

International Bible Lessons Commentary
John 14:1-14

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, May 27, 2012

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 27, 2012**, is from **John 14:1-14**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further** discuss the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **International Bible Lessons Commentary Index**. The weekly **International Bible Lesson** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at <http://InternationalBibleLessons.org> and in *The Oklahoman* newspaper.

International Bible Lesson Commentary
John 14:1-14

(John 14:1) “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

Prior to Jesus' arrest, He knew His disciples would flee in fear when He allowed himself to be taken away for trial and crucifixion, so He shared these truths for them and for all who would follow Him later.

Whenever His followers faced troubles or crises, Jesus wanted them to not let their hearts be troubled, whether He was personally with them or hanging from a cross. Jesus gave them good reasons not to be troubled. His followers are the children of God, their heavenly Father. Even if Jesus were hanging on a cross (as He soon would be), His followers were to keep trusting in God, their heavenly Father. He wanted His followers to also keep believing in Him, for He would soon be raised from the dead and be with them again. No matter what the fearful or troubling situation is, Jesus' followers need to keep believing in God and believing in Jesus so their hearts will not be troubled. Jesus is raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of God, and He is also dwelling in the hearts of all of His followers personally; He and their heavenly Father will take care of them.

(John 14:2) In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Most of Jesus' disciples died a martyr's death, and these words would comfort them. If we, His followers today, die physically; that is, our bodies die and we become separated from our bodies, we have a specific place to go – a dwelling place – a place to stay and live with God and Jesus. This will be a special place. Jesus knows us intimately, and Jesus knows what will make

us happy. So He will create a place for us that will give us happiness beyond our understanding.

(John 14:3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

Jesus was going to rise from the dead and ascend back into heaven, from where He lived before He came into the world. After Jesus has prepared a place for all those who believe in Him, He will return to them. When we separate from our bodies that die physically, Jesus comes to us (if we believe in him) to take us to be with Him. Jesus' words encouraged His disciples when they faced physical death, and for almost 2000 years they have encouraged all who have followed Him.

(John 14:4) And you know the way to the place where I am going.”

The disciples knew the way, but they did not know that they knew the way. Some might think of “the way” as a road to travel, a way of living, or a religious organization, or a rule or rules to follow. Jesus did not mean any of these things, but they did not understand. The place Jesus was going to was heaven or paradise in order to be with His Father in a different way than when He ministered to people and served His Father on Earth.

(John 14:5) Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”

Thomas was the disciple who mournfully declared that if the disciples went back to Bethany, even though they went to help Martha and Mary whose brother, Lazarus, had died, that they would die with Jesus: “Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him’” (John 11:16) . After Jesus was crucified, Thomas also doubted Jesus’ resurrection until he saw Jesus himself raised from the dead: “Then Jesus said to Thomas, ‘**Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe**’” (John 20:27). So, along with the other disciples at this time, Thomas certainly did not know or understand that Jesus planned to die, rise again, and ascend to heaven; nor did the disciples know the road to take to follow Jesus.

(John 14:6) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus told them that He was not speaking of a road to travel or of a way to live; rather, Jesus himself was and still is the way to God the Father. By Jesus clinging to us and our clinging to Jesus in faith as Jesus enables us, He becomes the way to eternal life

with God in heaven. Just as getting in a spacecraft is the only way to go to the moon, the only way to God the Father, the only way to know the truth (the true facts) about God and reality, the only way to have both the physical and spiritual life God wants us to enjoy forever is in a trusting relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We need to believe what Jesus said about himself.

(John 14:7) If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Jesus reminded His disciples that God the Father and God the Son were so perfectly united in heart and in mind, in purpose and in truth, that to know the Father was to know the Son, and to know the Son was to know the Father. Jesus wanted them to know that from their past relationship with Him, and from that time forward, they had seen and would see the purposes of the Father perfectly revealed in all He had said and did and would say and do in the future.

(John 14:8) Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Philip was keeping his eyes on the physical, the same as most believers still do. He wanted to see God the Father with his physical eyes right then and there. If Jesus would pull back the veil between heaven and earth for a moment so they could see God the Father

with their physical eyes they would be satisfied. Jesus wanted them to know that they have seen God, because they have seen Jesus.

(John 14:9) Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

The Father is God. Jesus, the Son, is God. The Father and the Son, these two Persons, are the one true God. The disciples have seen God when they have seen Jesus. With humility, Jesus says the truth about himself when He says that those who have seen Him have seen the Father. Jesus does not say in a way that would seem to be bragging, “I am God! Look at me!” If you have seen the loving heart of Jesus, you have seen the loving heart of God the Father.

(John 14:10) Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Jesus elaborated on what He had tried to show and tell them prior to this time. He would show and tell them more after He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. “I am” is another use of God’s name revealed to Moses on the mountain (Exodus 3:14). The Father and the Son can be “in” each other because

they are God. Jesus only spoke and taught what the Father and He had agreed for Him to reveal and teach. They did not work independently from each other.

(John 14:11) Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

Jesus wanted them to believe this fact, which they probably could not understand when He first told them. Later, the Holy Spirit that He later sent helped them understand. To come to understand fully and believe, Jesus knew that they needed first to believe in Him because of the works He did (John often calls these works “signs”). Later, they would understand and believe that the Father and the Son were in each other because Jesus was God, the Son of God.

(John 14:12) Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

If we believe in Jesus, we will do the works that the Father and the Son want us to do. We will be in one heart and in one understanding and in one purpose with God. Consider this one example (and think of others): Jesus never taught outside of a small geographic area. The apostles, such as Peter and Paul,

taught about Jesus and His teachings in a larger geographic area. Today, some have traveled around the world to teach about Jesus, Who has enabled these “greater works”.

(John 14:13) I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Do you want the Father to be glorified in the Son? If you answer of “Yes,” that will influence how you pray. Jesus did not make this promise to recruit disciples or to persuade people to believe in Him or to make people want to follow Him. He gave this promise to mature disciples who had proved that they loved Jesus and His Father, but who still had a lot to learn. They understood Jesus and His heart and His purposes up to the level of their understanding prior to His death and resurrection. They would spiritually mature to the point of only asking for things according to His will and for the purpose of glorifying the Father and the Son. We need to be of this same mind and intention when we pray in Jesus’ name.

(John 14:14) If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

Jesus told (and still tells) this to those who believe in Him. He said this to disciples who had been with Him about three years; He did not say this to recruit followers. To ask in Jesus’ name means to ask for

something that Jesus would agree to give because it would be consistent with the kind of person Jesus is and the kind of works that He and the Father want to do and want done. When these conditions are met, Jesus can do what we ask because what we ask will be according to His will and will bring glory to the Father and the Son.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What are some concerns or events that trouble some people today?
2. How can believing in God the Father and Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior help people not to be troubled about the concerns and events they listed in answer to question one?
3. Jesus said He was the way, the truth, and the life. How does knowing this help you in your daily life?
4. How do Jesus' words help you when you are facing death – the death of a friend, loved one, or yourself?
5. How does Jesus teaching on prayer in these verses encourage you?

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