*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 6 - 11

*Jesus in John’s Gospel*

**Monday, May 6 John 14:1-3**

*“I will come back and take you to be with me”*

On three previous occasions we learned of Jesus’ deeply troubled feelings: when he faced Lazarus’ tomb (11:33), when he contemplated the cross (12:27), and when he reflected on the betrayal of Judas (13:21). Jesus’ confidence in the greater power and purposes of God made it possible for him to confront each of these crises. Now the disciples must face similar troubled feelings by trusting in God and trusting in Jesus.

One of the reasons to trust is that Jesus’ departure will be purposeful. In his departure he will be working on their behalf, preparing a place for them. To have a place in heaven reserved for us is one thing; confidence in getting there is quite another. So Jesus promises that he will come back to bring them to where he is. But when will this “coming” occur? It seems best to interpret Jesus’ words to mean that he is giving a plain promise of the Second Coming, comforting and reassuring his disciples that they will not be forgotten. Though Jesus is going away, one day they will be reunited, never again to be separated – that is Jesus’ promise.

*You will return for me, as well, Jesus, and we will be together for eternity. Amen.*

**Tuesday, May 7 John 14:4-7**

*“I am the way, the truth, and the life”*

While Jesus affirms that they know where he is going, Thomas speaks up and presses for more clarification. He claims that they know neither the *destination* of Jesus not the *way* he will take to get there. Jesus’ answer in verse 6 is the premier expression of the theology of this entire Gospel. Of the three terms, emphasis falls on the first, “the way.” Access to the Father’s presence in heaven will only be through Jesus and no other. He is the only one who can lead his followers to the place he will prepare.

This is the case because Jesus is *the truth,* the authoritative representative and revealer of God. He hears what God says and obeys what God tells him to do. He discloses God exhaustively unlike anyone else can because he has seen God. Those who follow Jesus, who come to the Father through his “way,” will be the ones who gain eternal “life.” Thus, this verse places Jesus in the role of mediator, creating the only avenue to God. Further, if his followers know Jesus, they also know and see the Father.

*I know you Jesus, as the One who will bring me to heaven. Amen.*

**Wednesday, May 8 John 14:8-11**

*“Show us the Father”*

Philip’s statement in verse 8 is in response to Jesus’ declaration that they have seen the Father. Philip is wondering how they are able to see the Father – perhaps there is still something that Jesus can do to show them the Father. As is so often the case, one of the disciples has misunderstood Jesus, and it is a misunderstanding that can be used by John to bring clarification to Jesus’ teaching. The truth that Philip does not yet grasp is that in Jesus Philip has before him the full embodiment of God as it can be seen by humanity. In seeing Jesus Philip is seeing God.

This is one of the high points in our understanding of who Jesus is. Jesus is not simply a religious teacher or guide. He is the One in whom God can be found, and through whom we can be reconciled to God. At the earthly level, we can believe that Jesus is God’s representative with the power to speak and act in the name of God. This at least Philip has witnessed and can believe. At the deeper spiritual level, Jesus declares that he and the Father enjoy a reciprocity of life: The Father is in him and he is in the Father.

*I believe that you, Jesus, and the Father are One. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 6 - 11

*Jesus in John’s Gospel*

**Thursday, May 9 John 14:12-17**

*“You will do what I have been doing”*

If it is true that the power of God is resident in Jesus and that the disciple is invited to know Jesus and gain life from him, then in some manner the disciple will share in God’s power. However, Jesus must first go to the Father before the promise of remarkable works and realized prayer can come. The works of Jesus refer to his miraculous signs as well as his deeds of humility, service, and love, and in some respect every believer will be able to participate in such work. Most important, whatever believers do must be done in the name of Jesus so that God is glorified.

The promise that the disciples will do even “greater” works than Jesus can hardly mean that the efforts of disciples will exceed those of Jesus, who, for instance, provided the astonishing miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. What is “greater” is that these works will be done by regular people in whom the power of Christ has taken up residence through the Spirit. This is why the departure of Jesus is crucial, for only then can the Holy Spirit become a reality to all who follow Christ.

*We do your work, Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**Friday, May 10 John 14:18-24**

*“I will come to you”*

In Judaism, disciples who had lost their teacher were considered “orphans.” So, when Jesus says that he will come to them, not leaving them as orphans, he is speaking of his resurrection. While the world will not see him, the disciples will have a private visual experience. In other words, while from the world’s perspective Jesus will disappear from view (his death), in his resurrection he will return to them and validate that the power of the Father has been with him all along, and will continue with them.

But the coming of Jesus on Easter will mean more than a mere return of Jesus to life. His aim is to establish the sort of intimacy and unity he has promised throughout his ministry. The oneness he enjoys with the Father parallels the oneness the disciples will enjoy with him. Out of love for his disciples Jesus will reveal himself to them, which will result in a profound spiritual union beyond the world’s comprehension, a union brought about by the Holy Spirit. Further, those who are united with Jesus (i.e., those who love Jesus) show it by their obedience to his word.

*Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus, I live in union with you and with the Father. Amen.*

**Saturday, May 11 John 14:25-31**

*“The Holy Spirit will teach you”*

Jesus now emphasizes the teaching role of the Spirit. The concept of “remembering” occurs multiple times in this Gospel and is linked to the “misunderstanding” of the disciples. During the earthly ministry of Jesus, understanding was difficult. But now, Jesus promises, the Spirit will help them remember the things he has done and said and fix them in the minds of his followers. We can see this at work in John’s own Gospel. After Jesus cleansed the temple (2:13-23) John adds the editorial comment, “After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken” (2:22). It was the resurrection – and its gift of the Spirit – that provided the meaning of Jesus’ works.

The inspiration of the Spirit, therefore, does not bring forward new revelations about Jesus, but simply gives correct applications and meanings for what he said and did in history. Just as Jesus’ primary work was revealing the Father, so now the work of the Spirit is revealing Jesus to his followers.

*Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus, I grow in my understanding of you and of your ministry. Amen.*