July 23, 2017

Series: Asking for Directions

**The Way**

John 14:1-14

**Intro:** ***Can we make a video of me driving … WAZE recalculating … Sharon backseat driving …***

***Stopping to ask for directions … directions confusing … (Someone spitting tobacco-like while answering in a non-comprehensive way…)… giving directions according to sites, not roads …***

***Finally giving up - too late - we’ll never get to the meeting …***

Have you ever been confused as to where you were going?

Did you play follow the leader as a kid and not know where the leader was going?

Has that happened in your adult life? Work?

Have you been on a trip with someone - they are driving - you have no idea where you are going - the driver doesn’t seem to know either?

WAZE is never pointing in the right direction when I start …

GPS: You have reached your destination!

We have an ultimate destination - a place everyone wants to go - a place everyone wants to end up (not the Nursing Home - the place after that) -

**Big Idea: We have been given clear directions to our ultimate destination.**

In recent discussion, Jesus has stated that there are people who are getting confused about how to reach the ultimate destination. Getting the directions right is crucial. The consequences are life and death.

When you get directions in a GPS you can just look at the map as it goes along, but you can also get point-by-point directions.

Let me share with you 5 point-by-point directions that are crucial to reaching our ultimate destination.

**> Assurance of reaching our destination is comforting.**

John 14:1-2 - “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home.

If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?”

Don’t let your hearts be troubled. You are on your way to a promised ultimate destination!

When life stinks - we have a better place promised to us!

When you’ve lost your job - when your pay gets cut - when your kids are sick - when you are facing illness - when you’ve lost a loved one - there is available to us, if we will accept it, the assurance of reaching our destination.

Jesus is preparing His disciples for His death and departure - many people will not receive His message - the disciples will be in the minority - in the coming days, they will begin to go through some things they could never anticipate or be prepared for -

* people will start hunting them down
* people will start torturing them simply for being followers of Jesus
* people will start killing them

Jesus: Don’t let your hearts be troubled - you have an ultimate destination!

In that place:

Revelation 7:17 - … God will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Here’s more about this place - our ultimate destination:

Revelation 21:4 - He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

There’s more - something interesting will happen to us in this place:

1st Corinthians 15:51-53 - … We will not all die, but we will al be transformed! … those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

Here’s the ultimate result of us arriving at the ultimate destination:

1st John 3:2 - … we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.

The first temptation: You will be like God -

For those who accept the sacrifice of Christ, in our ultimate destination, we will be like Him!

**> People get confused about how to reach the destination.**

John 14:3-5 - When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.”

 “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Thomas was confused. People are confused today.

People think there are many ways to our ultimate destination.

When the airplane is getting ready to land, I’m glad the pilot doesn’t think there are many ways to land the plane …

There are people within a few miles of here, maybe even some here today who know very little.

It’s not your fault. No one has ever pointed you to get on the right way before. You’re here now - it’s ok!

Recently our niece took someone to church with her -

* Didn’t know we believed Jesus rose from the dead.
* Communion was really freaky …
* Recently with Randy in Chicago buying a car - “How do you spell Calvary? How do you spell Pastor?”

I’m not criticizing him - I’m not blaming him - that is our culture today. This young man has probably spent almost no time in church. He is not out of step. We are out of step.

We speak a language in here that is not spoken outside of here. When people come in from outside, we had better be speaking in a language they can understand. No one can receive if they don’t understand what the offer is. Even when we are talking to others about this great gift - this great life - we need to not jus speak in a language that is exclusively understood by people who have been Christians for some time. That doesn’t exist much in our culture anymore.

This is part of our mission from God to build a bridge to the next generation!

If that’s you today, I want to assure you - we love you - it’s all right that you haven’t heard yet - Jesus told us to tell you, so that you could get on the right way - and so that you could reach your ultimate destination that He has designed for you. The place He is preparing for you.

