

AHH LIFE! REFLECTING ON JESUS' UPPER ROOM DISCOURSE

Water from Rock, October 24, 2017, Tim Smith

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

John 10:10

In this series we reflect on Jesus' teaching about experiencing the abundant life He came to give us. We will focus on what is customarily called "The Upper Room Discourse", or, Jesus' teaching in the Upper Room (and prayer afterwards) a few hours before He died. In John 13-17 Jesus describes how followers can live in God's "eternal life", zoe ainios ("life of the age to come").

THE UPPER ROOM DISCOURSE CONTINUED: John 13:36-14:7

Context: Unfortunate chapter division at 14:1

1. Unfortunate chapter division at 14:1. Original manuscripts did not contain chapter and verse divisions. Archbishop Stephen Langton (1150 – 1228) is credited with the system of chapter arrangement that remains in use today. The Wycliffe Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use Langton's chapter division. The Geneva Bible was the first Bible in English to use both chapters and verses. These divisions became standard in English Bibles as well as other languages.
2. The immediate preceding context of the beloved fourteenth chapter of John is:
 - Announcement of Judas' betrayal of Jesus;
 - Jesus telling the disciples that He is going away;
 - Jesus foretelling Peter's denial of Him;
 - Jesus' disciples are troubled!

14:1

1. Jesus' words are a present tense imperative that can be translated, "*Stop being troubled.*"

2. They can calm troubled hearts by holding to their trust in the Father and in Him. They must not focus on their feelings but focus on the objective reality of the Father and the Son.
3. See *The Message Translation*: “*Don’t let this throw you.*”
4. He is telling people who are believers to believe. Trust your faith!
5. Poster: “Relax, I’ve got this! God.”
6. By claiming the disciples’ trust Jesus is acting and speaking as one who is divine as well as human.

14: 2

1. Many people are influenced by the Old English meaning of “mansion” in their thinking about this passage: ‘*In my Father’s house are many mansions...*’
2. Modern translations accurately render the word mone as “dwelling places.” Mone also means lodging, room, and abode. Later in chapter 14 Jesus promises that He and the Father will come and made their “*home*” (mone) in His people (John 14:23).
3. The noun mone comes from same root as the verb meno, translated as abide, live, dwell, stay, and remain. See the use of meno in John 15:4 “*Abide (meno) as I abide (meno) in you.*” Notably, the word meno occurs 40 times in the Gospel of John and 29 times in John’s letters.
4. The idea of mone is “not mansions in the sky, but spiritual positions in Christ.” (Robert Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament*)
5. “This special house or household where the Son has a permanent dwelling place suggests a union with the Father reserved for Jesus the Son and for all those who are begotten as God’s children by the Spirit that Jesus gives.” (Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII – XXI*)
6. “Therefore, he prepares a place for them by his death, resurrection and ascension, for these enable them to be united to him and, in him, with the Father; his going to the Father is itself part of the preparation of a place for them. Heaven is experienced even now through the believer’s union with the Father and the Son and the Spirit. However, this present union with God that occurs as the Father, Son and Spirit abide in the believer only comes to its complete fulfillment at the second coming, when the believer is taken by Jesus to be where he is (v. 3).” (Robert

Whitacre, IVP Commentary Series: John)

14:3

Through Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension He prepares a place so us, so that, "*I will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.*" Here is intimate nearness to the Father, of kind known only by Jesus! Each time you pray, you pray as close to the Father as Jesus. Each time you are troubled, know that you are as close to the Father as Jesus. Compare John 1:18 where Jesus is "*in the bosom of the Father*" (KJV), or, "*close to the Father's heart*".

14:6

1. Here is the sixth "I Am" claim by Jesus in John's Gospel (cf. John 6:48; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 15:1).
2. All of John's theology is summed up in this one verse.
3. Greek grammarians say that in the three things Jesus says about Himself in this verse (way, truth, life), the emphasis is upon "way". The words "truth" and "life" modify the "way". The "way" was the subject of the question put to Jesus. Compare *The Message* on this: "*I am the Road, also the Truth, also the Life.*" Jesus is the way inasmuch as He is the truth and the life.
4. Note in this the exclusive claim of Christianity about Jesus!

See also: Acts 4:12 "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

1Timothy_2:5 "For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human who gave himself a ransom for all—this was attested at the right time.

14:7

Jesus speaks of the reality of having experiential knowledge of God now! Since the disciples have come to know Jesus they know the Father.

See John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

John 13:36-14:7 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

³⁶Simon Peter said to him, ‘Lord, where are you going?’ Jesus answered, ‘Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterwards.’ ³⁷Peter said to him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.’

³⁸Jesus answered, ‘Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times. ^{14:1}Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In 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? ³And 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.

⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.’ ⁵Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ ⁶Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.