

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Getting to Know the Father John 14:7-11

Being loved and accepted by one member of a particular family does not guarantee that other members of that same family will necessarily love us.

I am sure that many young brides and grooms have had to face this painful reality when being introduced to their in-laws for the very first time.

Fortunately, this will not be the case for us as born-again believers when we are formally introduced to Christ's Father in glory.

This brings us back to Christ's farewell discourse and to Christ's attempt to comfort His disciples.

Why did they need to be comforted? They needed to be comforted because everything that they had built their lives upon, in terms of their earthly dreams and hopes, was slipping through their fingers.

They believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. And they had believed throughout His public ministry that He would be shortly establishing His earthly kingdom. But in light of His recent comments to them about his death and imminent separation from them, they had become extremely troubled.

And how did Jesus attempt to comfort them in that moment of time? He wanted them to change their focus from an earthly focus to a heavenly focus, from an earthly kingdom to a heavenly kingdom. Let me read for you **John 14:1-2**. "**Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. (2) In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.**"

What a wonderful promise and what a wonderful hope! But in order for this promise to comfort them, they would need to know that Christ's Father was as lovingly and passionately committed to this plan as Christ Himself, in light of the fact that it was His Father's house that Christ had told them He was going to come back and take them to.

So, what did Jesus tell His disciples about His relationship with His Father that would assure them that His Father would be just as enthusiastic about them coming to His house as Christ? He told them four different things. And we can find the first thing He told them in John 14:7-8.

Jesus told His disciples that knowing Him was to know His Father (John 14:7-8). Let me read for you **John 14:7**. "**If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.**" Did Jesus in **John 14:7** tell His disciples that to know Him was to know the Father? Absolutely! The disciples could not know one without knowing the other. If they had known Jesus then they would have known His Father, and if they had known His Father they would have known Jesus.

So, why is this so important for the disciples to know? It was important for the disciples to know in order that His disciples might better appreciate the depth, breath and height of His Father's love for them and His commitment to the plan that Jesus outlined for them in **John 14:2-3**.

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In order for His disciples to better grasp what He had just said about "**knowing Him was to know the Father,**" in more practical terms, Jesus directed their attention toward certain events involving Himself that were about to unfold that would not only say a whole lot about Himself but also a whole lot about His Father, since to know Him was to know the Father.

So, let us continue to read **John 14:7**. "**If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.**" Notice the phrase, "**from now on.**"

What does Jesus mean when He tells His disciples "from now on"? "From now on" refers to that period of time beginning with the events of that night and extending all the way to Christ's ascension and the sending of the Spirit (John 14:7). And why were these particular events such as His death, burial, resurrection and glorification so important for these disciples to focus on?

It was important for the disciples to focus on these events encapsulated by the phrase "from now on" so that when the events occurred they would come to truly know and to see Christ's Father.

And what would be the benefit of Christ's disciples knowing and seeing His father in all the events that were about to unfold? This would be the benefit. They would come to know and see not only His Father's love and care for them but also His Father's personal commitment to the plan Jesus outlined for them in John 14:2-3. But this of course is all dependent upon whether or not His disciples understood what He meant when He said what? "**If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.**" But unfortunately this was not the case.

Let me read for you the words of Philip in **John 14:8**. "**Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.'**"

Though Jesus had hoped His words would have assured His disciples of the certainty of the plan He shared in John 14:2-3, Philip's request in John 14:8 made it clear that His words had not done that. How do we know this?

If the words that Jesus spoke to His disciples about the nature of His relationship with His Father in **John 14:7** had assured His disciples that His Father was as lovingly enthusiastic about the plan that He had shared with them as He was and was in fact present in all the events that were about to unfold, then Philip would not have asked Christ to show them the Father in **John 14:8** and then say, "**and it is enough for us.**" So, what did Christ disciples want?

Christ's disciples wanted His Father to weigh in on what Christ had just told them in **John 14:2-3**. The disciples wanted His Father to assure them that everything that Jesus had just promised them in **John 14:2-3** was true.

So, what was the disciples' problem? Why hadn't the words of Christ fully assured them? Based on Philip's request in John 14:8, Christ's disciples still were struggling to understand the true nature of Christ's relationship with His Father even after what He had said in John 14:7.

They apparently understood what Christ had said about His relationship with His Father at times more in human terms than in divine terms, or in other words, they had not yet fully grasped the fact that Christ was in truth God incarnate, the visible manifestation of His Father in this world; very

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So, how did Christ respond to Philip's request for Him to show them His Father? This brings us to the second thing that Jesus told His disciples about His relationship with His Father.

Jesus told His disciples that if they had seen Him they had seen the Father (John 14:9-10). Let us read **John 14:9**. "**Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, "Show us the Father"?'"**

Jesus in this verse is simply repackaging what He had said in **John 14:7** when He told His disciples, "**If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.**" But this repackaging of what He said earlier is certainly much more emotional. We see this emotion first of all at the very beginning of this verse when Jesus said to Philip, "**Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip?**" Obviously Jesus' question to Philip in this portion of the verse is tinged with sadness. But why is Jesus so sad?

If His opponents, if His enemies did not recognize who He was, it was because they had not listened to God, they had not been taught by God, but this was not the case with these disciples. They had been listening to Christ and had been taught by Christ for nearly three years and yet here they were on the last day of His earthly life showing an incredible lack of understanding of Christ's true nature and His relationship with His Father. This lack of understanding was clearly a disappointment to Christ. He obviously thought that they should have been further along and this is what led to His lament in **John 14:9** when He said, "**Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip?**"

Hopefully we will not bring the same kind of disappointment to Christ as Philip did. Hopefully we will not be lagging so far behind as Philip was. And certainly we should not be in light of the many opportunities that we have through the indwelling Spirit to be instructed by Christ each and every day, both in our personal devotions combined with numerous instructional opportunities in this church.

