



LEADERS GUIDE – October 13

Leader Note: In this week's passage, Jesus' claims to be The Way, The Truth, and The Life and that only those who believe in him will be saved. Your discussion may veer into a conversation about pluralism (Is Jesus really the only way? What about a man on the island who has never heard?). This is an important doctrinal truth that we don't shy away from, but we want to have this discussion in the right environment. As the leader, we trust your judgment and discernment on how to navigate this conversation. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- We believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. (John 10:7, John 14:6, John 3:14-15). This truth compels us share the good news of Jesus Christ on the campus, in the city, and around the world (Rom. 10:14-15; Matt. 28:18-20) until all have heard (Matt. 24:20).
- Your group conversation should be more focused towards the heart, than the head. More focused on how Jesus' words impact the person in the room, not the hypothetical person across the globe.
- Though eternal life is exclusive through Christ, we find a lot of comfort in joy in that God even provides a way to know him when we don't deserve it and that it is accessible to all people.
- Consider the people in the room when you decide how much to discuss the pluralism topic. If it is your fifth week of meeting, you most likely don't need to get into a discussion until you build a trust amongst the new members. If you have a more experienced group, then just lay some ground rules on how to discuss respectfully.
- As the leader, it's okay to redirect the discussion if you feel that it is going in a direction that is not helpful for the group. One of the simplest ways to do this is by saying something like, "Those are great questions and a really important discussion to have. I definitely want to discuss that further, but for our discussion tonight, let's stay focused on...."
- Here are some links that guided Kevin and Andrew as they prepared for their sermons:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6RWyIzhB7k>
 - <https://www.tvcresources.net/resource-library/articles/what-if-i-believe-in-god-but-not-in-jesus>
 - <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/humbly-handling-the-offense-of-the-gospel-with-non-christians>
 - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-most-controversial-claim-jesus-made>

PRIMARY PASSAGE

John 11:17-44: I AM The Way, The Truth, and The Life

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

WHAT IS GOING ON?

1.) Why were the disciples' hearts troubled (Hint: Look back to John 13)? In John 13, you have Jesus' and the disciples sitting in the upper room celebrating the Passover Feast. During this time, Jesus' predicts Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial. Most importantly, he is predicting his death which was quickly approaching. He would be arrested in the next 48 hours.

2.) What are some of the things that trouble your heart? Give people time to open up about what troubles their heart. You may need to lead in this. Transparency breeds transparency. Examples: anxiety, fear, inadequacy, etc.

WHAT DOES JESUS CLAIM?

3.) How does Jesus' respond to their troubled hearts? He calls them to trust in him. He then assures them in three ways: He is going ahead of them to provide room for them in his Father's house (v.2-3). He also makes the claim that he is the Way, the Truth, the Life (v.6). Lastly, he shares how he and the Father are one (v.7).

What does Jesus' I AM statement say about who Christ is?

- The Way: He is the only access point to the Father. See notes above on how to handle this discussion. Many may find the exclusivity of this statement troubling, but it should be comforting. Though Jesus is the only way, it is comforting to know that there is indeed a way to God when we don't deserve it and it is accessible to all.
- The Truth: Truth is objective, despite the current culture that wants to make it subjective. Truth is an unmovable anchor and unchanging standard. In this way, Jesus is truth personified.
- The Life: Through Christ there is abundant and eternal life.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

4.) What does Jesus claims mean for us today? Andrew says it well when he says, we can have confidence when our hearts are troubled, we can stand and rest in absolute truth, and we have access to and can truly know God. Knowing the Way leads us to believe the Truth which gives us Life.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Jesus' statement, "I am the Way, The Truth, and The Life," gives us hope because we know the way, which helps us believe the truth, which gives us abundant and eternal life.

- **What has your heart troubled?**
- **How does Jesus as The Way, The Truth, and The Life bring comfort to those troubles?**
- **How do you need to respond to that truth in your life this week?**