

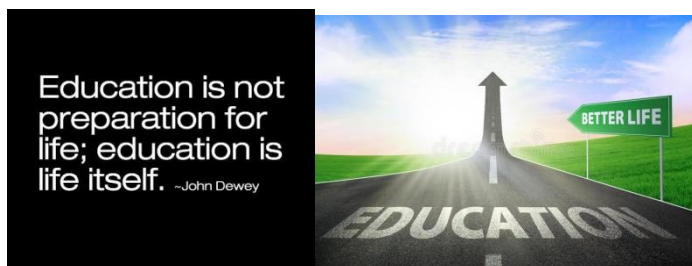


# Essential elements for Life

## The Way the Truth and the Life

John 14:5-14

1. **How can we know the way?** **14:5-6**
  - a. **By knowing the Truth**
  - b. **By living the Life**
  - c. **By going the Way**
2. **Don't you know me?** **14:7-11**
3. **Why is Jesus essential for life?**



The way to a full life is through education. The better you are educated the better life is and the fuller your life will be. Everything hinges on how well I do in my matric finals, and subsequent studies. There is no way to a full life without a proper education. Or at least that is what the world tells us.

What is it that you believe will bring you to a full life? Good deeds, education, hating your own body, your ancestors? There are many things that claim to be the way to a full life all religions, education even our good deeds.

Over the past 5 weeks, you will know that we have been asking this question "Why is Jesus essential for life?" Today, we are going to look at Jesus answer to a question about knowing the right way from the wrong way.

### 1. **How can we know the way?** **(14:5-6)**

This question is on many people's lips today. What is it that will help me find my way in life? Jesus has just explained to his disciples that he is going to be betrayed and killed. And explains to his disciples that he is going away 14:2 "I am going to my Fathers house to prepare a place for you... 4 you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas, one of Jesus disciples raises the obvious question. 14:5 "Lord we don't know where you are going so how can we know the way." Give us directions.

Jesus doesn't tell Thomas that the way to God is to be properly educated. He doesn't say that the way to God is by living a good life where your good deeds outweigh your bad ones. He doesn't say the way to our Father in heaven is through religious activities. Jesus says but 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me."

In other words, the only way to get to his fathers house is to go through Jesus himself. But what does that mean? We can know the way to God

**a. By knowing the truth**

In the OT, we read regularly that God is truth. For example, the psalmist says in 31:5 "O Lord, God of truth". In Isaiah 65:16 we read, "Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth; he who takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth." What the OT writers are implying is that God is the very essence of truth. He is the person who defines truth from falsehood, right from wrong. How different from our world today which says 'if you think it is right, then it is right'. The world tells us that the only absolute truth is that there is no truth. But the Bible clearly tells us that God is the truth, not us. And no amount of education or knowledge will make us the truth. Only God is the truth.

In Jesus saying he is the truth, he is implying that he is in fact, God. Jesus tells the disciples in verse 11 that they should believe that he and the Father are one, but if that is a struggle, they should believe him on the fact of the miracles he has performed.

Jesus wants us, to check and look at what the Bible says about him, to look at his miracles, his good deeds, and to see that he is the fulfillment of God's promises. Jesus wants us to see that he is the truth as God is. But Jesus goes on to say that not only is he the truth, but that he is also the life. How can we know the way?

**b. By Living the Life**

Jesus saying that he is the life means that he can offer a life that is both full and filled with joy and happiness as opposed to the life of heartache and pain. But even Christian's lives are not filled with joy and permanent happiness. So what is Jesus talking about? Jesus is talking about a life with him in heaven, not on this world. He is saying that it is not education that gets us to heaven. It's not money or good deeds. It's not even religion. It's coming to Jesus that gives us life.

Jesus offers us life that is better than anything we know in this world, a life without pain and suffering, a life without crying and mourning and a life that will know no death. We need to ensure that we take hold of the life that he offers.

So Jesus says he is the truth, and the Life. He is God and he can give us a full and perfect life.

3<sup>rd</sup>, Jesus says we can know the way...

**c. By going the way**

Thomas' question is quite normal. If we are going somewhere, we need to know how to get there. We ask for directions, we type them into our phones and we get the directions.

So how can we know the way to God? 'Easy', Jesus says "I am the way..." and he qualifies that by saying "No one comes to the Father except through me."

Note for a moment what Jesus isn't saying. He isn't saying I know the way and can take you there, nor is he saying that we must do this or that to find the way; neither is he saying I am one of many ways. No. Jesus tells us that HE is the way and he alone is the way to God.

