

I am The Way, The Truth ^{St. NT}
and The Life
(John 14:6) ^{John 14}
1 Thir 7

11/1-9
Evening
I would like to pose a question to you ~~at~~ this
~~Good Friday afternoon...~~ MORNING What would your reaction be
if ~~any of the ministers in this service, or the~~
minister of ^{this} your church (OR ANY OTHER CHURCH) proclaimed from the pulpit
today...or any other day that HE was The Way, The
Truth and The Life?

7thly. Bacon
2nd Sunday Easter
I don't think your reaction would be very
positive because you have a frame of reference with
an immortal ~~man~~ who said these very words long ago...
a man called Jesus. You would doubt your minister
just as many of these who heard Jesus doubted him, -
or had trouble understanding ^{HIS} ~~their~~ meaning.

Jesus was trying desperately to make His disciples
understand who He really was, and what His mission
was
here on earth.

He said these words to 12 men who urgently needed
direction in their lives...men who needed hope...
men who needed TRUTH-NOT ~~to~~ lies from ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
religious and political leaders of their day...
men who yearned for a lighter yoke...a better way
of life, ~~for them, their families and their people.~~

The setting for these words by Jesus was in The Upper Room during the last Passover meal Jesus and His disciples would have together. Jesus was trying

to prepare them for the long, trying hours ahead, and FOR THEIR FUTURE LIVES! He could see how confused and troubled they were.

He told them not to be troubled. He said, "Believe in God, believe also in Me. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am - you may be also...and you knew the way where I am going."

→ Right here was where the disciples' confusion, apprehension...and even fear, became evident. It was here that Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord we do not know where you are going - how do we know the way?"

And Jesus answered him, "I am The Way, The Truth and The Life. No one comes to the Father but through Me."

Isn't it puzzling? ~~Jesus had~~ Jesus ~~had~~ issued each one of the twelve men in that Upper Room a simple command... "Follow Me." - and they rose up, left home and family and followed Him. (FRIENDS 2nd)

Now, after ~~living~~ being with Jesus all this time, ...after seeing Him heal the sick, the blind, and the infirm (WAYS)

after seeing Him calm a raging sea...after ^{listening} ~~listening~~
to His preaching and watching His life style, they
puzzled over His words. And today, many of us are
having the same problem. We don't know The Man From
~~GALILEE~~
~~Galilee~~ as well as we would like to. We yearn to
know Him better...to become as much like Him as we
can.

~~...the most unusual circumstances at Bethelhem. We read of~~
~~His parent's concern when they had to return to the~~
~~Temple to seek Him out and find Him among the priests~~
~~and scribes discussing ~~the~~ theology. ~~He~~ He was~~
We can be fairly ~~sure~~ ^{CERTAIN} of the salient points of
Jesus' earthly life. We know of His birth under
most unusual circumstances at Bethelhem. We read of
His parent's concern when they had to return to the
Temple to seek Him out and find Him among the priests
and scribes discussing ~~the~~ theology. ~~He~~ He was
just a boy ~~but~~ ^{EVEN THEN} but ^(BY SAYING) he ~~told~~ ^{HIS} his amazed parents that
He was going about His father's business.

Jesus grew up as other boys grow...increasing in
stature, strength...maturing in wisdom and ripening
into favor with God. ~~and at times with some of the~~
~~people of His time.~~

In our mind's eye we see ^A ~~this~~ young Jesus working
in his father's carpenter shop at Nazareth as he

broods over the burdens of His people...troubled over their sins and sorrows...his mind filled with a longing to help them.

One day he learns of the stir caused by a dramatic, to-the-point, fire and brimstone preacher called "John the Baptist." He travels to hear this preacher and persuades him to baptize him in the Jordan River.

As He rises up out of the river we read what happened in the third Chapter of Mathew...the 16th and 17th Verses..." And Jesus, when He was baptized went straightway put of the water; and lo the heavens were opened unto Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo a voice from heaven saying..."This is my well beloved Son in whom I am ~~well~~ pleased."

① Right after this He is immediately led out into the wilderness, there to be tempted by ~~the Devil~~ ^{SATAN} himself. While in the wilderness those 40 days and nights Jesus suffered hunger as he was taunted by Satan to turn stones into bread, and eat. But Jesus resisted and answered..."Man shall not live by bread alone, but by ~~the~~ every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

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Then Satan took Him ^{INTO} the Holy City, and in effect said, "Here's a terrific publicity stunt. To prove you are truly The Son of God jump off the ~~precipice~~ ^{pinnacle} of the temple because it is written that angeles will catch you in their hands and you won't be hurt. But, Jesus said to Satan..." It is also written that thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," Then ~~he~~

