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ONLY WAY

You've run into them. Maybe you live with one. Maybe you are one: *Those who always have to get their way.* We joke about *"my way or the highway"* but usually these words are grumbled by someone who didn't get their way. What about the guy going the wrong way down a one-way street? Then there's *"the right way, the wrong way, and the Army way."* Well, in John 13-14 we see three different ways.

John 14 begins with beloved words of Jesus, **"Let not your hearts be troubled."** You hear this at funerals. But Jesus said this privately to His disciples, not to the public. Jesus Himself is troubled by what is coming. Judas has gone to betray Him. Peter is going to deny Him. And Jesus is going to leave them. And He says where He is going they cannot come. Yet, don't you be troubled, He says.

Why? Because **"You believe in God, so believe also in Me."** The words and works of Jesus in John's gospel proclaim Jesus as God's promised Messiah, the Son of God - God come in the flesh. All is working out according to God's plan. They trust in God, so they should also trust in Jesus.

He explains, **"In My Father's house are many rooms. I go to prepare a place for you. And I will come again and take you to Myself so where I am you may be also."** In Jesus' day, an engaged man would add rooms to his father's house. Then he could get married and bring home His bride. **"And you know the way."** But no, like us, the disciples are dull of hearing and slow to understand. Jesus spells it out. He's going to His heavenly Father, to prepare to bring His disciples there. The "way" is His personal access.

"I AM the way and the truth and the life." People give lip service to John 14:6-a when they say Jesus is a great teacher. But this is no clever metaphor. It summarizes what Jesus is showing and telling all along. The grammar is elliptical, integrated. "I AM" is the personal name of God, Jehovah, LORD in all caps in your Bible. Jesus says *"I AM the way because I AM the truth because I AM the life."* I am the only way to God because only I have come from God, and I only am the true manifestation of God, the Word become flesh. And I alone have the power of life, eternal life, in and of Myself. Because only I AM God.

People claim to love John 14:6-a but they repel in hate from John 14:6-b where Jesus explains **"No one comes to the Father except through Me."** That's so intolerant, so exclusive, people say. But one day when you die and stand before heaven's gate, WHY should God allow you in? If you say *"I did it my way"* won't God say to you *"no way - I showed you THE one and only way, My way, through Jesus."* That's the message of John and the entire Bible. It all points to Jesus as THE way. As Hebrews 10:20 declares, Jesus is the new and living way through the atonement by His body and blood.

What a contrast with John 13. There we see "my way" on display by the disciples - the way of betrayal and denial. The way of following the world, the flesh, and the devil. The way of religion, trying to work your way to heaven instead of receiving the work of Jesus on your behalf. Jesus showed them His "new way" when He washed the feet of His disciples, even the ones who would betray and deny Him. That's Jesus' way of humility, love, obedience. The way to be glorified is to be crucified. The way up is down. Jesus' way is God's character lived out through your life. Not the old way of the Law but the new way of the New Commandment and the New Covenant. Then Jesus told them all to love one another the same as He loved them. Then He died for them. Are you going to do that, to earn heaven "my way"?

The way is not a route on a map. Not a ritual. It is not religion. The way is Jesus, crucified, resurrected, glorified. The way is His personal access to heaven. Not something you can work out, but something only He can work. Jesus Himself is "the one and only way." He's explained what the way is like, and who the way is. Now He explains HOW to live the way. John 14:16, **"I will give you another Helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth."** Jesus is going away, but this will be even better. He says, the power of the Holy Spirit within you is way better than Me being with you, because now I will be "IN" you.

In this dangerous calling of discipleship, Jesus promises all believers need to face the world, the flesh, and the devil - the enemies in John 13 and 14. Before Jesus departs, He bequeaths His last will and testament, which gives believers joy, love and peace. John 14:27, **"My peace I give to you, not as the world gives. Let not your hearts be troubled."** No longer do you need to be a "my way" kinda guy. Believe in Jesus, and He will transform you to His way, by the Holy Spirit. No matter your circumstances. And that's the way YOU too can follow His way - by His presence, His peace, His power within you!