

# Daily Discipleship

## Fifth Sunday of Easter (A) – John 14:1-14

**Discipleship:** *An Instrument of Courage*

**Focus Question:** *This week how might you be an instrument of courage?*

### word of life

**“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”** John 14:1 (NRSV)

Read John 14:1-14

The last supper described in John 13 is an intimate meal for Jesus and his disciples. Jesus has told the disciples on several occasions of his pending death. Thus, this final meal takes on significance not only because of its finality, but because of unique actions taken by Jesus as he washes the feet of his disciples, gives them the commandment to love one another, and connects the Passover meal with his own body and blood.

John 13 concludes with the disciples being concerned not about the future of Jesus as much as themselves. What will they do without Jesus? Jesus reassures them, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.” (John 14:1 NRSV)

1. *Describe those things which might have troubled the hearts of the disciples.*
2. *How does Jesus respond to the troubled hearts of the disciples?*

John 14 continues the love theme of the last supper. Just as Jesus commanded the disciples to love one another, Jesus sees, hears, and responds to the concerns of his troubled disciples. Just as some of the disciples had made preparations to secure the upper room for their last supper, so Jesus promises to prepare rooms for his disciples. He does this out of his love for them.

3. *When Jesus describes preparing a place for his disciples, what is he talking about?*
4. *How might the preparation of a place be an act of love?*

Unfortunately, this promise by Jesus is not reassuring, but confusing to the disciples. They are baffled how to follow Jesus if he is no longer living. Despite walking beside Jesus during his ministry and learning from his teachings, they do not know the way of Jesus. Plus, what might it mean for Jesus to come again to get the disciples and bring them to Jesus? It is as if Jesus does not grasp the finality of death. If Jesus is to die, then the disciples will be alone. There will be no second chance to be with Jesus.

5. *Describe the confusion of the disciples.*
6. *How will the resurrection of Jesus help to give clarity to the disciples?*

It is Thomas who dares to ask the core question, “How can we know the way?” (John 14:5 NRSV) This is the same disciple who will not believe in the risen Jesus until he touches his wounds. Thomas appears to be a man of practicality. He wants the facts. Jesus responds, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6 NRSV)

7. *Do you think the answer by Jesus would have satisfied Thomas? How so?*
8. *How is the way of Jesus connected to truth?*
9. *How is the way of Jesus connected to life?*
10. *How is the way of Jesus connected to God?*

When we go through difficulties and have lost our way, these verses can give us hope and courage. Jesus is working on our behalf to prepare a place for each of us. Thanks be to God!

11. *What does John 14:1 mean to you?*

## **word among us**

The school year was finally coming to an end. Amanda's friends were thrilled as they made plans for the summer vacation, but Amanda was filled with such sadness and anxiety she could barely concentrate on her studies. Amanda wasn't sure why she had not told any of her friends about her family's plans to move out of state the week after school was out. She couldn't quite find the right time to share the news.

1. *What things might have troubled the heart of Amanda?*
2. *How might the secrecy of the move compounded Amanda's anxiety?*

Amanda's father had already moved and started his new job. He had found a house and was busy making preparations for the family. The plan was for the movers to pick up the furniture from the old house, travel to the new home, and arrange the furniture *before* the family arrived. During the final weeks before the move, it helped Amanda to see the photographs of the new house and neighborhood. Amanda appreciated her father had gone ahead and prepared the way for her family. Saying goodbye was still hard, but Amanda knew she was heading to a place of love.

3. *Describe a situation where someone went ahead of you and made preparations. What was that like?*
4. *How does it feel like to go somewhere new?*

As we face new or difficult circumstances, Jesus does not want our hearts to be troubled, but invites us to believe and trust in him. From belief comes a desire to know Jesus and to discern his way and teachings. Discernment leads us to follow Jesus on a path of daily discipleship. Because the way of Jesus is the way of God, it is also the way of truth. One thing leads to another, but the way of Jesus leads to the Father who sent Jesus to us.

5. *How would you describe the way of Jesus?*
6. *How does believing in Jesus help our hearts not to be troubled?*

This week's prayer theme is that of courage, specifically the petition to have the "courage to change the things I can." Any of us can take paths away from God instead of towards God. All of us can go through troubled times where our hearts are burdened. Yet, how reassuring to hear the words from Jesus about trusting in him and not letting our hearts be troubled. There is another way.

Sometimes it takes courage to follow Jesus and to make decisions to align ourselves with the way of Jesus. It also can take courage to name the things we can change and those things we cannot change. Courage is a gift from God and helps us to face our reality, trusting in the promises of Jesus.

7. *What verse in John 14:1-14 do you hope to remember?*
8. *What situations in your life do you need courage to change?*

### **Prayer**

Gracious God, grant me courage to change the things I can change. Amen

### **Dig Deeper**

1 Peter 2:2-10

## **last word**

Pray each day the Serenity Prayer:  
God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can, and  
wisdom to know the difference



*Daily Discipleship*

Written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade

Copyright © 2008 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

May be reproduced for local, non-sale use provided the above copyright notice is included.

[www.elca.org/evangelizingchurch/dailydiscipleship](http://www.elca.org/evangelizingchurch/dailydiscipleship)

5 Easter (A) Page 2 of 2