



Our sermon today centers on Jesus Christ—who he is and who he claimed to be when he walked the earth. There are a lot of different opinions on this. Instead of having me describe them, let's listen to these random people from the streets of Dublin . . .

» *video shown*

It's interesting to see people's reactions to this question, isn't it? Throughout the ages, people have debated the two most important questions in life—"If there is a God who is knowable, how does one get to know Him?" and "If there is a literal heaven, how can one be certain he will live there after death?"

Our Bible passage today answers both of these questions. We are told how we can know God and how to live eternally in heaven. However, before we read our scriptures I feel it's appropriate to provide some background and some foundational information on Jesus Christ because knowing this will bring much greater insight into our scriptures.

### 300 Old Testament prophecies

Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies from the Old Testament. The statistical likelihood of this is so high, it's nearly impossible. Four examples of these are:

- » He was born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 foretells it and Matthew 2 describes it.
- » He was a descendant of David. Jeremiah 23:5 foretells it and Luke 3:31 describes it.
- » He was born to a virgin. Isaiah 7:14 foretells it and Luke 1 describes it.
- » He entered Jerusalem on a donkey. Zechariah 9:9 foretells it and Matthew 21:1-9 describes it.

### Miracles and signs of wonders

- » He healed a leper (Matthew 8).
- » He fed 4,000 men with seven loaves and a few small fish (Mark 15).
- » He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11).

### Jesus' death and resurrection

This is the lynchpin to Jesus' authority. If Jesus would have died like any man and stayed dead, he would have no authority to make the claims he made. He would have been impressive, yes. And we would be scratching our heads at the statistical

unlikelihood of a man meeting so many Old Testament prophecies. Yet he would be a fraud. To finally and authoritatively prove he was God in the flesh he had to defeat death itself.

» He was crucified with thieves on a cross. Isaiah 53:12 foretells it and Matthew 27 describes it. And non-Christian histories verify that Jesus of Nazareth was a real, historical man who died on a cross in Jerusalem. This is not debated or controversial. It's clear and simple.

» He rose from the dead. Matthew 28 describes it. Now this one stumps historians because everyone knows he lived and died. Then his tomb was empty, even though the tomb was guarded by Roman soldiers. And Jesus appeared to over 500 people—alive—after he had been dead for three days.

» He ascended to heaven. Acts 1 describes how Jesus ascended into the clouds and he was gone. Then two angels showed up and told the apostles to quit standing around and start telling everyone who would listen that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

Surrounded by differing opinions on these questions, the Bible provides a clear authoritative answer to who Jesus Christ is. And because of who he is, we can know the answer to the other questions I asked earlier:

- » If God is knowable, how do we know him?
- » If there is a heaven, how do we get there after we die?

The answer is the same for both questions. In John 14:6 Jesus says, ***"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*** Incredible claims! Because the promise is so good. Audacious claims! Because the claim is so extremely bold. So exclusive. Some would say recklessly bold in defiance to other world religions.

With that in mind, let's turn our attention to John 14.

**Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me (v. 1).**

The remedy for a troubled heart is belief in God. Trust in him. Why? Because he's all powerful and all loving.

**In my Father's house (temple – heaven) are many rooms. 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 (to live in the radiant glory of God the Father), I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also (verses 2–3).**

Jesus provides the explanation for why the disciples can find comfort in him here: Jesus is preparing a place for them. Look at how personal this is. Jesus says, *“I go to prepare a place for you”* (v. 2); *“I will come again and take you to myself...where I am you will be too”* (v. 3). Although Jesus is the King of the entire universe, he is personally preparing a room for each of them.

**And you know the way to where I am going (v. 4).**

The way—suffering, torture, death, drinking the cup of God’s wrath, separation from God the Father.

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

Thomas is thinking of a physical location—another country or region. Jesus is thinking about a spiritual dynamic.

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

In this statement Jesus is saying: God is knowable. You know him through me and you know him **only** through me. Jesus says, “No one comes to the Father except through me.”

The audacity of this statement is staggering. In a world filled with over 6 billion people and at least half a dozen different opinions about how a person can know God, Jesus is stepping out alone, alienating himself, claiming to be the exclusive way to know God. It’s for this reason that I wanted to build this visual pyramid for you, to help you understand Jesus’ credentials to make such a claim. He is legitimate. And if you’re considering whether Jesus has the rightful position of authority over your life, and everyone else’s life, to help you see that, you can and should accept his authority.

By knowing God and Jesus, eternity in heaven is possible. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”

**The Way.** Jesus’ own way was the suffering on the cross so that we wouldn’t have to suffer like that. He became the way for everyone else. As the Lamb of God, he took away the sin of the world.

**The Truth.** He embodied ultimate and perfect truth. It’s not simply that he spoke truth, which he did. We can do that too. He could speak nothing but truth because he was truth.

**The Life.** Because he rose from the dead and never died, he defeated the power that death holds over humanity. Remember, in the very beginning, Adam and Eve brought the curse of death onto all of us by their rebellion against God. Because of that, we experience two types of death: physical death and spiritual death. Because of Jesus’ defeat over death, he has provided to

anyone who would believe in him the ability to defeat spiritual death too. We can have spiritual life through him, meaning we can live in eternity with him. And if you’re wondering about physical death he will remedy that, too, when he returns.

**If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves (verses 7–11).**

In these verses, Jesus adds to his incredible statements by saying that “whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” This is a unique claim in Christianity. No other world religion makes such a claim. At best, they have so-called prophets who have seen God and then they report what they experienced. There’s something fundamentally flawed in this. Because they were mere men, there is a strong possibility of mistakes. I would say that at any point that these men disagree with Jesus, they are in error.

Jesus filled some of the functions of a prophet too. But he is so much more than a prophet; he was God in the flesh. That’s another bold statement, isn’t it? But remember the credibility he stands upon when he makes this statement.

**“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it (verses 12–14).**

He ends this section passing his authority along to his followers: Do the works I do—greater works—more numerous because there are millions and millions of followers. He wants us to attempt bold actions in his name. Upon his authority, he will be in heaven, with God the Father, interceding for us, helping to make our efforts successful.

Conform your way to Jesus’ way. Adjust your perceptions of truth to Jesus’ truth. Believe in Jesus for eternal life.

Jesus is...the King of the universe, the Lord of life, the author of truth. When he tells us something, we would be wise to heed his words. It would be appropriate for us to conform our lives to whatever he says.

*This manuscript represents the bulk of what was preached at CPC. For further detail, please refer to the audio recording of this sermon.*

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