If we would simply seize these opportunities and purpose ourselves to feast at the table of biblical truth with a heart fully devoted to Christ, I am quite sure that we will not be the source of the same disappointment to Christ as Philip had been.

So, after expressing His disappointment in Philip and the rest of the disciples in terms of their present state of knowledge, or perhaps better said lack of knowledge, what then did Christ say?

Let us again go back to **John 14:9** and continue to read the verse. "**Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father.'**" This, as I shared earlier, is the repackaging of the same truth that Jesus shared in **John 14:7** but just using different words. Jesus once again as He had in **John 14:7** attempts to help His disciples to see that He and His Father, though separate, are yet perfectly one and so much so that if they knew one they would know the other and if they saw the one they would see the other.

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Since seeing Christ is to see the Father, we can perfectly understand why Christ finished John 14:9 by asking Philip, "How do you say show us the Father?"

In essence, Jesus is saying to Him, Philip you are all messed up. You are asking for something that has no meaning in light of what you have been enjoying ever since I have known you. I have, in my presence, always been showing you the Father.

Philip's request was messed up. In essence, His prayer was messed up. It was messed up because what He had requested was not based on what Christ had revealed to him.

Hopefully we would not make the same mistake. Hopefully in striving to feast at the table of biblical truth with hearts fully devoted to Christ we will find our prayers to be consistent what with Christ has revealed to us through His Word. And what would be our reward for praying according to His revealed will? Our reward would be a personal transformation from glory to glory and greater fruitfulness in ministry.

But now Jesus is going to ask a very penetrating question in the very next verse. Let us now begin to read **John 14:10**. "**Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?**" He is challenging Philip to think about everything that He knew about Him in terms of what he had personally experienced and what he had been taught. And if Christ had given him the time to answer that question, what response would you think that Christ would have expected from Philip?

I believe in light of His disappointment in Philip's request in John 14:9 that Christ, in John 14:10, would have expected Philip, upon further reflection, to answer the question yes.

Christ was calling Philip to act on what he truly deep down believed but yet failed to demonstrate earlier when He asked Jesus to show them His Father. I believe Jesus was in essence giving him a final exam based on everything that Jesus knew that He had communicated to Philip and to His other disciples. And I believe Jesus, in giving this final exam, would have fully expected Philip to cry out, "Yes, Lord, I truly do believe that you are in your Father and your Father is in you!"

Praise the Lord for final exams! Final exams give us the opportunity to pull every thing together and finally get things right!

You might even now be saying, "I wish Jesus would give me a final exam. I wish that Jesus would give me an opportunity to pull everything together." And guess what? He is! He is doing it through every circumstance He permits to come into your lives.

He is giving us that opportunity. In fact, He is giving us that opportunity through each and every circumstance that He permits to come into our lives. In other words, in each and every circumstance that He permits to come into our lives He is challenging us pray according to His revealed will.

So, what did Jesus do for Philip at the very beginning of **John 14:10**? Jesus, at the very beginning of **John 14:10**, gave Philip the opportunity to examine his request in light of everything that He believed Philip should have known and really in fact deep down did know.

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So, what will Jesus do next? Jesus told His disciples one more thing about His relationship with Father and what was that?

Jesus told His disciples how His words exemplified the Oneness He enjoyed with His Father (John 14:10-11). Jesus is now seeking to support what He had said to them about His relationship with His Father in John 14:7-9.

So, let us continue to read **John 14:10** after He asked Philip, "**Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?** He goes on to say, "**The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.**"

Jesus in essence is telling them that the very words that He has spoken to them supports what He has been saying about the oneness that He enjoys with His Father.

Jesus was in essence telling His disciples that the words He had spoken to them in John 14:2-3 were not only His words but the very words of His Father.

And how did He explain this phenomenon to His disciples? He explains it by telling them that the words that He had spoken to them were not spoken independent from His Father but at His initiative who was in fact in Him doing His works.

Was Christ's Father fully and lovingly behind the plan that Christ articulated to His Disciples in **John 14:2-3**? Yes! Absolutely! In fact, His Father was the one who initiated this plan and was working out His plan in Christ.

But Jesus is not done telling His disciples about His relationship with His Father. Not only did He tell them if they knew Him they would know His father, not only did He tell them that if they had seen Him they would have seen His Father, not only did He tell them that His words exemplified the oneness He enjoyed with His Father, He also told them something else.

Jesus also told His disciples to believe what He had said about His oneness with His Father, if not based solely on His words, then on His miraculous works (John 14:11).

Let me read for you **John 14:11. "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves."**

Perhaps someone might want to argue with His words, but it was very difficult to argue with His works. And certainly this would have been true of Christ's disciples.

Jesus was clarifying for us and for His disciples the special relationship that He enjoyed with His Father: To know Him was to know His Father. To see Him was to see His Father, so much so that every word that He spoke had been initiated by His Father and therefore was not only His words but also the words of His Father Himself. And just in case they were tempted to doubt the very thing that they deep down truly believed, He then challenged them to contemplate His miraculous works.

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And if they did in fact come to the place where they could loudly and clearly without hesitation proclaim that Jesus and His Father were truly one, then what could they count on in respect to Christ's earlier promise?

They could count on a loving and enthusiastic reception in His Father's house, not only by Christ but also by His Father Himself, since every word, every action and every event that involved Christ gloriously revealed and manifested His Father.

May God give us the grace to see the love and care of Christ's Father in every word, action, or event involving Christ.