

JOHN 14:6

The Gospel of John is probably the most condensed and expanded record of Jesus' life and teachings at the same time.



It is **condensed** in the fact that when we read it, a lot of things happen in a short period of time, especially the last week. As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the crowds are shouting and proclaiming His entrance as King. A few days later they would shout to kill Him. It is as if the clock ticking down towards His crucifixion is speeding up.

It is **expanded** as the same gospel account also gives the most detail in a short space of time. In fact, about half of the entire account is about the last six to seven days before the crucifixion.

While this web site's focus is John's third chapter, we cannot view it in isolation, even if it contains the most important verse ever – John 3:16. When we read the entire gospel, it expands in great detail just why John 3:16 is so important. This study sheds more light on the last few days of Jesus' life and focuses on three claims He makes about Himself. Please note that this piece does not attempt to describe everything found in John Chapters 12, 13 and 14 but what is described leads to John 14:6, no further.

CHAPTER 12

When we start reading in John Chapter 12, verses 1 to 11, we follow the countdown towards the Friday of the crucifixion. Six days before the Passover, Jesus goes to Bethany. John is very careful to note that Lazarus was there – emphasising the fact that Lazarus was in fact raised from the dead. Lazarus was present at the table where a meal was being served. At this event Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with expensive oil, and this immediately draws criticism from Judas Iscariot. John returns to Lazarus and states that a great number of Jews came to see Lazarus. The Jewish leaders decide to kill Lazarus because a great number of people believed in Jesus because of seeing Lazarus alive.

Verses 12 to 19 recount the entry into Jerusalem. Verses 20 to 50 first deal with Him discussing with the disciples that He must be glorified, and then switches the attention to His discussion with the people, verses 30 to 50.

CHAPTER 13

Chapter 13, verses 1 to 20 recounts the act of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples, a deed demonstrating great humility, and immediately after that in verse 21, He states that someone will betray Him. From here we have the sad event of Judas Iscariot being revealed as the one who would betray Him whom he, Judas, had spent so much time with. In verse 30, Judas leaves the company of the disciples and walks off into the night to visit the Jewish leaders who would pay him to reveal Jesus' whereabouts to them so that they could kill Him.

The last part of Chapter 13 is crucial for the understanding of what Jesus was to say a few minutes later. From verse 31 to the end of the chapter, after Judas Iscariot has left, He says that now He is glorified and God in Him. Judas' exit is the catalyst that introduces and drives the last few hours before His crucifixion. He states that He will still be with them for a short

time and then leave and where He goes, they cannot follow Him. Simon Peter almost immediately interrupts and wants to know why they cannot follow Him now but will do so later (v36). Peter seems to have little patience – he always wants to rush ahead with things – and Jesus uses this impatience to teach him an immense lesson, that he would betray Him when it would matter most (v38).

CHAPTER 14

Chapter 14 contains the verse that we want to look at in more detail. Jesus tells the disciples not to be troubled and that He is going away to make a place for them. Once He has done so, He will return to them and take them to where He is. Verse 4 is startling:

You know the way!

Thomas says that they do not know where He is going, and they do not know the way. Jesus answers them with what is surely one of the most important verses in the Bible after John 3:16:

I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. Nobody comes to the Father except through Me. – **John 14:6**

This verse, tied to John 3:16, explains Jesus' mission on Earth. Unfortunately, it has also been the verse that is most often changed to suit deceivers and false teachers. These deceivers and false teachers are nothing new. Jesus said that after He leaves, false teachers would come in like wolves and devour the flock of believers. The best way to do this is to deceive people. John 14:6 lends itself to being misused, misquoted and misapplied. Jesus makes three statements:

I am the Way

Jesus is **the** Way. Note the use of the definite article here! If you do not know what an article is, and not all languages give the same importance to the use of articles, then this is a bit of a grammar lesson. The indefinite article, **a**, indicates something without giving much detail about it and there can be many of the same thing. Look at these examples:

I lost **a** book I had in my briefcase. This could be any book. No more detail is given about it.

Now look at this:

I lost **the** book I had in my briefcase. This assumes more detail. First, it points to the fact that this was the **only** book in the briefcase. There are no others. It also implies that the owner had in-depth knowledge about the book.

Jesus says that He is **the** way to the Father. It does not state that He is **a** way, as if there are other ways, other means, or other people through whom man can come to the Father. In our time, there are many people who say that Jesus is just **a**, one of many, way to get to the Father. They mention names of those they say are also ones who are the way to the Father. This is false! Jesus is the **only way**. Like the example of the book and the briefcase, there are no other books referred to and the use of the definite article, **the**, is clear.

Jesus is **the** Way. There is no other way.

I am the Truth

The second statement Jesus makes is that He is **the** Truth. All others are liars. He is not a truth, one of many, but **the** Truth. Now that we understand the difference between the definite and indefinite article, the second statement needs less explanation as the grammar structure is the same as the first statement.

Jesus is **the** Truth. There is no other truth.

I am the Life

The third statement Jesus makes is that He is **the** Life. Just as He raised Lazarus from the dead, in the same way He rose from the dead, and in the same way He will raise us from the dead, on condition that we believe. Nobody else, and no other religion, can claim that they have raised people from the dead. Their own way is not the life, they are dead!

Jesus is **the** Life. There is no other life.

He then encapsulates the three statements with this:

No one comes to the Father but through me.

Because He is **the** Way, **the** Truth, and **the** Life, **He** is the One through whom we have access to the Father – through **Me**.

This is as clear as it gets. Do not be deceived by the teachings of others, even if they claim to be Christians. In our time the devil does not need other religions to lead people astray. He simply deceives people who call themselves Christian leaders. Do not allow your thoughts to become deceived and diluted by what others say about Jesus. Simply focus on what He says of Himself.

CONCLUSION

To summarise, how does this verse tie up with John 3:16? John 3:16 states:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** should not perish but have everlasting life.

The focus is on the part in bold: **whoever believes in Him**. Let us put this in simple language:

Whoever, anyone, who **believes in Him** (Jesus) as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, will not perish but have eternal life.

It is not your way – your way may seem right to you, but it leads to death. – **Proverbs 14:12**

It is not your truth – your truth may seem right to you, but it is His truth that counts. –
Psalm 138:2

It is not your life – your life as a believer is in Christ, and His life is in you. – **Galatians
2:20**