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~~Satan~~ ^{SATAN} tried again. He took Jesus up on a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. ~~Satan said~~ And Satan told Him that all these kingdoms would be Jesus', if Jesus would bow down and worship ^{Him} ~~Satan~~. ~~By this time Jesus had~~ But Jesus ~~said~~ said... "Get thee hence Satan, For it is written... Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and only Him shalt thou serve." Then ^{SATAN} ~~the devil~~ left him and the angeles came and ministered unto him. ---

Baptism and the

After His days and nights in the wilderness, Jesus leaves His family and the carpenter shop to teach what ~~he~~ ^{TERMS} ~~he~~ "The Abundant Life" which is possible in what he calls "The Kingdom of God". He demonstrates such amazing healing power that throngs follow Him wherever He goes. They listen intently as His teaching parables speak their language

...the language of the farmer...the shopkeeper...
 the rich...the ~~poor~~...the infirm...the tax collector...
 yes, even the prostitute. ^(They watch) They listen, and they tell
 others... ^(LISTEN) "Come and see." His popularity grows and
 opens the way for possible political leadership. But,
 He turns away from the chattering crowds and takes a
 course that He ~~knows~~ ^{knows} will most surely lead Him to
 His death on the cross. He is determined to die to
 save His people. His motive and goal is love. His
 mission salvation. But He is either loved, and adored,
— or feared, and hated.

Jesus, living as a mortal, was beset with the
 pains and hungers that beset us all. He was human
 enough to say on at least one occasion... "I thirst."
 He became angry enough at one point to physically
 drive the ^(AND peddlers) moneychangers out of the temple. ~~On the~~
~~occasion~~ In ~~the garden~~ of Gethsemane just before His
 arrest he told his disciples that "His soul was
exceeding ~~sorrowful~~ ^{SORROWFUL}, even unto death." Later on, as
 He prayed while the disciples slept, his anguish
 was displayed as he said, "O My Father, if it be
possible let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless,
not as I will, but as thou wilt."

7 44
And, as he hung on the cross he cried out

"My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?!"

Yes, Jesus knew what it was to ~~be~~ a mortal.
He
● He lived among us. ~~He~~ was beset with the
"ills of man", but He so triumphed over all of them
that we never read anything about Him talking
about His health. He was tempted, as we are...yet
He sinned not. He lived with His people under oppressive
conditions—~~with~~ harrassed by officials of state and
church, but His spirit was never broken. He was a
patriot...but He was no narrow nationalist. He died
not only for His friends and His people and for us,
but also for His enemies. As He was ~~sitting~~^{Dying} on the
cross He said, "Father, forgive them for they know
not what they do." What compassion! He was offered a
crown of gold but it did not tempt Him. Instead, he
chose a crown of thorns and faced the cross, but it
did not harden or break His heart. He lived what He
taught...and He died for what He lived.

An ancient Roman who became interested in Christianity came to the conclusion that ~~it~~ would amount to nothing. "It will never succeed", he said..." because it is founded upon a catastrophe, It is founded upon the death of its own leader. It will never last."

Well, he and ~~countless~~ ^{COUNTLESS} others would be quite right if the story had ended at the cross and a sealed tomb. If that were "the end"...it certainly would be "the end" ~~for~~ for all hope because the Scriptures ^I declare, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins".

But - there is the wonder of God's great working! The good news really begins where all the tales of men must end... It ~~begins~~ ^{BEGINS} with ~~the~~ ^{JESUS'} death, which at the time appeared to His followers to be the end of everything they had hoped for...and ~~it~~ ^{it} goes straight ahead to reveal its triumph in ~~his~~ ^{His} resurrection.

It is because Jesus lived a human life ^{in the form} ~~and man~~ OF a human being ~~that~~ that His triumph over sin and pain and death takes hold of our hearts. ^I ~~I~~ ^{WE} personally feel a strong, and continued need for a

Savior who not only tells ~~us~~ ^{us} how ~~we~~ ^{we} ought to feel...
 AND - ~~we~~ ^{we} how ~~we~~ ^{we} ought to live, and what ~~we~~ ^{we} ought to be, but who
 has actually lived the victorious life we all long
for.

Jesus is ever beyond us, yet we follow Him.
 His perfection baffles us, yet we continually
strive for that perfection. We cannot give Him up,
for His everlasting love will not let us go. He died
to redeem our sinful ways. - yours AND MINE.

Is it any wonder then that we ponder, and take
 to our hearts the words he proclaimed ~~so many times~~
 so long ago... "I am the Way, The Truth and The Life.
No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." How true
 that was then... How true ~~it~~ ^{IT} is today. ~~more~~

Let us pray... Father, help us to listen
 to Jesus words - "Follow Me." Help us
 to follow Him in our daily lives.
 Help us to know deep in our being
 that the Truly is "The Way - The Truth
 and the Life" - and through Him
 we come unto you. In Jesus' name
 we pray - Amen.