

OpenTheo

Upper Room Discourse (Part 2)



The Life and Teachings of Christ - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses several key points from the Upper Room Discourse in this talk. He notes that the disciples will face challenges, but they should not be troubled as joy will come. Jesus also talks about "father's house mansions", but this does not refer to heaven in the Old Testament context. Gregg explains that believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and God dwells in them as a corporate body. The talk also explores the concept of the Trinity and the central role Jesus plays in accessing God the Father through prayer.

Transcript

Deny Him three times. That probably made Peter kind of troubled. And Jesus says, listen, don't be troubled.

Trust Me. I realize that what I'm saying sounds like it's a really bad deal. And it does have its downside, but the upshot of it is so good that I want you to just trust Me that you're going to be happy in the end.

Remember in chapter 16, we looked at this verse a moment ago. In verse 20, chapter 16, Most assuredly I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice, and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. So don't be troubled.

You're going to weep. You're going to lament. That's, you know, weeping endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

And Jesus even said earlier in His ministry, Blessed are those who weep, for they shall be comforted. Or as He put it in Luke's version of that beatitude in Luke chapter 6, He said, Blessed are those who are weeping, for they shall laugh. And the disciples would go through a period which was going to be very trying for them emotionally, very depressing, high stress.

But He says, Trust Me. If you just trust Me, you won't be troubled. Now, apparently they didn't trust Him, and they were troubled.

They were still troubled near the end of the chapter when He told them again in verse

27, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Furthermore, we know that when Jesus was crucified, when He was arrested, they were very troubled. They fled, and they were still troubled until they saw Him raised from the dead.

So they didn't believe Him well enough, and that's a shame. But He told, He basically indicated, If you believe in God and in Me, there will be nothing that should cause anxiety to overwhelm you here. He said in verse 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. Now, you have heard me talk about this verse before, so I probably can't fool you on this one.

But if I would ask you, What is His Father's house? What would you answer? Had Jesus ever before said anything about His Father's house prior to this? Now, most Christians, of course, when they read John 14, 2, they think He means heaven. In My Father's house are many mansions. They're going to go to heaven someday, and there's going to be all these houses there.

You know, I want a colonial style mansion, and someone else wants something else. But the Father's house in the Bible is nowhere referred to as heaven. Jesus spoke only one other time in the Gospel of John about His Father's house.

That was back in John chapter 2 and verse 16. In John chapter 2 and verse 16, it says, He said to those who sold the doves, Take these things away. Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise.

Now, in that verse, the only other time in the Gospel of John that Jesus speaks of His Father's house, He uses it in the sense that the Old Testament consistently used it. God's house in the Old Testament was always the tabernacle, or after it was defunct, the temple, after Solomon built the temple. When David said in the very famous Psalm 23, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, He didn't mean heaven, although the forever part might incline us to think so.

I think we have to take in the hyperbole there. The house of the Lord in the Old Testament was nothing other than the tabernacle until Solomon built the temple. That was after David's time.

And then that was God's house. And that's how Jesus spoke about it early in His ministry. Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise.

Of course, you might recall that just prior to this upper room discourse, Jesus had said to the Jews that He was leaving. And He pronounced several woes on the scribes and Pharisees. And He said, Your house is left to you desolate.

And He meant the temple. The temple was no longer His Father's house. His Father was

moving out into another house.

And this house that had been His Father's house was now your house. You can have it. And God was never again to dwell in houses made with hands.

But what is the house of God today? By the time that Jesus spoke these words, the temple of Jerusalem was no longer regarded as the Father's house. Now, in this verse, John 14, 2, In My Father's house are many mansions. The word mansions is a strange, strange translation.

The Greek word there is mone, m-o-n-e. And this word is found only twice in the New Testament. It is related, is the noun related to the verb meno, m-e-n-o.

And meno is a very common verb in the Gospel of John. It is translated abide or remain. As, for instance, in John 15 where he says, Abide in me and I in you, as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but it has to abide in the vine.

