

## Reflection on John 14 vs1-14

By Corinne Craymer

### Jesus the Way to the Father

'Do not let your hearts be troubled'. Have you noticed that in scripture just before there's a very important announcement we hear the words, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled'. The angel said to a perplexed Mary, 'Do not be afraid for you have found favour with God'. To a fearful Zechariah the angel said, 'Do not be afraid for your prayer has been heard'. And we could find many more examples of God's reassuring word to humanity in so many situations.

In our gospel reading today Jesus has something very important to say to his disciples. He has washed their feet. He has told them he will be betrayed. He has given them a new commandment to love one another as he has loved them and now, he is preparing them for a time when he will no longer be physically with them. There is some confusion among the disciples with Thomas leading the questions as only Thomas can. 'Lord we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?'

It's our question too. We don't really know how to do this. We have no prior experience of finding a place that Jesus has prepared for us. Indeed, it's all jolly mysterious. If only we could have a signed and sealed map and instructions, we would feel a lot easier about it all. Philip feels like this-he wants the 'I's dotted and the 'T's crossed. 'Show us the Father and we will be satisfied', he says.

Jesus shakes his head sadly and as a patient teacher with confused children slowly tries again to help them understand. 'Have I been with you all this time Philip, and you still do not know me'? And then he starts to unpack his teaching.

Jesus makes strong claims about himself and his ministry. He uses metaphors to describe his work which, in turn give rise to titles applied to him.

Jesus explains he is The Way. Salvation is expressed only through Jesus. It is exclusive to him. We are following his path, listening for his directions and trusting that the bends in the road will ultimately reveal him to us.

Jesus then explains that he is The Truth. He is the whole truth of our faith, not only equal to God's law, but able to give us a new commandment about love.

Next Jesus says he is The Life. Jesus is the source of all life, both physical and spiritual. He has authority over life and death. 'Because I live you also will live', he says.

To the still confused disciples then, and to us today, Jesus explains that to see him is to see The Father, because he is like The Father. His words and deeds are one with The Father. To see Jesus working and to hear him teaching is to experience God.

This flowing of work between the Father and the Son tells us that Jesus is the perfect revelation of The Father. God and Jesus are both united and at the same time separate persons of The Trinity. The third person of The Trinity, The Holy Spirit, is promised to Jesus' followers, that's us! Through the work of the Holy Spirit in us, we join ourselves to God's will, trusting and obeying all we are asked to do. This is discipleship. This is to God's glory!

The Holy Spirit, sometimes called the Paraclete, is promised to us to guide and help us. God does not expect us to know everything about being a Christian, indeed, ours is a lifelong learning curve of trust and obedience. And on difficult days our faith needs to understand the challenge that God has not promised us golden days forever in this life, although he has promised he will never leave us.

Faith cannot exist without obedience. God speaks to us as The Holy Spirit guides us. This happens through his word to us in The Bible, through prayer and in the circumstances of our lives. When the things of this world no longer can be depended on, we often turn to our faith. The vulnerable, marginalised and poverty stricken have always known dark days and we join them now in our prayer to God to bless us with endurance.

Easter has come at last. We have been offered the three gifts of Easter..... Faith, Hope and Love. But, if we are still spiritually held in Lent because of current circumstances, let Jesus' words to us go deep as we hear him say to us: 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead and see I am alive for ever and ever'. (Revelation 1:17-18).

Amen.