At school, we are taught the way to do things. With Math's, especially with formulas and in geometry, there is only one correct way to solve a problem. Based on the shape you have, and the parallel lines you have or don't have, it determines which formula or theorem you will use. Use the wrong one, and you will not get the answer that is required. Likewise, we can't get to God without going through the correct process to get there.

With so many voices out there today, telling us that any way is the way as long as we believe, and then Jesus comes along and says "No one comes to the Father except through me."

God has offered us one way to approach him, and one way only. In the OT, the only way to approach God was to go into the holy of holies. That was a special room in the temple where only the high priest could enter once a year. The man on the street could only approach God through the high priest. Jesus now says that he is the person that we can approach God through. The writer of Hebrews confirms this 10:19-20 "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body." Because Jesus is the truth and the life, he can also be the way, and he can be the exclusive way to the Father as a result. If we want to get access to God and the Life he is offering we can only come to him in one way. There is no idea of following Jesus partly and listening to and honoring the ancestors. There is no idea of looking to Jesus to rescue you and consulting the horoscopes at the same time. There is no idea of following Jesus on Sunday and the rest of the week doing our own thing. There is no idea of knowing about Jesus but doing nothing with it. No. Jesus is the way, the exclusive way.

Think perhaps of a specific car that is for sale. If it found only at one dealership, so it doesn't help to try to go to another dealer to try to buy that car. Likewise with Jesus, we can't get to heaven through another person or figure or by occasionally turning to Jesus.

It means that we need to accept that we reject God and want to run our own lives. And most of all it means that we need to accept that what Jesus did for us on the cross has dealt with our rejection of God. It is only when we accept this, that we have access to God himself. In the words of Jesus himself, "I am the way"

So how can we know the way? By knowing the truth, living the life and going the way. But there is one more important question or statement that is raised in this discussion, by Philip.

## **2. Just show us the Father**

**(14:7-11)**

During the course of the discussion, Jesus mentions that you have to go through him to get to his father, and he mentions that if you have seen him, then you have seen the father. Philip does not want to worry about all the other detail, and says to Jesus, “Don’t worry about all this fancy stuff, and about having to go through you, this is too complicated. Just show us the father. Verse 8 “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Isn’t that like many today, we want to short circuit the way to the Father, the way to God. Why bother going through Jesus. Let’s just go direct to the Father.

In maths, you get marks not just for the correct answer, but also for your working out. I recall that sometimes, I knew the answer and could do the working out in my head, so would just write the answer down. Of course, I didn’t get full marks, because most of the marks were for the working out, not just the correct answer. Likewise with coming to God the Father. There is not alternative or short cut to him. Only through Jesus.

If we know Jesus, then we know the father. So the question we need to ask ourselves is, do we truly know who Jesus is. I don’t just mean know of him. Just because you come to church doesn’t necessarily mean that you know who Jesus is. You might know all about Jesus, the stories of his birth and his ministry and his death and resurrection. It is possible that when people talk about Jesus you get bored because you know it all and have heard it all. That could be a sign that you don’t really know Jesus. If this is the case, then you are no different from any other religion in the world.

The Jews have the same OT as we do. They claim to follow the same God we do. Yet many reject Jesus despite all the evidence in the OT and in the miracles he did while on earth. Are they going to get access to the Father? Not unless they accept that Jesus is the way.

The Muslims also claim to follow the same God we do. In fact they say we have the same roots, Abraham. They are perhaps one better than the Jews in that they see Jesus as a special prophet sent by God, but are they going to get access to the Father? Well only if they accept who Jesus is, and go his way. Even the evil spirits know who Jesus is, but they do not believe in him. Will my education save me? Well not unless that education helps me to really know Jesus and to trust in him. Jesus is not one of many ways. He is the only way, so claiming to follow Jesus and ticking other boxes like ancestors or horoscopes, or education etc. will not lead to the father. We have to follow Jesus completely or we don’t at all.

V9 “anyone who has seen me has seen the father”, v10 “I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” Verse 7 “if you really knew me, you would know the Father as well.” No one can know God if they don’t know Jesus.

### **3. Why is Jesus essential for life?**

I can only give you the evidence to decide for yourself why he is essential. I cannot force you. I cannot twist your arm to believe what I am saying, but the evidence is before us today. Jesus gives us access to God the Father.

I want to close with the words of Thomas `a Kempis, who was a 14<sup>th</sup> century theologian and minister who wrote a great book, entitled "The imitation of Christ." He says of Jesus Christ "Follow me. I am the way the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going, without the truth there is no knowing, without the life there is no living. I am the way which you must follow, the truth which you must believe and the life for which you must hope. I am the unbreakable way, the complete truth and the never ending life."

Remember that no one gets to the father except through Jesus. Who are you trying to go through? Let's pray