

I AM THE WAY

Jesus' "I AM" (6)

Banská Bystrica, 23th February 2014

John 14:1-10 "Your heart must not be troubled. Believe¹ in God; believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many dwelling places;¹ if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. ⁴ You know the way where I am going."¹ ⁵ "Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where You're going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ "If you know Me, you will also know¹ My Father. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him." ⁸ "Lord," said Philip, "show us the Father, and that's enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been among you all this time without your knowing Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me?^a The words I speak to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who lives in Me does His works.

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0. INTRODUCTION: METAPHORICAL SAYINGS OF JESUS

- I am (1) the way, (2) the truth, (3) the life → (1) GO! (2) THINK! (3) EXPERIENCE!

0.1. THE ART OF METAPHOR

0.1.1. BIBLICAL USE OF "WAY"

- **Prov 16:7** ...man's ways... (דְּרָכַי־אִשׁ) = ways of doing things, ways of approaching problems etc.
- **Dt 28:29** ...in thy ways... (וְלֹא תִצְלִיחַ אֶת־דְּרָכֶיךָ)
- Prov 1:31 ...they eat of the fruit of their own way
- Christianity: "the Way": **Acts 9:2** who belonged to **the Way** **19:9** slandering **the Way** in front of the crowd, **19:23** disturbance about **the Way**. **24:14** according to **the Way**, which they call a sect,

so I worship my fathers' God, believing all the things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

0.1.2. ARISTOTLE

- ‘the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars (τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἔστιν).’¹

A metaphor: very hard to choose a suitable one, figurative speech = some of its meanings are valid, some not – a need to discern.

A way: space/where to walk but also process of walking.

Christianity was called “the Way” by the first disciples – they saw it as a new way of worshipping the same God (not as a new religion).

0.1.3. JESUS' METAPHORS

- the Way - journey, method, lifestyle, type of worship...
- Jesus' metaphorical/parabolic sayings → the demand for right thinking and understanding
- Jesus' work: (1) ...through our cognition (~teacher) (2) ...through our submission (~physician)
 - Jesus knows about you what you do not know about yourself!
- three phases (1) the start of the journey, (2) [long] time of traveling, (3) arriving to destination

0.2. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO THE FATHER - JESUS

0.2.1. EXCLUSIVE!

- → an offence!
- arrogance?
- injustice? unfair?

0.2.2. THE CROSS

- the *only* possible transformation of a man and a woman

1. THE GOAL IS TO COME TO THE FATHER

- Acts 17 - the meaning of creation: **Acts 17:26-27** ...He has made every nation of men to live all over the earth and has determined their and the *boundaries* of where they live, (ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν)²⁷ so that they might seek God,
- And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me *with all your heart*. Jer 29:13
- Everyone deeply seeks something
- I need to value God so much that you seek Him with ALL YOUR HEART – no room for idols (= being so taken by some other things that I invest all my interest in them)

1.1. WE CHOOSE WAYS ACCORDING TO THEIR DESTINATION

- Begin by considering the end! - choose by where the road leads!

1.2. THE GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE

- Westminster catechism:
 - Q. 1. What is man’s primary purpose? (What is the chief end of man?)
 - A. Man’s primary purpose is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.
- Augustine: ...quia fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te²

Billy Graham *Peace with God*: YOU started on the Great Quest the moment you were born. It was many years perhaps before you realized it, before it became apparent that you were constantly searching — searching for something you never had — searching for something that was more important than anything in

¹ ARISTOTLE *Poetics XXII:9*.

² AUGUSTINE *Confessiones 1:1*,

life. Sometimes you have tried to forget about it. Sometimes you may even have felt that you were freed from the need to go on seeking this nameless thing. At moments you have almost been able to dismiss the quest completely. But always you have been caught up in it again — always you have had to come back to your search.

1.3. JESUS DEFINES THE GOAL

- you see me → you've seen the Father

2. THE GOAL AND WHERE TO BEGIN

- the final goal is not always in sight

2.1. START OUT! GO!

- *Incipe! Dimidium facti est cepisse.*

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. (Lao-tzu, The Way of Lao-tzu, Chinese philosopher (604 BC - 531 BC) Although this is the popular form of this quotation, a more correct translation from the original Chinese would be "The journey of a thousand miles begins beneath one's feet." Rather than emphasizing the first step, Lau Tzu regarded action as something that arises naturally from stillness. Another potential phrasing would be "Even the longest journey must begin where you stand." [note by Michael Moncur, September 01, 2004]

2.2. THE WAY OUT - LIBERATION

- you need be set free - to be able to go
- Jesus sets you free: **1 John 3:8** ...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. = He wants to set me free from myself, my idolatry, my reluctance to be sanctified

2.3. TRUST BEYOND YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- step into the unknown (a "leap of faith"?)
- we do not know the *details* of the way, but we know *the guide* on the way
- journey consist of the series of *steps* - meditating about the goal without taking daily steps leads only to empty speculation - barren "churchianity"

3. THE GOAL AND DAILY ROUTINE

How to stay faithful? Our lives are full of sidwalks, we're surrounded by lies. The only way how to stay on His way is to keep looking at Him and come back to Him always. He is with us always. He knows what pain is, He understands our worries. He cares about us.

- BUNYAN *Pilgrim's Progress*
- **Mt 24:13** But the one who endures to the end (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος) will be delivered.

3.1. A FAITHFUL RELATIONSHIP OF LOVE

- **Mt 28:20** **I am with you** always (πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας); yes, to the end of time.'
- **1Cor 16:22** If anyone does **not love** the Lord, a curse be on him. Maranatha!

3.2. JESUS IS YOUR DAILY GUIDE

- **1 Peter 5:7** casting **all your** care (πάσαν τὴν μέριμναν) upon Him, because He **cares** (αὐτῷ μέλει περὶ ὑμῶν) about you.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- Remember for Whom and for what you have been created. You can reach it only through and in Jesus!
- Speculation is no journey. Make a *step* toward Jesus, and then walk with Jesus and in Jesus!
- Beware of sideways. They always lead away from Jesus!