

New Kilpatrick

Podcast

10th May 2020

John 14:1-14



Welcome

Hello. Welcome to this podcast, a short time together to explore this week's bible passage and create some community while we are apart. Perhaps we are able to hear old words afresh when we are in unusual circumstances so let us re-imagine Jesus words for us today as he speaks of ways, truths and lives along with mansions with many rooms.

If you are creating worship spaces each week, or even just imaging that worship space, place there a map or atlas if you wish. Not because we have a sense of going somewhere, simply because we have a sense of adventure. Despite what so many versions of Christianity suggest about Jesus being the answer to everything, that's not the faith according to Jesus who rather said he was the way.

Reading

"Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Believe in God, believe also in me.
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?
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.
And you know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him,
"Lord, we do not know where you are going.
How can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him,
"I am the way,
and the truth,
and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.
If you know me,



you will know my Father also.
From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him,
"Lord, show us the Father,
and we will be satisfied."

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.

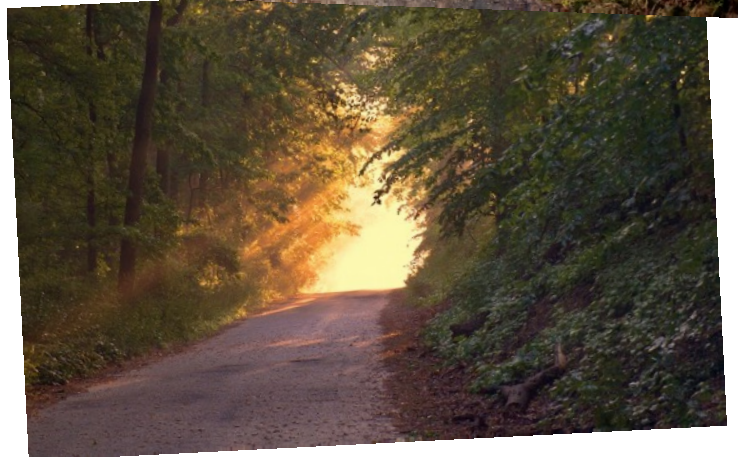
Prayer

Shape us O God
shape us in the way of the kingdom
that verb
that doing word
that invites us
onto and into something
that moves us out of being settled
and into the journey

Shape us O God
shape us with the truth of the kingdom
that summons
that call
that invites us
to become something
that stands against dullness and harm
and speaks truth to power

Shape us O God
shape us with the life of the kingdom
that way of seeing
that way of being
that invites us
into what is full and abundant and shared
with all who find themselves traveling
through the world

May we become settled
in what unsettles us
accept
what we often reject
and find in this new landscape



a way of being
that finds you
being
love
compassion
truth
renewal
among us
all

Hear us
So be it
Amen

Reflection

Here's the thing, we've taken this passage, and played it and played it in certain circumstances, and now we can't hear it without imagining it is about heavenly rest. The many mansions has become for us, in our hearing, a confident promise of a place in some heavenly future.



And the thing is I don't want to take that away from anyone. That's a promise that is imbedded in us, brings meaning to us and it seems, that is exactly what Jesus is talking about, is it not? How clear do you need to be?

Except, it isn't clear that's what he is talking about. Almost certainly his hearers will have been picturing a quite different image. One that isn't about settling down, about comfort at some end point in a journey.

In fact, the first hearers will have heard this instead as an invitation not to settle down, but to keep travelling, that the road is a road to somewhere perhaps, but it's being on the road, that Jesus talking about, not some promise of a many roomed mansion at out final destination.

In so many ways, the bible is a book of its time and we need to listen in its own context, to hear what this passage says. It's then we realise it says something more valuable for us today than a comfortable existence some time in the future. It's not about the future. It is about now.

The word dwelling-place, that we have evolved into mansion, is part of the problem.

If you heard the word we've translated mansion in Jesus time, you'd hear it as 'stopping-off' place, that wayside resting place you find along the route of any journey.

You are travelling by caravan, a bundle of folk on the way and you're thinking ahead: where might we rest for the night. And from the group two or three who would go ahead of everyone else, and prepare the evening rest, find the food, let those in the village, know you were coming.

Jesus is describing the resting place on the journey rather than an end point of that journey, those hospitality places, where companionship is found, and stories and news are shared.

He's blessing the places of sanctuary, of meeting, of compassion along the way. And that is what Jesus said he was: the way, the journey, the pathway.

We're not talking some fancy dwelling place. We're talking far more about hospitality, relationship and community, for, and with all those who travel.



So in our rush to get somewhere, which seems to be our chief motive in so many physical and emotional journeys we take, we lose the purpose in what we do.