To abide in Christ, to remain in him or to continue. These are the three English words that are continually rendered to translate this Greek word meno. Meno means to abide or to remain or to continue.

It's a very, very common word in John's writings. We find it repeatedly in 1 John. We find it, of course, in the Gospel of John a great deal.

Now, that's a verb, but the noun form of that is mone. And that word, since it's obviously a cognate of abide, means an abiding place or a place to stay, a place to remain. That is the Greek word that is here used in verse 2, here translated mansions.

In my father's house are many mansions. The word mansions is really abiding places. Some modern translations would say rooms because in the imagery of a house, many staying places in a house would be like rooms.

You'll find frequently modern translations say my father's house are many rooms. And that's all right. That's not bad.

The thing to realize, though, is that this Greek word, whether it's translated mansions or rooms or whatever else you want to translate it, it simply means places to stay. And it's found only one other time in the entire New Testament, and that's later in this same chapter. Although it's masked because it's not translated with the same English word in this chapter.

That's in verse 23. In John 14, 23, Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word and my father will love him. And we will come and make our home with him.

The word home there is Moneta again. It's the only other occurrence in the entire New

Testament. This word appears in verse 2 and in verse 23 of John 14 and nowhere else in the New Testament.

Now, since this is a rare noun, did I say verb? It's a rare noun in the New Testament found only twice, both in the same chapter, in the same discourse. One would perhaps be justified in suggesting that the word may refer to the same thing in both instances. Now, it's not all that clear what it means in verse 2, but what does it mean in verse 23? If you love Jesus and you keep his word, what's the promise? God will love you and Jesus and his father will come and make his home with you, with the believer.

In other words, God's abiding place is in the believer. And in the father's house, there are many of these believers, many of these abiding places. And you are aware, no doubt, that in the New Testament, the Christian as an individual and the church corporately are both referred to as the home where God lives.

If you'll look at, for instance, 1 Corinthians chapter 6. In 1 Corinthians 6, 19, it says, do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you? Now, we talked about your body probably means your individual body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. That's the house of God, the temple. The word house of God always is a reference to the temple or the tabernacle.

But the temple today is not made of stones, not dead stones anyway, but living stones. But your body is a temple. But it says also a few verses earlier in chapter 6. No, no, I'm sorry, a few chapters earlier in chapter 3. Pardon me.

In verse 16, 1 Corinthians 3, 16. Do you not know that you, in the Greek it's plural, you plural are the temple, singular of God. You as a group are the temple.

Of course, Peter says in 1 Peter 2, 5, that we are like living stones built up into a spiritual house. The idea is that whether looked at individually or corporately, believers are the house of God. He dwells in you because you are an abiding place.

But in his house, there's many of these abiding places. His house is the church, the temple of the Holy Spirit. And you are one of the stones, one of the abiding places, one of the rooms in the house, depending on how you want to ship the metaphors.

If you'll look at Ephesians chapter 2, just for a couple of other instances here where we can get this concept established. Ephesians chapter 2, verse 19 through 22 says, Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with his saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom, that is in Christ, the whole building, what building are we talking about here? He's talking about the church, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. So, you are being built

together as corporately the church into the temple of God.

The church is God's temple, his house. Look at 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 15. 1 Timothy 3.15, Paul says, But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

So, there's no question about what the house of God is. Ever since Jesus came, the house of God is the church, which is, of course, the believers in Christ. One other place I'd like you to look at is Hebrews chapter 3. Hebrews chapter 3 and verse 6. Well, 5 and 6, because it says of Moses in chapter 3 of Hebrews verse 5, Moses indeed was a faithful in all God's house as a servant.

I take the house there to be the tabernacle. Moses was faithful in his construction of the tabernacle according to the pattern that was given to him, which was a testimony of those things which should be spoken afterward, the tent of the testimony. But verse 6 says, But Christ is a son over his own house.

