

Which Way to God?

John 14:5-14

Since Jesus has already identified himself as the bread of life (John 6) and the gate (John 10:7-10) and shepherd of God's sheep (John 10:11-18), it should not surprise us when he calls himself the *way* (to a personal, parent-child relationship with God), the *truth* (ultimate reality, and final standard for all talk about God) and the *life* (who makes it possible for us to live the abundant life God desires for us now and eternally).

God's perfect Fatherhood implies constant love, thoughtful care, powerful protection, ongoing instruction, wise guidance and a nurturing strategy that prepares us to be at home with him and Jesus in heaven forever. Coming to him and knowing him means going beyond awareness of his reality to enter the fullness of this relationship. Penitent faith in Jesus as sin-bearing Savior and reigning Lord brings us into it.

The Father exalts his Son by making him central at every stage in the work of our salvation. These are deep and wonderful waters.

GROUP DISCUSSION. In our world today people are looking for God in many different places. What paths to God do you see people exploring?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Reflect on your faith commitments

Why do you remain in the faith?

We continue to follow Jesus ' last conversation with his disciples where he announces that he is leaving, and his startled friends ask questions. In this section he responds to Thomas and then Philip. Read John 14:5-14.

1. Philip asks Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." What connections throughout this passage does Jesus draw between himself and God the Father?

2. What connections do you see between Philip's request and Thomas' question (vv. 5-8)?

3. Focus on Jesus' bold statement of verse 6. If the disciples gathered around him would fully accept this statement, what impact would it have on them in this difficult time?

4. Why is Jesus' statement of verse 6 offensive to many people today?

Do you find his statement challenging? troubling? comforting? confusing? Why or why not?

5. In reply to Philip's request Jesus says, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." What does this hint about the nature of God?

6. In verse 12 Jesus says, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing." Mentally review your plans for the coming week. What personal challenge do you find in Jesus' statement?

7. With hindsight on two thousand years of Christianity throughout the world, what do you think Jesus means in verse 12 when he says, "He will do even greater things than these"?

8. Focus on verses 13-14. First give these two sentences a quick reading as if you were seeing them for the first time. What would be your first response?

9. Now read these same two sentences slowly, noting small phrases such as "so that" and "in my name". With these conditions in mind, what specifically do you now want to ask Jesus to do?

10. Meditate silently for a few moments on the words of Jesus in verse 6: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Consider the kinds of comments made by your friends or heard in the media about Christians' belief that Christ is the only way to God. How can you respond?

As you weigh the impact of this bold statement from Jesus, pray for those you know who have not yet recognized him as their Lord, and pray for your own part in their spiritual care.

Now or Later

Look for an opportunity this week to engage in meaningful conversation with a person who is on a totally different "God path" than your own.