nature we are entirely separated from that house of many mansions in any sense of the word, entirely separated. By nature, we may not enter into that house, Father will not have us in that house. By nature, we are cast away. And by nature, beloved, we not only may not enter into that house but it is absolutely impossible for us to enter there. That we may not enter, that we have no rights to enter, is due to the fact that we are guilty, guilty before God. By nature, we stand in such a position before the face of God that he is to us a God of wrath, nothing else. Guilty and condemned to death. Guilty and condemned forever to be banished and to be outside of the house of many mansions and outside of the fellowship of Father. By nature, we are not only in this state in which we cannot enter, but also in the condition that makes it impossible for us to enter. By nature, we are darkness. In that house of many mansions, all is light. By nature, we are corrupt in sin, in death. In that house of many mansions, all is righteousness and holiness and fellowship. And therefore we are not only locally distant from that house of many mansions, apart now from this way of which Christ speaks, we also spiritually are distant, absolutely distant from that house of many mansions so that it is impossible that we have the right to that house, and that we possibly can enter into that spiritually in the spiritual ethical sense of the word.

But Christ is the way. He is the way. He is the only way, beloved. The only way to the house of many mansions is Christ because of two things. I'll come back to that presently when I speak of the how of the way, but I must mention that now too. Christ is the way because he made reconciliation of us to God. That is the legal sense in which Christ is the way, and to say by nature we have no right to enter into Father's house, but in Christ we have exactly that right. Remember that in Christ we do not only have the right of a certain life, in Christ we have the right to enter into the life of the house of many mansions. That's something else. I'll come back to that.

And in Christ, we also have the power through his Spirit and through his word to walk as children of that house of many mansions and therefore spiritually to enter into that house. In that sense, beloved, Christ is the way. Oh, that does not mean that we cannot say much more about that way as we shall say presently, as I had another bullet, beloved. I said to the sick people this week, I like to talk a little about some phrase of Scripture when I visit them that may comfort them. I call attention to the fact that our individual ways are not all alike. They're not all alike, but principally, of course, they are all alike; the way to the house of many mansions is principally one. No difference. "No one cometh unto the Father but by me." Nevertheless, in our individual ways in this world, our walking in Christ leads along entirely different lines, as you know. And we may often ask the question: why? Why is it that one enters into that final glory of the house of many mansions in an entirely different way than another? We have seen that in our own

congregation. We have seen that in our own churches. One sits by the supper table and prays and goes to the house of many mansions in a moment. Another must walk through a long, long way of pain and distress and sorrow and suffering. All kinds of different ways. They are all included in that one way in Christ. Why cannot the saints seeing that Christ has merited the place for them in the house of many mansions and that Christ is the only power that can possibly make them prepared for the house of many mansions, why cannot Christ take them all in the same way? And the answer I told them, and I tell you now too, is that although there is only one way and there is only one place and the place is the house of many mansions and the way is Christ yet, beloved, in that one place there are all kinds of different places.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." That does not simply mean different rooms, different dwellings, as far as their outward appearance is concerned, it means, beloved, that the saints in Christ Jesus in glory occupy different positions, different places. If I may compare the saints, the millions and millions of saints in Christ in glory to one grand chorus, I would say that every single one of the saints in glory that sing the praises of God in Christ Jesus has his own voice, has his own place according to that voice in that chorus, so every one of the millions and millions and billions of saints that shall finally fill all the mansions of that house shall have his own place. And I know that I cannot understand exactly why one must become prepared in this way and another in that way, but I know this: Christ prepares a place for us and he prepares the particular place which God has in store for you and me individually. Again I say, although Christ prepares that place, even that particular place for you and for me through his Spirit and word, nevertheless all the individual experiences of all the children of God are conducive to that same preparation. I know that. I'm sure, and you will agree with me that's Scripture that God prepares us, each one of us, each one of his children for his own particular place in glory and that all the experiences of this present time must go together to that goal.

That's quite a comfort, don't you know. Quite a comfort even though in all kinds of trouble and sickness and distress, we may sometimes ask the question in detail, "Why?" and do not get an answer. We know the general answer, we know that all things must work together for good to them that love God. We know that every one of his children must walk in the way in which Christ would prepare him for his particular place in glory. That's a comfort in all the sufferings of this present time. "I am the way." And if we are principally on the way which is Christ, we are on the way of all things, beloved, all our individual ways are subservient to that one way, Christ.