Notice now, whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end. We are his house. Christ's house, the house of God, whatever, the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Notice the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit all live in this house. It says there in Hebrews 3, 6 that we are Christ's house. First Timothy 3, 15 says the house of God, which is the church.

And in First Corinthians, Paul calls us the temple of the Holy Spirit, the house of the Holy Spirit. So the triune God dwells in us in the church. And that is the only sense in which the New Testament refers to the house of God.

It is the church, unless, of course, it's the earlier passages in the Gospels where it talks about the temple in Jerusalem as God's house. But by this time, Jesus had already begun to shift his identification of what the Father's house was. In my Father's house are many abiding places.

Anyone who loves Jesus and does his commandments is one of those abiding places. God comes and lives with him, verse 23 says. And the Father's house is corporately all those abiding places, all the believers together.

Now, he said, if it were not so, John 14, 2, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. Now, that statement, if I, you know, if it were not so, I would have told you is kind of a strange statement.

And some have felt that it should be understood as a question. There are no punctuation marks like question marks in the Greek text. So whether a statement is simply that, a

statement, or whether it's a question, rhetorical or otherwise, you kind of have to judge by the context.

And some feel that the context here would make the sentence make more sense. If it rendered, if it were not so, would I not have told you? Or would I have told you? I'm going away to prepare a place for you, put in the period somewhere else, making that last sentence part of the previous sentence. In any case, it's not clear how that should best be rendered, but it doesn't affect an awful lot.

The idea is, I told you the truth. I wouldn't tell you anything other than the truth. If it wasn't so, I wouldn't say it.

And therefore, he says, I want you to believe in me. I've told you this. Believe that I tell you the truth.

And that should cause your hearts not to be troubled because I'm going to dwell with you. My father is going to dwell with you. And he says in verse 3, well, at the end of verse 2, I go to prepare a place for you.

In verse 3, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also. Now, this is understood to be of the second coming of Christ. I take it that way myself.

I don't see any better way to understand that. Although, I mean, I suppose if someone wanted to stretch it a little bit, he could mean, I will come again to receive you to myself, could mean at his resurrection, he's going away to die. He's going to come back to them after he rises from the dead, which he did, he appeared to them on several occasions, and receive them to himself.

And from then on, he was always going to be with them, so that where he was, they would be also. He was, he'd dwell with him. Remember, he said in the Great Commission, I'm with you always, even to the end of the age.

So that could be seen that way. But I think more naturally, a reference to the second coming of Christ. One thing I would point out, however, though, is that this is commonly a verse quoted about the rapture.

And while once more, I don't have any particular problems with applying this to the rapture, I do believe in a rapture. I don't believe in a pre-tribulation rapture. I don't think that's taught in the Bible.

And the thing I would point out is it doesn't say he's going to come back and take us away to heaven. My concept of what the Bible teaches on the rapture is that when Jesus comes back, he will come down to earth. And before he reaches the earth, we will rise to meet him in the air prior to his touching ground.

And we'll, having met him, be like a welcoming committee, meeting him in the sky and coming, making the rest of the journey with him down to here. He's coming here. The concept that many people have, especially those who have the pre-tribulation rapture ideas, that he's going to come down, rapture us up, and he's going to turn around and go back up to heaven, take us up there.

He doesn't say that here. He doesn't say anywhere here that he's taking us back to heaven. Now, see, one of the problems is that people have associated the Father's house in verse 2 with heaven.

And therefore, the assumption they make is that since he's talking about heaven here, he must be talking about taking us away to heaven. But if you look carefully, he doesn't say that. God is going to dwell with you is his masked meaning of verse 2. He makes it unmasked in verses 21 and 23.

But he says nothing about heaven there. He does say he's going away, and in all likelihood, he means he's going away to heaven. But when he says, I'm going to come again, he doesn't say, I'm going to come again, then I'm going to go away again to heaven.

He's going to come again to here. This is where he's coming to. He's coming back to earth.

And when he does, he's going to receive us to himself. So that where he is, and if you read Revelation chapters 21, 28, the lamb is on the throne in the new Jerusalem, on the new earth, he's not up in heaven somewhere. We will be also.

