

SUNDAY May 3, 2026 “Way truth Life- Home to Heaven?”
Psalm 42: 766 vu Acts 7:54-60 to 8:1 John 14: 1-14

An old song from 1925 has these words:

*Show me the way to go home, I'm tired and I want to go to bed,
 I had a little drink about an hour ago, And it's gone right to my head,
 Wherever I may roam, On land or sea or foam,
 You will always hear me singing this song, Show me the way to go home.*

There have been parodies of this song made through the years. But the key point is that the individual knows that home is the place to be to rest and recuperate. Home is where the heart is.

In his classic monologue, comedian George Carlin riffed on the mountain of stuff we compile. His assertion is that a “house is just a pile of stuff with a cover on it.” So when you get right down to it, your house is nothing more than a place to keep your stuff...while you go out and get...more stuff.

But what is the difference between a house and a home? A house is a physical structure designed for human habitation, while a home represents the emotional connection and sense of belonging associated with a living space. In essence, a house provides shelter, but a home provides warmth and personal significance. But how would one define what Jesus calls, my Father’s House?

In this season of Easter we have heard the stories of Jesus’ resurrection from the perspective of Mary at the tomb, of the disciples who looked inside and found it empty and of Jesus’ visit with them that night. We also heard the story of the disciples on the Emmaus road as they told ‘the stranger’ who walked with them about what had taken place in Jerusalem. And then our focus switched to the times of Jesus teaching the disciples so that we will remember the important ideas of who Jesus is and what he had hoped they would remember and pass on to those who heard this good news story of the Messiah.

Our passage today focuses on Jesus teaching the disciples at the time of the Last Supper. The disciples do not realize what is to soon occur. But Jesus knew. So he tries to teach and recap what he has been teaching for the last three years. Jesus has just told Peter that he would deny him, even though Jesus would need his support. Peter doesn’t think this will occur because of his commitment to Jesus as the Son of God. But then Jesus says, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. He then states, “You believe in God; believe also in me. Don’t worry or be afraid. I will be with you.

No matter what one is experiencing-- whether medical treatments, surgeries, or when people are undergoing counselling or even just enjoying the day, be assured that Christ is with you. God is leading us and we have nothing to fear.

This passage from John 14 is one that I have used many times while sharing at a memorial or funeral service because it brings comfort to those who are mourning, for those who believe in God and the idea that life on earth is only a part of our total existence. Jesus knew that his disciples would grieve and mourn his death. They needed each other as they experienced the changes and transitions of Jesus being with them physically to the time of his death and burial. Jesus was preparing them for the events of the next 36 hours.

And so when we share with others in a funeral or memorial service it is for all who gather together out of love for the one who has died. Together people share a common loss and grieve together as memories, the stories and the experiences of how that one person touched their lives. For this is also how they gave love and received it in return. These stories need to be shared. The one who dies, is in the presence of God and by faith we need only to believe that they are in the place Jesus prepared for them as believers. We often take this for granted-- that yes we may be afraid of what is to come, but if we truly have faith and trust in God and His Son, there is no reason to have doubts or fears.

Jesus is comforting his disciples who have heard him say he would die. Jesus promises them that His death would not be the end. Neither would Peter's denial be his ending. Jesus explains that His death which was pending as the crowds were starting to gather and wonder and question who he was were turning against him. Jesus was going to die. But Jesus tells them that he would rise again just like the temple which was rebuilt. Jesus also states that eventually he would ascend into heaven and be with God the Father. And when this occurs, the disciples and all believers would receive two specific blessings. These two blessings are that it would enable Jesus to prepare a place for all and it would allow the Holy Spirit to come and comfort them.

Jesus knew that he was going to die as it says in vs.3. He is going to prepare a place for the disciples and yet he states, "I will come again and take you to there so that you will be with me. Don't be afraid. Jesus' death was the preparation for us to receive a place in the God's house. It is ready now. But we are not ready for there is much to do here on earth as living breathing human beings who are faithful to God's call, who are willing to tell the story of Jesus' love and who are willing to sacrifice and give of their time, talent and effort in order that people will come home.

Thomas our friend who later on had doubts about Jesus rising from death was the inquisitive type. He asked Jesus a simple question. We do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Where was Jesus going? Which way? Jesus was giving them what we all need when we feel lost. A fixed point by which to navigate. How important it is that when you are lost physically, mentally, or spiritually, you need something to help centre yourself before determining which path to take. Jesus knew that the disciples' lives were about to be upended, and Jesus knew that they needed a compass to help them navigate the days to come. They needed to hear from him what was to happen so that they could get back on track if they lost their way.

In his last few hours with the disciples, Jesus was trying to convey as much as he could about who He was and why He came, even if they didn't understand it until after his resurrection. Jesus talks about "the way" to the Father. When sin entered the world humanity was separated from God—we were made for Him and needed to have a way back to Him. Jesus came to earth to be the way that is the bridge between humanity and God the Father. Believing in Jesus combined with a commitment to follow His teachings is the way of salvation from God's law of sin. For we remember John 3:16 and that it says: *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* Only Christ could bridge the gap because he only lived a sinless life and sacrificed himself for our sins. It is because of this idea that early Christianity was called The Way.

Jesus is also the Truth. He is the physical embodiment of God's truth and divine revelation given throughout the scriptures. We need to remember that 1) God is the source of all truth. 2) Jesus shared the truth of God in all His teachings. 3) Jesus was both God and Man; therefore, He was the Truth. And 4) In his role as savior, he was the revelation of God's truth and love. But we also remember what Jesus said to Pilate, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" Leaving this question unanswered. Did Pilate believe in Jesus as the Son of God?

Jesus also stated that he is life! At the beginning of John's gospel it states, "In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind." (1:4). Later on we learn that Lazarus had just died, Jesus said that He was more than "the life." He said He was "the resurrection." That confused Lazarus'

sisters, Mary and Martha, who wished Jesus had been there to heal him. Martha said, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day," referring to the day the Messiah would come and resurrect those who had died. But Jesus showed them right then and there he had power of life over death. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die". Those who believe in me will live, even though they die and whoever lives and believes in me, will never die. (John 11:21-24) Jesus is the source of both resurrection and life. Jesus does more than give life-- he is life and death has no power over him. Jesus confers this spiritual life on those who believe so that they share in the promise and gift of eternal life. This is why we can state, that those who have faith in Jesus, who die, their spirit will live eternally with Jesus. They will go to the place that Jesus prepared. They will go home to place God has prepared for us. They will go home. We know that when loved ones die it is difficult for us who are left to live and carry on our daily tasks- establishing homes, preparing food and working. Yet we do never forgetting the loved one who is at home with God.

Yet there is a time and place when we will be welcomed into God's heaven. When we too will experience a homecoming like never before. And as each of us grows older in earth years, there seems to be more waiting for us already there. We remember those individuals with love and laughter but we also give thanks to God. This is because they listened to Jesus' teaching as the Way, Truth and life. It is up to us to listen again and not be afraid. We are to have hope in God and he will guide us even when we are yearning for his comfort and peace. But we need to remember that in our time we too will be called home. And how we answer this call - is filled with faith and hope. For when we read Stephen's story in Acts, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit. He then knelt down, cried out and died." He was home with Christ. Home again.

Home- brings many images of comfort and love.. Let us reflect on this as we listen to Hagood Hardy's "The Homecoming" a song with simple melody that invites us to see what is home for us and what awaits us in God's heavens. LISTEN.

PRAYER: Jesus you are the way, truth and life. Lead us home as people forgiven and forever loved. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.