Why is Christ the way? Because he is the truth and because he is the life. That's why Christ is the way to the house of many mansions. What is truth? A truth is the harmony between a thing and its manifestation. That's truth. When I manifest myself as I am even here as a preacher before you, then the impression you get from that manifestation of mine in all my expression is the truth. Every man testifies in court and his testimony is in harmony with the thing itself, then that harmony between the testimony and the thing that's happened is the truth.

Now, the text says, Christ says, "I am the truth," and we may well emphasize in a moment, he says, "I am THE truth." Not a truth. Not some truth. But THE truth. And, beloved, Christ is the truth because he is the manifestation of the Godhead in the Trinity. I won't dwell on that because that's deep anyway, but Christ is the truth as the Son, as the Word. God expresses the Father, expresses himself in the Word and that Word is the truth of the Father.

But let's forget that for a moment. Christ means to say not simply that he is the truth in the sense that he is the Son of God which is always the background of it all, but he means to say here, "I am the truth as the way to the house of many mansions. I am the way because I am the truth." And therefore he means to say, beloved, "I am the revelation. I am the manifestation of the God of our salvation." That's the truth. That's the meaning.

And when you read here that Christ is the truth, you must not simply think of the Christ in one certain phase, you must think of the whole Christ, the whole Christ; the whole Christ that has appeared in time; the whole Christ that appeared between the years 1 and 33 AD, that whole Christ is the manifestation of the Father and therefore the whole Christ is the truth. Christ as he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. As he was born of the virgin Mary. In the manger of Bethlehem, there Christ is the manifestation of the God of our salvation who adapted our sinful nature, or rather adopted our nature and the likeness of sinful flesh. That's the truth. That babe in Bethlehem is part of the truth but not all. Christ is the truth throughout his 33 years, especially in the years of his ministry when in all his word and all his work, he revealed to us the Father, the Father as our Father, as the God of our salvation. Christ is the truth when on the cross, he entered into deepest hell until he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That was a phase of the truth, beloved. One phase of the revelation of the manifestation of the God of our salvation and that manifestation of the God of our salvation is the truth and can lead us to the house of many mansions. The way.

Still more. On the third day, he rose again from the dead. He was in the grave three days, in the grave of Joseph of Arimathea and there even in that grave, he is a manifestation of the God of our salvation. We can thank him that even so he revealed the Father unto us in the grave that it leads into the house of many mansions, don't you see. Aren't you glad, beloved? Aren't you glad that when finally your body will be buried, will be hidden in the grave, that you can say that grave is only a way for me to the house of many mansions. As for me, I hate the grave. I hate the grave. I shudder when I think of the grave. I do. Oh, when I think of the time that I'm dead and that you will look at my dead body all painted up by the undertaker and no good anyway anymore, and then finally I'll be sent down in that old earth where it will rot away, beloved, I shudder. But, "I am the way because I am the truth." Christ was there too. I'm not afraid. In Christ Jesus, I'm not even afraid of the grave because, after all, Christ was raised, beloved. Buried, yes, but raised and exalted and sitting at the right hand of God. From his birth to his exaltation is a manifestation, a revelation of the God of our salvation and therefore Christ can really say, "I am the truth." The truth as it is here in the Gospel. That's the truth. The truth. The recorded truth in the Gospel is only the recorded Christ as he was on earth, 33 years as a manifestation of the God of our salvation therefore Christ can say, "I am the truth and

because I am the truth, I am the way." That's the truth. Christ is the way indeed. That's the way. That's the way. The manifestation of the God of our salvation in Christ. From his birth, through his death to the grave, to the resurrection, to the exaltation at the right hand of God, that is the way.

That way we must walk but that's not all, beloved. If that were all, it would nice to know it but we could do nothing with it but Christ says not only, "I am the way," but he also says, "I am the life," and that settles it. What is life? Difficult to define, beloved. Difficult to define life. A life just as truth is harmony between the thing and its manifestation, so life is essentially covenant fellowship thrilling in our hearts and making us unspeakably blessed. That's life. Death is the very opposite. Death is separation and not separation from God in the local sense, that is impossible. We can never be separated from God in the local sense but separation from God in the sense that we have no communion with him, that is the very opposite of communion with God. That is the very opposite of that state in which we say, "I know thee, O my God, even thou knowest me." That's life. To say that is life. "I love thee, O my God, even as I know that thou lovest me." That's communion. That's life, not death. And Christ says, "I am the life. I am the way because I am the truth and because I am the life."