There is no reference here to us going to heaven. There is a reference here to his coming back to earth and us being gathered to him when he's here, when he's back. He says in verse 4, and where I go, you know, and the way, you know.

Now, Thomas protested that this wasn't in fact the case. He said, Lord, we don't know where you are going. And how can we know the way? Now, Jesus answer that he was the way is what justified him in saying, you know, the way he meant, you know, me.

Thomas understood him to mean, you know, the path. And that is, in a sense, what he meant. The word way means a path or a road.

And therefore, Jesus is saying, where I'm going, you know, you know, the place. And, you know, the road there. Now, I'm not sure how he meant that they know the place.

They weren't real clear at that point, really, where he was going. However, he had spoken to them previously of going to his father. And I think they could have rightly presumed that the father was in heaven and that that was where Jesus was going.

But the way there was far from clear to them. At least they weren't quite sure how to make the identification. Thomas said, listen, we don't know where you're going and how to get there.

It's beyond us. We don't know the way there. And Jesus said, well, I am the way.

And by that, he means he is the way or the path or the road, the route to the father. And he clarifies that before the verse is finished, where he says, no one comes to the father except through me. Now, we have understood this sometimes to be no one goes to heaven except through Christ.

I have no problem with that. I believe that is true. I believe no one goes to heaven but through Christ.

But that's not exactly what he said. He said no one comes to the father but through me. Now, while it is true that God is in heaven, it's also true that God is not far from any of us.

As Paul said in Acts chapter 17, he said in him, we live and move and have our being. God is not really far away from us, but many of us are far from him. And we need to approach him.

We need to come to him. Prayer, if it's genuine, is always an approach to God. But no one can approach God.

No one can come to the father except through Christ. Now, coming to the father is not simply a reference to going to heaven. I do believe, of course, that when we die, we will go to heaven.

But I don't believe his words are restricted to that meaning. No one comes to the father but through me, I think means that no one can have access to God in any sense through prayer. Approaching God, drawing near to God, as the Bible frequently exhorts us to do, is something that is done through Christ.

Now, how so? He said, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father but through me. Coming to the father requires that we come a certain way, a way that God has prescribed.

You can't go just any way. In the tabernacle and later in the temple, there was a prescribed method or way of coming before God. It required blood sacrifices being offered.

It required the priest to wash his hands before going into the building. It required the burning of incense. On the Day of Atonement, it involved going in with blood from several different animals into the Holy of Holies and the priest having washed himself

thoroughly.

There was a whole procedural way of approaching God in the tabernacle. That whole procedure is replaced by Jesus himself. This is what the writer of Hebrews, I believe, is saying to us when he spends a great deal of time in chapters 8, 9, and 10, talking about the tabernacle and its various rituals of approach to God.

He begins talking about it, actually, in chapter 5 when he talks about Jesus as our high priest, but he gets in earnest into talking about the tabernacle itself in Hebrews chapters 8 and 9 and 10. In chapter 8, he talks specifically about the true sanctuary, the true tabernacle. In chapter 9, he talks about some of the articles of the tabernacle of Moses and how the thing was laid out.

And he goes into some detail later in chapter 9 about the Day of Atonement and how the high priest was only able to go in once a year and so forth. And then he talks about how Jesus has gone into tabernacles not made with hands and intercedes for us. And he continues to talk about the sacrifice of Christ as our high priest in chapter 10, so that finally in chapter 10, verse 19 of Hebrews, he says, Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he consecrated for us through the veil that is his flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Notice the exhortation there, Hebrews 10, 22, is let us draw near to who? To God. Let us draw near to God. Let us come to the Father.

How? Well, he says, well, Jesus has consecrated a new and living way through his own flesh through himself. He is the way to approach God. He replaces the tabernacle way, the tabernacle procedures, the sacrifices and the incense and all that stuff.

