

Sunday Sermon May 14, 2017

Sermon Text: John 14:1-12

Sermon Theme: You know me! I am your God and your Savior.

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. <sup>4</sup> You know the way to the place where I am going."*

<sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

<sup>6</sup> Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup> If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

<sup>8</sup> Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered: "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'? <sup>10</sup> Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. <sup>11</sup> 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 miracles themselves. <sup>12</sup> I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

Just about the time you think you know somebody they do something that makes you wonder if you know them at all. Just the other day my wife and I were listening to the radio, a song came on and I began to sing along. She looked at me with a mixture of awe and disgust and said, "Who are you? Sometimes I wonder what you were like in your teens when you know songs like that." Maybe you have had a similar experience with a spouse or a friend, someone you have known for quite awhile, that makes you wonder if you actually know them at all.

Imagine you are one of those disciples sitting in the upper room on Maundy Thursday evening. You have come to know Jesus as your Rabbi, teacher, and friend. You think you know him very well. You have often sat with him and these other men and listened as he has taught you many things. But this evening, Jesus tone is different and his words are so different from what you have heard him say before. "I'm leaving tomorrow. I have work to do that I cannot do here. But don't be afraid, it's all part of the plan." If someone you cared about said this to you, you would probably think, "What are you talking about? I don't really know who you are."

Even though his words confuse them, Jesus speaks plainly to them about the work he has to do to save the world. Even though he has much yet to tell them, he calms their fears. "You know who I am. You have always known me. I am your God and your Savior."

Peter has just told Jesus he would never fall away. Jesus has responded to Peter and the rest of the disciples that where he is going they cannot come. This is something the disciples have never heard Jesus says before. He has never told them they can't come with him. Yet, even as Jesus explains to them the work he is about to do is only his, they understand who he is and what he is talking about. **Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you.**

Even though it is clear to us that Jesus is speaking in heavenly terms when he is speaking about his Father's house and the rooms that are there. It wasn't clear to the disciples what he was talking about. They thought he was speaking in a literal, earthly sense.

They obviously don't understand whose big house he is talking about. They have seen where his mother lives, but they have never seen anything like this house he is speaking about. He responds to their doubts, "I would not lie to you, **If it were not so I would have told you.**"

**I am going there to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. <sup>4</sup> You know the way to the place where I am going."**

They are also confused about how to get to that house. Which road will Jesus be taking on his lonely journey? How will follow Jesus and meet him later if they don't know where the house is? Jesus assures them, I have taught you the way, **You know the way to the place where I am going.**"

Thomas says **"Lord we don't know where you are going, do how can we know the way?"**

Finally, Jesus makes it clear that he is not talking about a physical road somewhere. Rather, he is talking about a spiritual road of faith and trust that leads to heaven. **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."**

This is one of the clearest Gospel statements in all of the Bible. Jesus tells us he is the Savior and it is through him alone we are saved.

Notice what Jesus did not say. He did not say he will show us the way to heaven and we need to do the rest ourselves. He did not say that he knows the truth which can save us, but we have to experience that truth ourselves in our own ways. He did not say that he has the secret to eternal life, but we need to unlock that with our obedience. He tells us he is Savior in three ways. He is the way, the road or path that leads to heaven. His suffering and death is the only truth which leads to heaven and through that truth, through faith in him, he gives eternal life.

Jesus tells us he is our Savior. He is telling his disciples that his time on earth must come to a painful end. He must go through this suffering and the death in order that God's plan would be fulfilled, that he would save people from their sins and that the gates of heaven would be opened and all of the places in heaven that have been assigned and prepared would be filled with those who believe. This must happen because Jesus is the ONLY way, truth and life, no one can come to the Father in any other way and be saved.

Even though Jesus has just told them he is the Savior sent from God the Father to save them, they are still confused. What do you mean Jesus, we know you and your teachings, but we do not know about Father. We do not know what he is like. Phillip says, "Show us the Father and that will be enough."

Jesus replies, **"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'? <sup>10</sup> Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. <sup>11</sup> 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 miracles themselves. <sup>12</sup> I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father**

Jesus tells his disciples, "You know God, because you know me." You know God's love because you have seen the love that I have shown to all people. All of the times that you heard me speak about carrying out the Father's plan of to save all people, that was my plan. All of the times when I called people to Repent and believe in me, that was because I am the Lord, your Savior. All the times you have seen me perform miracles, you knew that I was the Son of God. All of this you have seen and experienced. You know me, you know my Father, because the Father and I are one. Don't you believe this?"

Jesus preaching and teaching had been clear. Even the Pharisees understood that Jesus was claiming to be God, they called him a blasphemer because of it. Yet, the disciples knew Jesus as their Rabbi, teacher and friend and they did not fully understand that he was their God and Lord.

Jesus is tells them and us, "You know me. I am your God and Savior believe in me."

What happens if we have questions like the disciples had about who Jesus really is? What happens if, even though he tells he is the way and the truth and the life, we are not sure if that is believable? What if we don't really believe Jesus is our God and Savior? What if we see him more as a teacher who lays out a set of directions and guidelines that we must follow to get to heaven? What if we know him as a leader and guide who points the way to heaven, but in the end it is a path that we must find and follow on our own?

Jesus did teach that we should follow his example and live a God-pleasing life according to his commandments, but he never taught that those actions would be the path that leads to heaven. Jesus never taught that if we follow his example well enough, if we keep enough of the commandment the doors of heaven would be opened. In fact, he closed those doors of obedience when he said we must be perfect as he is perfect.

Jesus always taught the path to heaven was in him and through faith in him alone. We really don't know who Jesus is, if we think that we can be good enough to get to heaven. We are not listening to Jesus words if we think that the way to heaven lies in our hands.

Jesus is our God and Savior. He doesn't want there to be any mistake about how we get to heaven. He wants us to be there with him forever. As our God and Savior, he not only knows the way to heaven, he tells us the only way to heaven is through faith in him. He not only tells us he knows the truth that can save, he tells us that salvation is through faith in him. He does not hide the message of heaven, instead he tells us that Jesus has unlocked that gate to heaven with his suffering and death, and, through the Holy Spirit, all who believe him will be saved.

Jesus comforts his disciples by reminding them, "You know who I am. I am your God and Savior." Our God loves us enough that he personally came to be that path for us and to assure us that because of his work our eternal life is secure. Because of all our God and Savior has done for us, we are assured that we are heaven bound.