Jesus said, “You know the way.” Thomas said, “No we don’t! We need more clarification!” Maybe you need clarification today. Thomas was one of Jesus’ closest followers and he still wasn’t sure - so you’re in good company today.

Maybe you are on your way, and you don’t understand that people really don’t know the way .

It is the job of everyone here who is on the way to help others get on the way - and be patient and loving with them as we tell them.

**> Jesus gave clear directions.**

Getting to the right place is often finding the right person.

* If you want to find fish in Florida - find my Uncle Doug - He will get you fish.
* If you want to find fish in Indiana - find Ireland McWhorter - He will get you fish.

John 14:6-7 - Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is.” From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”

If you want to get to humanity’s ultimate destination, you’ve got to find Jesus. We are here to point you to Him!

If you know Him - you are here to point others to Him!

(Talk about Random Act of Kindness cards … time to reach people is coming up in the fall as people are returning … best times to invite people).

We want to point people to Jesus because He is the only way to the ultimate destination!

> **We must be convinced that The Way is a Person.**

John 14:8-11 - Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

 Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.”

* There are those who believe Jesus only a prophet. It’s not enough to believe that. Jesus was more than that. In order to get on The Way we have to believe what He said about Himself. If you have seen Jesus, you have seen God.
* Some believe He was only a good teacher - that’s not enough.
* Some believe Jesus was not really miraculously born of a virgin by the Holy Spirit - that belief is not enough to get you on The Way.
* Some believe He was given the gift of Divinity sometime through His life - not good enough.
* Some don’t believe God is personal in any way at all! Certainly not good enough if the point is knowing Him so you can get on the only way to the ultimate destination.
* All the way back in the first century, followers of Jesus argued as to whether or not Jesus was created - not fully God with God from before the beginning of time - not good enough.

Nicene Creed - 325 A.D.

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

 And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father…

They also came up with the Apostle’s Creed - this is what those closest to Jesus said about who and what Jesus and God really are -

This is what we must believe:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth,

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

and born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting.

Amen.

**> Belief has consequences.**

John 14:12-14 - I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father.

 Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

Not only will you reach the ultimate destination that God has designed for you -

* Same works
* Greater works … this could be speaking not just of miracles - Jesus rose people from the dead - but how many people we can reach!

We have to believe that God wants to do more than He has done!

Jesus died with 11 close followers, and when He left there were 120 in a room waiting to obey His instructions.

The Church around the world today numbers in the tens of millions! He wants us to reach more!

I’m thankful for what God has done here … He wants to do more!

We must know the culture - understand the culture - speak the language of the culture when we speak to them - have services here on Sunday morning when people who don’t know the Lord are most likely to come - services that they will understand, relate to and connect with. Reaching so many more people than were reached - these are greater things!

People coming to life in Christ is the greatest thing of all!

Not long after this, Peter preached and 3000 were saved - at one time - from all over the Empire - went back to share it with others - multiplication immediately! Greater things!

We can’t be satisfied with what we have here as long as there are people in our community who don’t know - don’t understand - haven’t recieved!

As a leader, I will never rest until the greater things of more and more people are reached happens. As a leader, I will never be satisfied with what is happening and what I see before me as long as there are people who aren’t on The Way to heaven yet. And if what we are doing is not working, we will change and do something different so that the GREATER THING of seeing more people come to Know God happens more and more!

* Anything in His name … that is according to His will - following His purpose & plan … that’s what we have to pursue …find it out …
* So that the Son can bring glory to the Father

When we know His Word (Bible) - then we know His will (purpose) - then we will know what will bring honor to God.

We live by that - we have the mind of Christ - we live like Christ - we represent Christ - we are on the way!

**We have been given clear directions to our ultimate destination.**

**> Assurance of reaching our destination is comforting.**

**> People get confused about how to reach the destination.**

**> Jesus gave clear directions.**

> **We must be convinced that The Way is a Person.**

**> Belief has consequences.**

Jesus is the way.