Oh, one more thing: it's not the life in general which the Lord here means but it's the life that prepares us to enter into the house of many mansions and that, beloved, is resurrection life. That's Christ. Christ is the life even as he is the truth, for he says himself in another connection, "I'm the life and the resurrection. He that has me," and that's the same as, he that believeth in me, "he that believeth in me, he that has me, shall live though he were dead and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." That's Christ. He is the way, don't you see. The way.

He is not the way in a dead sense, he is the way because he is the life. He is not the way in the sense that he points to the way as a teacher does, but he is the way because he is the life and the resurrection and because by his Holy Spirit through his word, he enters into the heart of all that shall be gathered into the house of many mansions and quickens them so that they walk in that way, the living way. Christ does not say, "I offer you the way. I show you the way. I teach you the way." He is the way and he is the way because he is the life and the resurrection and because by the power of his life, he enters into our dead souls and quickens them unto life everlasting.

One more question, beloved: are you sure you're in that way? Are you sure? That's important, of course. How can you know? The answer is: by faith, of course. No question about that. That's the answer: by faith. And then you probably will ask another question: how can I know that I have the faith? You know, the devil often tries to bring you into all kinds of conditions and states of doubt and unbelief as though you ask perhaps, you say, "I know that the way is the way of faith and that if I believe, I'm on the way to the house of many mansions." But the devil comes and says, "Listen, fella, do you know that you have the faith?" What are you going to say? Beloved, faith is not dead. Faith is not a matter of which you cannot know. If I say, "I am hungry," you must not ask me whether I am sure that I am hungry, I know I'm hungry and I like food. The same is true of faith

and the same is true of the knowledge that we are in the way to the house of many mansions, the way which is Christ.

You ask: how? Oh, there are different steps on that way, beloved, not steps successively but steps all during our life; steps which I must take and you must take every single day. Every single day. In the first place, if I'm on the way, and let me tell you personally, I'm sure I am, if I'm on the way, I reject all other ways. That's one thing. And I do, do you? You reject the way of your own wisdom. You reject the way of your own righteousness. You reject the way of your own worth and only look upon Christ as the way to the house of many mansions. Beloved, that's something I do and I must do every day. Do you? Rejecting every other way and walk in the way of Christ alone?

If you do, there is one more, a second very essential step and that is that rejecting every other way so that you have nothing as far as the way is concerned, you have one thing that is very much against you, that is your sin. That's second. Reject every other way. You look on the way and say to Christ, "Thou art the way." But then, beloved, it comes to this: that you have not only nothing but you have nothing but sin and then you say, "I repent. I repent. I'm sorry. O God, be merciful to me, a sinner." That's the next step.

Thirdly, beloved, there is the step that I hear the Gospel. Do you? Hear Christ, not me but Christ, in your heart, in your innermost heart, saying to you personally, "Come unto me and the way to the house of many mansions." Do you hear that? Christ says that here in the Gospel, he says that through his Spirit into your heart.

In the fourth place, beloved...don't forget, I'm not picturing a way of successive steps, I'm picturing a way that you must walk every single day. Every single day. You go to Christ when he calls and you say to him, "O my Savior, I rely on thee and thee only and in life and in death to go to the house of many mansions, to the glory that is in store for all thy people."

And finally, beloved, when you walk through all these steps all the way on the only way there is, the way of Christ, you say, "Before my Savior I will live. From death he saved my soul. I will live in the midst of the world to his praise and glory." That too. I assure, beloved, I assure you, if that's your life, your consciousness, your walk, you're on the way, and then I preach to you tonight you and I shall go to the house of many mansions where all these different steps shall be no longer necessary but we shall dwell with him forever in perfection. God grant that to you and to me. Amen.

Thanks Lord for thy word and thy testimony and thy grace and thy glory and the strength of the hope eternal. Give us grace to walk in that hope that we may know that we are on the way of Christ unto the house of many mansions. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with you. Amen.