All of that was a shadow. All of that was bearing witness to something bigger than itself, greater than itself, and that greater thing was Jesus himself, who is now the way to God. Now, when we say Jesus is the way to God, I think there's a couple of ways we can understand that, or even more than a couple.

One is that, of course, Jesus has removed all obstacles between us and God. Through his death, he's removed the barrier of sin so that he's made an open way. He's sort of opened the gate, as it were, the obstacle that would have prevented us, the veil that hid God from us and kept everybody out of the Holy of Holies.

That was torn. When Jesus' body was torn, the veil was torn, and Jesus has opened the access. He has removed the barrier or the veil.

And that's one sense in which he is the way or has made the way, another way of saying it, into the access with God. Another sense in which he is the way, the only way in which

we can come to God, is that he is the mediator, and we must have a mediator. You cannot come to God on your own merits.

You need to have one who mediates. That's what a high priest does. He mediates, and that's what the Bible says Jesus is.

He's our high priest. He mediates between us and God. Paul said to Timothy that there is one God and one mediator between God and man.

And that's the man, Christ Jesus. I was looking here, I think it's in 1 Timothy chapter, maybe it's 2 Timothy chapter 2. I don't have it at my fingertips, so I'm not going to keep looking for it here. We don't have enough time.

But there's, and it might not be in that chapter, but Paul did tell Timothy, there's one God and one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus. And I know if I just look a little longer out, my eyes will fall across that verse, but I don't have time to keep looking right now. Actually, it might even be 1 Timothy.

I was looking a second, but thanks. 1 Timothy 2.5. I knew someone would get it. So Jesus mediates for us.

That is to say he goes alongside us as an advocate to recommend us. We come on his merits, on his welcome. He is always welcome before the Father and with him or in him, more properly to use Paul's terminology, we are accepted in the beloved.

That I think is Ephesians 1.11. We are accepted in the beloved. Then there's a third sense in which he is the way to God. And that is that the way he lived, the way he lived in obedience to the Father and in trust in the Father and so forth is the way that is appropriate.

The way that God accepts for people to approach him. John says in 1 John 2.6, 1 John 2.6, he says, he that abides in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked. We can approach God in Christ through that way and no other way.

And yet those who say they abide in him ought to walk even as he walked. His way of living, his way of walking is the way to walk toward God, the way to walk in approaching God. So there's three senses in which we could say Jesus is the way to the Father.

One is that his death removed the veil, removed the obstacle that debarred us from the presence of God. His mediatorship or his advocacy, as John puts it in 1 John 2, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. That is another sense in which he is our way in to God.

And then the third sense is that the way he lived is the way he walked, is the way to walk toward God. And so Jesus is the way to the Father. There's really no other way to the

Father.

That is not being exclusive. I mean, in one sense it is. People have objected to the exclusivity suggested in that, that no one can come to God except through Jesus.

But that's not really exclusive because God has allowed anyone to come through Jesus who wants to. Jesus said, he that comes to me I will in no wise cast out in John chapter 6. So it's wide open, really, to anyone who will come in the way that God prescribed. In Old Testament times, people couldn't just come to God any way they wanted.

Nate Abba and Abihu proved that. They came their own way. They were supposed to go through this prescribed ritual and take the fire from this particular altar and go burn it before the Lord.

They got fire from some other source. They decided to modify the way a little bit. There was a whole methodology that God had prescribed for approach to him.

And for people to depart from it was an insult to God. It suggested that they had the right to approach God whether they took the way he prescribed or not, as if God owed it to them to let them come before him. Even if they rejected his particular way that he prescribed.

You see, they failed to realize what a privilege it is to come to God. Man has no intrinsic right to come to God. And if God allows man to come, even on the most strict basis, God is showing tremendous generosity to allow man to come at all.

But when God has prescribed a way, it is the only way that one can rightly approach God. And Jesus said, no one can come to the Father but through me. He's the only way.

Now you see, it's also the truth and the lie. I don't have time to expand on those concepts as frequently as they occur in the gospel of John. Truth and life.

