7-13 May 2023 Family traits

John 14: 1-14

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

14 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God[a]; believe also in me. 2 My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 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. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Jesus the Way to the Father

5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really know me, you will know[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

8 Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

9 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’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 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 works themselves. 12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

**Bible notes**

**Jesus has been speaking of ‘going away’ for some time in this Gospel (7:33ff, 8:21, 13:33ff), but his disciples still don’t understand. Once more Thomas represents their confusion (v.5; cf. 11:16). In verse 6, Jesus again speaks of himself as a point of access (in 10:7 he is the gate of the sheepfold), using language drawn from the prophets and Israel’s wisdom writings (Isaiah 40:3; Wisdom of Solomon 10:17-18; Ecclesiasticus 4:11-15). Now he promises to open up his relationship with his heavenly Father to his followers.**

**Jesus represents the Father to them because he embodies the Word of God, and the baptizing Spirit remains on him (John 1:14,32-33). The Father-Son relationship could not be closer. Their mutual indwelling echoes the way God’s Wisdom lives in her disciples (Wisdom of Solomon 7:22–8:1), and it makes Jesus the human face of God (v.9). His character is so transparent to God’s self-giving love that he reveals the Father’s words and works.**

**The time is fast approaching when Jesus’ followers will represent him in the world by extending his works (vv.10,12; ‘greater’ here is quantitative rather than qualitative). This gives the community’s life together in the world a heavenly quality, because Jesus’ going to the Father takes them to God’s house (v.3). This passage is often used at funerals to provide reassurance that death opens the door to life with God in heaven. But in verses 2 and 3, Jesus is speaking of the coming of the Spirit through his death and resurrection.**

**Reflection**

Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading.

**Questions for reflection**

*You may wish to use these questions and the picture to help you think about or discuss issues arising from this week’s Bible passage.*

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* In what ways might the lamb recognise or resemble the ewe?
* What things did Jesus do that help us understand what God the Father is like?
* How might we represent God in our daily lives?

## **Prayer**

Adapt to your local context.

We praise you, O God, for your creation: for plants, for flowers and food, for animals and people, for sustenance and provision.
We praise you for sight and sound, for touch and taste and smell and feeling; for emotions and inspiration; for your indwelling spirit.
For all of this and so much more that makes life what it is, and reveals what living and loving are.

We praise you for guidance; for dreams and visions that reveal you to us.
We praise and thank you for all people – the good, the bad, and everything in between – who have made us the people we are,
and who encourage us to be the people you want us to be.

You are our compass, our plumb line, our map through the choices of life.
To you, O God, we offer our thanks this and every day.
**Amen.**

## **A prayer to end the Bible study**

Send us out, Lord, into your world.
Draw us closer to yourself by your Spirit,
so that others may see your presence in us
in all we do and say and are.
In Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

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