

The Rev. Jay Lawlor “The Way, The Truth, The Life” 5th Sunday of Easter, May 14, 2017

The Rev. Jay Lawlor visited Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in Franklin, Indiana for the Fifth Sunday of Easter 2017.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, February 21, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) preached a [sermon](#) titled “The Way, The Truth, The Life” for the Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 14, 2017 at Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in Franklin, Indiana. The readings for the day were Acts 7:55-60; 1 Peter 2:2-10; and John 14:1-14. Following is a reprint of The Rev. Jay Lawlor's sermon.



Jesus said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.” (Jn 14:1). These words are part of what is known as Jesus’s “Farewell Discourse” to his disciples. It is part of how he is saying goodbye – filled with assurances that the disciples will not be left on their own or without guidance. In fact, it serves to clarify the values of the Jesus Movement.

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The Way – The Jesus Movement – is living a life of loving service as a way of loving God. Placing God at the center of our lives.”

The Rev. Jay Lawlor

Now this part of the discourse takes on a familiar form: a series of questions posed to Jesus, followed by his responses that are misunderstood, with then further clarification from Jesus. But the exchanges between the primary participants in this particular conversation – Jesus and Thomas, and Jesus and Philip – cannot be fully understood without a bit of context from an earlier part of “The Farewell Discourse” which appears near the end of John chapter 13, just a few verses before today’s reading.

In it Jesus says: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn 13:34-35).

Jesus gives the New Commandment to love as Jesus loves just before the conversation with Thomas and Philip takes place . . . it sets the stage for the conversation . . . it is important pretext which establishes the very context in which Jesus tells his disciples to not let their hearts be troubled, to believe in God . . . to believe also in Jesus.

Why? Because Jesus has shown them the way to the Father. Jesus has shown them the way to life:

here and now, in the future, for all eternity. Jesus has shown us the way. All you need is love. Lennon and McCartney had that right . . . but Jesus should get a Beatles writing credit because he said it first.

When Thomas asks Jesus “How can we know the way?” (Jn 14:5b), Jesus answers by telling him “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” (Jn 14:6). And the way is love.

Early Christians understood this. They were originally known as “The Way.” The way to Jesus. It was the original Jesus Movement. And they knew they were being authentic to “The Way” – to the Jesus Movement – if they loved one another. And others knew they were disciples of Jesus by their love.

When Philip says “Lord, show us the Father” (Jn 14:8), Jesus tells him ‘whoever has seen me has seen the Father’ . . . ‘the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.’ Then Jesus tells Philip, if you have trouble believing because of my words, then believe because of my works. . . . And they are works of love.

Then Jesus says: “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do” (Jn 14:13a). The way to the Father is the way of self-giving service. It is in that context in which Jesus promises to give whatever is asked in his name so God is glorified in Jesus’s name.

The Way – The Jesus Movement – is living a life of loving service as a way of loving God . . . placing God at the center of our lives. Jesus’s promise is not like that of a genie who grants whatever we wish . . . the promise of Jesus is that when we offer our lives in loving service to one another – and to the world in which we are sent, Jesus joins us and God is glorified.

At Communion we will join in a hymn of praise to Jesus written by the Welsh-born poet and Anglican priest, George Herbert, which is a fitting meditation:

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: such a way as gives us breath; such a truth as ends all strife, such a life as killeth death. Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: such a light as shows a feast; such a feast as mends in length; such a strength as makes his guest. Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: such a joy as none can move; such a love as none can part; such a heart as joys in love. (Hymn 487, The Hymnal 1982).

So do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Jesus . . . because Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life . . . Jesus is love. And Jesus invites us to live with our arms wide open, ready to embrace one another in love . . . and then share that love with the world which we serve in Jesus’s name.

Amen.

This is a reprint of the sermon transcript for the sermon titled “The Way, The Truth, The Life” by the Rev. Jay Lawlor at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/the-way-the-truth-the-light-rev-jay-lawlor-sermon-5-easter-year-may-14-2017/>

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