You know that we could go to many cross-references both in John and also in 1 John and 2 and 3 John also, by the way, on those words. These are favorite concepts of John's. But what do they mean in this context? Coming to God, one must come, first of all, through acknowledgement of the truth.

And Jesus is the truth. What Jesus is, what he taught, what he represents. He was the manifestation of God's truth.

He was, to put it another way, he was the word made flesh. He was God's word incarnate. We haven't come to it yet.

But in John 17, in verse 17, Jesus was praying for his disciples and he said, sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth. God's word, of course, is the truth because God can't lie.

And whatever he speaks, whatever he communicates has got to be true because he cannot lie. Therefore, if Jesus is the word of God made flesh, then he is, of course, the truth of God. And whatever he says, whatever he exhibits, whatever he demonstrates is a manifestation of God's truth.

And therefore, he is the truth. Anything that is not agreeable with Jesus is not the truth. It is a lie.

And in an age where the whole concept of truth is challenged philosophically, that there are, you know, people say, well, there is no absolute truth. One thing may be true to you and another thing true to me. Uh, Jesus statement, of course, rebukes that attitude.

And so does common sense, by the way. I mean, it's quite obvious that if someone wants to say, um, you know, this podium is solid and someone says, well, that may be true to you, but to me, it's liquid. Well, go ahead and try to dive through it if you want.

And we'll see who's got the truth here. You know, it's either solid or it's liquid. And not all opinions about it are equally consistent with what's true.

Just because someone may wish to say it's liquid doesn't make it so. The podium is a certain way and the way that it is, is the truth about it. And a person's ideas about it.

Don't change the truth about it to the extent that our ideas about it conform with the way it really is. Our ideas are true to the extent that our ideas about it do not conform to the way it really is. Our ideas are not true.

Truth is a certain way. People's ideas about truth vary, you know, broadly. But what Jesus is saying, he is the truth.

And therefore, those who believe in Jesus, those who trust in him, those who take him seriously and believe his words and recognize him for who he claimed to be, those persons have the truth. Everybody who has a different opinion about it, they got a lie. Only Jesus is the truth.

And he is the light. Jesus had said this earlier in chapter 11 when speaking to Martha after Lazarus died and before he raised him from the dead. He said, I am the resurrection and the life.

Where was that? That was. OK, we're down here in chapter 11. Twenty five.

Thank you. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. So he already declared himself to be the life.

Furthermore, John, in the opening verses of the gospel, John had declared that Jesus was the life or something very much like that. He said in him was life and that life was the light of men. And John one for in him, that is, in the word was life and the life was the

light of men.

Again, these are favorite concepts of John's. And we could get distracted widely by going off onto every reference in the gospel of John or the epistles of John where life is talked about. But essentially what we have to understand is that coming to God requires that we have his kind of life.

Because fellowship with God is impossible unless we have something in common with him. Fellowship with anybody requires that you have something in common with them. You can hardly fellowship with someone if you don't speak the same language, at least.

In fact, you can't have anything like real fellowship unless you're the same species, at least. I mean, you can have friend, a dog, you know, or a horse or or goldfish. Even, you know, you may, you know, in that movie, what about Bob? This guy had a goldfish that he talked to like it was his friend, but he was a little nuts.

But I mean, let's face it, the more unlike a human being your friend is, the less the less like real fellowship. The thing is that you have with that species. But but if you have the same species of life, if you're a human being, you can have fellowship, communion with another human being and have human and have fellowship with God requires that we have his species of life.

We have to have his eternal life. We have to have his divine life. Jesus said in John 17, three, this is eternal life that they might know you.

The only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent and Jesus is that life. So the idea is he that has Jesus has the way to God. He has the truth of God and he has the life of God.

John again in First John puts it very clearly, no doubt expanding on this very verse in First John, chapter five and verse 12. He says he who has the son has life. He who does not have the son of God does not have life.

