

A place to call home

If you had all the money in the world, where would you live? What country? What suburb? What sort of home would you live in? Rent? Buy? Maybe...

- Live here! The Presidential Suite at the Intercontinental Hong Kong. \$13,000 a night.
- Or, the Sultan's Suite in Istanbul, \$15,000 a night
- The Royal Suite in Dubai, \$18,000 a night
- The Royal Suite in Paris, \$24,000 a night.
- The Presidential Suite, Raj Palace Hotel, India - \$45,000 a night
- The Royal Penthouse, Geneva - \$65,000 a night.

A nice place is expensive!

What if you had to move out of your home tonight? And you had no place to go. You don't know anyone who can help you. You have no money. What would you do with all your stuff? Where would you go?

This is the big question for all of us. When we come to the end of our life, and we leave this earthly home, where do we go? All of a sudden, we have to move. Where do we go? How do we get there? Who will help us?

This is what Jesus wants us to think about. Our future home. Jesus is preparing to go to the cross to die. And he's talking to his disciples and telling them that he's about to leave. He's preparing them for his death. But he wants to prepare them for their future. Verses 1-3:

1 "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."

Jesus says: I'm going to die, and then rise, and go to heaven **to prepare a place for you**. And then I'll come back and take you to be with me.

THAT is a great promise. Jesus preparing a place for us, and then he's going to bring us home to that place.

So what does this mean for us?

1. First of all, Jesus wants us to know that the WAY we are going is to heaven. Heaven is our home.

Our **real** home, is not in an earthly house or unit, or penthouse or hotel room. Our REAL home, our PERMANENT home, is with our Father in heaven. And Jesus is preparing that place for us.

THIS is not our home. And we must not make THIS place our home. THIS is temporary. THIS is a short stay, a visit. Our homes on earth are like hotels. They are temporary places to live.

Just think – if you had to move tomorrow, how much stuff you would have to pack? Now imagine packing all that stuff up into boxes and loading it into a truck and... pushing that truck off a cliff. All gone. All the **stuff** we have is temporary. What Jesus is preparing for us is a permanent home with the Father.

Our problem is often that we treat THIS place like our permanent home. We accumulate so much money and possessions and we put so much into our career. We invest so much INTO this world. And we even KNOW we get it wrong. People at the end of their life often say: "I wish I spent more time with my family". They NEVER seem to say: "I wish I'd spent more time at work"! We KNOW we get our priorities wrong. And Jesus wants to help us get those priorities right. The danger is that we will lose sight of our real future. The danger is that we will keep focussing on our earthly homes instead of our permanent home. It's dangerous because it takes us away from God's heart. This place is temporary.

2. Second, Jesus tells us that the WAY to that home is through Him.
"No one comes to the Father except through me." (verse 6)

That's pretty clear isn't it? If you want to go to heaven, if you want to be with the Father, there is **no other way**. There is no other road to walk. To know Jesus is to know God. Because they are one.

Jesus says this a lot. Verse 9 - If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. Verses 10 and 11 - I am in the father and the father is in me. Verse 7 - If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.

III – Some people might think that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are like Babushka dolls. One fits in the other and into the other. But Jesus says: He is in the Father and the Father is in him.

A better picture would be... a pretzel!

All made of the same substance. All part of the one. Each distinct, yet indivisible. It's not a perfect illustration, but we're trying to use human language to explain something that is beyond our complete human understanding.

But essentially, Jesus wants us to know that he and the Father, and are ONE. So why does He make a point of this? Simply to say this: To know Jesus is to know the Father. And, in fact, that is the ONLY way. **Because** they are ONE.

And the reverse is also true. If you do NOT know Jesus, you CANNOT know the Father. **Because** they are ONE.

3. Finally, Jesus talks to the disciples about the WAY they are to live – **obedience**.

Listen to these verses:

“If you love me, keep my commands.” (15)

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. (21)

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. (23)

Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. (24)

If we love Jesus, we obey him. Obedience SHOWS him we love him.

But obedience is not easy. Especially if we're focused on this world, instead of our permanent home in heaven.

Ill – I have a Navman that guides me in my car. And usually it's pretty good. It guides me well. Sometimes it completely stops working. But usually it gets me where I need to go. It tells me what it thinks is the BEST way to go. But sometimes I ignore it. I go my own way. And what does it do? It says: “Recalculating route” – it recalculates the route to get me back on track.

Jesus is our WAY. He knows which way is the best. And sometimes that's a difficult road, and sometimes it's a costly road, but he always leads us the BEST road. But there are times we ignore him and go our own way. WE take an easier road, a cheaper road. That's called sin. But he remains with us and “recalculates” our route. He keeps guiding us. And he calls us to turn back and follow HIS way., to OBEY him.

But he never leaves us. No matter how many times we go our own way.

And that's what he wants the disciples to know – that he will never leave them. As he goes to be crucified and die and rise and go to heaven, he will leave them the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit. God with us. Verse 16:

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Jesus leaves His Holy Spirit with us, in us. He not only gives us direction in life, he HELPS us to be obedient. When our sinful human will is determined to go our own way, God's Spirit is IN us, giving us the strength to overcome our sinful will and to obey him.

So, when we put all that together, what do we have?
Our permanent home is in heaven with the Father. Not here.
The only way there is through the Son, and ONLY through the Son.
And the way we're called to live on this earth is in obedience.

The way Jesus went, to the cross, was not easy. And the way he calls us to go is often not easy. But it is the only way. Do you believe this?
Do you believe that Jesus is the only way?
Do you believe that the way he leads us is the best for us?
Do you believe that our permanent home is in heaven, and that's what should give us perspective in life? The way we spend our time and money, the relationships we have, the way we prioritise God's **kingdom** needs over our own desires?

When we make big decisions in life. Career, family, real estate, education, even the priority we give to our entertainment or sport or leisure time, these are the questions to ask.

Am I remembering that this worldly home is temporary? That everything I have will only last a little while?

Do I believe Jesus is not only the BEST way to heaven, but the ONLY way?

And if so, am I being obedient to Him? Do I **trust** his direction for my life, even when it's difficult?

If heaven is our permanent home, and if Jesus is the only way, and if calls us to be obedient, does something in my life need to change?