

Four Dimensions of Faith

John 13:31-14:31

Bethany Assembly of God

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Central Proposition: You can trust in Jesus even though He's not here.

Introduction

Have you ever had a job where you were supposed to be trained to do something, but the boss or the trainer really didn't care, or they got called away to do something else, so, they gave you some vague instructions and hoped for the best? We may sometimes feel like that's what Jesus did to us: He came to save us, gave us a job to do, but then He took off and we're not exactly sure what we're supposed to be doing. But that's not what Jesus did, even if in moments of weakness we feel that way. The Gospel of John helps us to understand who Jesus is and what it means to believe in Him as well as what kind of life He offers. We're in part two of the Gospel called the Book of Glory. In this section, the focus is on Jesus' work on the cross and how He prepares His disciples for His departure. Jesus' death would glorify God because it would reveal God's character and plan of redemption and would draw many people to salvation. He tells us that there are at least four dimensions to faith: moral, future, cognitive, and experiential.

1. The moral dimension: You should love other Christians. See John 13:34-35; Ephesians 3:18-19.

The command to love is not new, but the standard ("as I have loved you") is. Jesus had just washed the disciples' feet, an act pointing to His death on the cross, which would soon follow. Jesus not only expects us to love other believers but to love them like He loves us. We'll see in a moment that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit and we must have His help to love like this. But there's something else that allows us to love this way: the experience of Jesus' love for us. You can't love like Jesus if you don't know you're loved by Jesus.

2. The future dimension: You should look to Heaven. See John 14:1-4, 28; Revelation 21:3.

The whole point of heaven is to be with God, in His presence. Jesus' point isn't so much about the accommodations in heaven, He's saying that we will be with God forever, as we were always meant to be. We are living *in* this world but *for* another world.

3. The cognitive dimension: You should stand on the Truth. See John 14:5-8.

Jesus did not claim to know the way or show the way; He *is* the Way. There is a difference. He is the way because no one can come to the Father except through Him and that's the case because to know Jesus is to know the Father. John has been saying this all along. Right from the beginning we learned that Jesus is the Word of God who was from the beginning, the only God who was at the Father's side who came to make God known to us. This would not be worth believing except, Jesus died, just as He predicted, and He was raised from the dead just as He said He would be. To trust Jesus is to stand on these incredible and exclusive claims.

4. You should live in the Spirit. See John 14:12-17, 23, 25-31.

We might call the final dimension of faith in Jesus' absence personal or experiential. While Jesus is absent physically, He hasn't really left us alone. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit and what a fantastic promise that is. While Jesus is not here physically, He is nonetheless present with us. The implications of this are astounding: God lives in you! The presence of the Holy Spirit means that God the Father and Jesus are at home with believers. How should that make us feel? How should that affect our actions and attitudes? Shouldn't that give us confidence and hope? The presence of God's Spirit in our lives means that we experience God, we can know His comfort, His peace, and His power.

Are you experiencing the presence and power of the Spirit in your life? If not, could it be because you aren't standing on the truth? Could it be in part, because you aren't obeying Jesus so you don't need the Spirit's power to love others because you're not loving them anyway?

Trusting Jesus is life-changing and life-encompassing. If we will listen to Jesus, we will trust Him by obeying Him, looking forward to His return, standing firm in truth, and experiencing His presence through the Holy Spirit.