It's just that easy when we talk about eternal security, really answering the question of whether one saved, always saved or whether you can lose your salvation or whatever. It just boils down to something quite this simple. If you have Jesus, you've got life.

You don't have Jesus. You don't have life. He is the life.

Now, is it possible to have Jesus at one point in your life and not later? Judas did. Judas had Jesus at one point but didn't have him later, didn't die with him. And there are others, no doubt, that the Bible refers to who had the Lord at one time and don't later.

But I mean, it's quite obvious. Some people walk with God, walk with Jesus Christ for a while and later in their life they're not walking with Jesus anymore. If they've left Jesus,

they don't have him in my understanding.

And if they don't have the son, they don't have life because he is the life. You can't have life as something separate from having Jesus. Even if you had Jesus before and had eternal life, if you depart from the Lord, you depart from that life as well.

He's all those things. No one can come to the Father. No one has any access to God except through Jesus.

Very famous verse among us evangelicals. Let's take a few more verses. We're not obviously going to make it through this chapter at all in this session, but let's go to verse 7. If you'd known me, you would have known my father also.

And from now on, you know him and have seen him. Philip said to him, Lord, show us the father and it's sufficient for us. Jesus said to him, have I been with you so long and yet you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the father.

So how can you say, show us the father? Do you not believe that I am in the father and the father in me? The words that I speak to you, I do not speak on my own authority. But the father who dwells in me does the works. Believe me that I am in the father and the father in me or else believe me for the sake of the words themselves.

Now, Jesus said in verse 7 that from now on, you know the father and you have seen him. When Philip suggested that he hadn't yet seen the father, but that would be quite adequate to satisfy him if Jesus would just kind of pull back, you know, the clouds and give him a gaze into heaven so he could see the father up there. By the way, that's a view that very few people have ever gotten.

Stephen did as he was being stoned. He saw the heavens open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. No doubt Philip was hoping for some kind of revelation like that.

Just show us the father and then, wow, we'll just we'll really be encouraged no matter how bad things get. If we just can see God, give us a chance to see God and that'll certainly be sufficient. It'll be all we'll ever need, you know, to keep us strong in faith and so forth.

And Jesus said, you know, basically, if you've seen me, you've seen the father. Now, some people feel, of course, there's a lot of people who don't believe Jesus is God. The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, often come to mind as people who hold to the idea that Jesus is not God.

And they would take a verse like this, which, of course, they believe Jesus really said this, but they would take it differently. If you've seen me, you've seen the father sounds like he's saying the father and I are inseparable in a sense, but they don't understand it

that way. They'd say, well, basically, if you've seen what Jesus is like, you've seen what the father is like because Jesus is like the father.

Now, of course, those words of Jesus taken in a vacuum could mean that they could be taken that way. You know, if you've seen me, you've seen the father could be just a less than exact way of saying the father's a lot like me and I'm a lot like the father. But in the context, his words have to mean more than that, because he says from now on, you have seen the father.

And Philip said, no, I don't think we have seen the father. Could you just show him to us? And Jesus had to correct him and say, yes, you have seen him. Now, no doubt Philip already knew that Jesus was a lot like the father.

Jesus had said that so many times during his mystery. You know what the father does? I do also. The father, the son does nothing of his own.

What he sees the father do, that's what he does. And, you know, he's basically saying that everything he does is like what the father does. But Philip said, OK, we've seen the father's a lot like you, but could you just show us him? Could we just see the father himself? And Jesus' answer basically is there's nothing more the father to see, but what you've already seen.

Basically, how can you say that, Philip, when you've been with me this long time? Haven't you known who I am? Now, that statement would make no sense whatsoever unless he's saying I am the father. You asked to see the father. How can you ask a question like that? Don't you know who I am? Don't you know who you're looking at? You've seen the father.