The Christian life and our way of living is not about arrival. The promise Jesus gives us here is about what we discover and encounter along the way: our neighbour, our travelling companions, and in the welcoming of those, we find something true and meaningful.

Jesus has gone before us, which is what he says, to prepare such places, those meeting, hospitality, blessing places where we encounter others who are also in need.

And in encountering each other, what you actually find is Jesus who is hospitality, welcome. It is all about community. It's always about community.

So perhaps, while quite rightly we want to quickly get out of this crisis, maybe we should be slower about getting back to normal, and reflect on who we have shared this journey with, the places of encounter, the hospitality in loving neighbour we have seen. It's the slow parts of the journey that are perhaps the most valuable.

Jesus is the way: the journey; Jesus is the truth: the recognition of what is important in each other; Jesus is the life, the life shared with others on the journey.

Let's not rush to get back to normal in our faith, but rather enjoy a slower return, allowing ourselves time to journey and pause in the dwelling places, in our hospitality towards others on this journey, where have we found Jesus.

No Rush

Let us slow the rush
and find the moment

Let us slow the words
and find the pauses

Let us slow the pace
and find some time

Let us slow our minds
and find the calm

Let us slow our judgments
and find the compassion

Let us slow our negativity
and find some kindness

Let us slow the rush
and find the moment

Let us slow the words
and find the pauses

Let us slow the searching
and find the being

Let us slow the end
and find the present

Let us slow our being
and find God



Prayer

Let us draw our thoughts and minds together in our closing prayer. Today, there will be a short time of silence during the prayer to allow to us to remember and pray for those who are in our own hearts and minds at this time.

Loving God, another week draws nearer to its close, but time does not stop as we journey into another week. Another week of unknowing, waiting for answers to what seem like unanswerable questions and praying that this week things will be different. That this week the slow return of being able to meet up with family and friends can begin.

Outside, the beautiful weather masks the mixed emotions, anxiety, and sorrow that we hold on to as we move through this pandemic. Gracious God, may we find a place in you to rest our weary hearts and minds and souls. Where we can reach out and find a welcome word and safe place to be on this journey.

The quiet stillness of the streets hides the busyness of everyone working behind the scenes to keep us safe, protect and care for us, and ensure we have food and provisions. Loving God be with those working in all areas of work, often in difficult and traumatic situations. Comfort them and hold them in their time of need as they comfort others.

For all volunteers, offering hospitality and joy and a lifeline to the most vulnerable, may we recognise their true worth and the gospel message being lived out in their day to day. Remind us to help them.

In the sorrow and grief of those who mourn, in the worry felt by those who are sick, from those who are unsafe and cannot find a way out, may we do what we can. May we offer hospitality in new ways, a friendly voice, or a comforting message so sustain them in these dark times. And by doing so may your light shine through offering a glimmer of hope for a more peaceful future.

And now we bring our own prayers to you for those we remember and mourn and love. In the silence, hear us now.

Epilogue

Let not your hearts troubled be.
You've already got what you need:
you already believe into God, don't you?
Then believe also into me,
for there are many dwelling places along the
way,
and I am already ahead of you
preparing those places,
of welcome,
of comfort,
of hospitality.

And if I am already doing that,
I shall be there for you.
I shall be hospitality and welcome for you on the way.
Where that hospitality is found and felt and needed
that's where I'll be for you;
I am a verb and not a noun:
I am, the travelling on the way.
I am, the following of the truth,
I am, the journey your life takes,



and if I am the doing of life:
the hospitality, the welcome, the generosity along the way,
then everyone who travels
meets me in these actions.
These are essential to where you are going
In fact you can't get to where you are going
without coming through hospitality and welcome
those actions in which I am found.

And in knowing me like this
you have known the love of God.
And when you ask: "Show me the love of God!",
believe what you see and know and have experienced on the way.
You've met love in me,
and you've met me in love.

Benediction

Go on the way
in peace
and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
the Love of God
and the Commonwealth of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all
Evermore



Announcements

Thank you for the invitation to journey with you today. It is always a special place where we meet in the imagination that sound offers.

Today is the start of Christian Aid Week and while we cannot organise a door-to-door collection this year, we would like to invite you to go to christianaid.org.uk christian aid's website and, if you can, donate there so that we might continue our support of some of the least in our world. While coronavirus separates us, love unites us, so please go to christianaid.org.uk and respond as you feel able as they work with some of the poorest who are most affected.

We may not be able to meet in church but we do meet as church, mainly online at nkchurch.org.uk but also on the phone, through bulletins emailed or posted out and a bundle of daily activities online, Facebook and Instagram: daily prayers, videos, poems, appeals, stories, photos, and a great number zoom events where we meet socially. Do join us, on the way. Take care and stay safe.