Now, it says in Isaiah chapter 9 and verse 6, which is, of course, a famous passage about the Messiah. Isaiah 9, 6 says, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, a reference to Christ, of course. And it says, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

So Jesus, one of his titles is, in fact, the Everlasting Father. If you could somehow peel away the veil and look at who is incarnate there, it would be that it was none other than the Everlasting Father. Or, as Paul put it in Colossians 2, 9, in him, Colossians 2, 9, Paul said, in him that in Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The whole fullness of God dwelt bodily in Christ. This is a great mystery, and we don't deny that. It doesn't really make it any easier to talk in terms of the Trinity.

In fact, we only confuse things when we bring up the Trinity. That doesn't mean the Trinity is not true. It just means it's not easy to understand, and it's a bit confusing to try to get into it.

But we can certainly say this much, that the Bible declares in no uncertain terms that inside Jesus of Nazareth, God the Father was there, manifesting himself. It says in 2 Corinthians 5 that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. Now, Jesus tries to sort of give an understanding of that.

In verse 10, he says, Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? Now, we've talked about this strange and difficult concept on other occasions. Jesus was in the Father, and the Father was in him. Now, if Jesus had just said, The Father is in me, and had said nothing more, that would perhaps be helpful.

It would be like he's saying, I'm like a container. My body is just a container, and the Father lives inside of this container. And that would be true.

But the problem is, then he adds the other part, and I am in the Father. The Father is in me, and I'm in the Father. And then we have this whole idea of how can one container be inside another container, and yet, I mean, how can container A be inside container B, but at the same time, container B is inside container A? And we talked about that before.

And I, at least, maybe no one else has wrestled with that particular imagery before, but from my childhood, I remember always getting very perplexed and unhappy with Jesus saying that the Father was in him, and he was in the Father. How can they be in each other like that? And I think I shared with you once that I think my concept of it now is not so much like the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three men in a room, and therefore, they are in the Godhead, you know, the Godhead being a committee of three, but rather, it's more like the ingredients of some, I hate to use this because it depersonalizes it, but it's only a metaphor, but the ingredients in some liquid that has three ingredients mixed together. Lemonade, for example, you know, the lemon juice is in the lemonade.

In a sense, the lemon juice is in the water, and it's in the sugar, and the sugar is in the water, and in the lemon, and the lemon, you know, they're all in each other, you know? And I don't know if that's a better way of looking at it, but I suspect if there's some imagery that comes to mind, or that's supposed to come to mind, where I'm in the Father, the Father's in me, rather than the imagery of containers, like my body is a container of God, but then God's body is a container of me, you know, I mean, that gets real difficult, probably it doesn't get less difficult no matter what, it doesn't get un-difficult, no matter what earthly imagery you try to use to describe the Trinity, but possibly an alternative imagery helps a little better than the idea of container, that the Father and the Son are intermingled in identity, they are so mixed in identity that they can speak, I mean, it can be said that Jesus can say on one hand, the Father's greater than I later in this chapter, but it can also be said that He is the everlasting Father. Well, I don't try to sort that one, or unravel that one, just take that one for granted that God understands that, and Jesus was God in the flesh, just like when John says the Word was with God, and the Word was God, that's just about as easy to figure out as this is, you

know, it's just a mystery. And Jesus said in verse 11, believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves.

That is, if you don't believe me just because I say so, think about the works. I did skip over, and I shouldn't have, the latter part of verse 10, the words I speak to you, I do not speak on my own authority. Now, he had said that already earlier in several different places, but he says, but the Father who dwells in me, He does the works.

It seems strange to mix words and works in that way. It seems like it should either be just works or words in both clauses of that sentence. However, he already mixed those two ideas once previously.

In John 8, 28, Jesus said to them, when you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me, I speak these things. His works, I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me, I speak these things. His words and his works, sort of seen as a combined two-fold testimony that the Father has given.

The way Jesus lived and the things he spoke were both ways in which the Father manifested himself through Christ. And he says the same kind of thing there in chapter 14, verse 10. We'll have to take the rest of chapter 14, and we'll also have to get into chapter 15 next time.

I've got a couple more sessions scheduled to get through chapter 16 all together.