

# Life Group Lesson

Hope-God Makes Sense out of Nonsense • Week of May 24

Expectations. You have them. You expect certain things from the people you live with, work with, the people you go to church with and do life with. Have you ever asked yourself, “What do I expect of Jesus?” As we read the Gospel accounts, we quickly see how the disciples had expectations of Jesus. The crowds had expectations. The religious leaders had expectations for who Messiah would be and the political feats Messiah would accomplish.

Clearly, the leading priests and high council in Jesus’ day were concerned for their Temple, and their national standing with Rome (see John 11:48). The disciples were often unclear about the Kingdom, and at one point, even argued about which one of them was the greatest (Luke 9:46). But the Lord knew His mission all along. Jesus knew what His Father in Heaven expected of Him. Christ came to redeem the world. Had Jesus compromised the mission in any way prior to the cross, Jesus would have jeopardized His anointing to fulfill the Father’s expectation—

*“Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But this is the very reason I came! Father, bring glory to your name.”  
(John 12:27-28)*

## Read John 14:1-14

1. Unmet expectations can cause our hearts to be troubles. What is troubling your heart today? (Name it)

*Jesus says, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?” (John 14:1-2)*

Stop for a moment, and imagine the magnitude of this thought: Jesus has gone to heaven to prepare a place for *you*! What else is Jesus doing in heaven *for you*, according to Hebrews 7:24-26?

In John, chapter 17, Jesus prayed for His disciples and all who would ever believe (future) in Him (see John 17:20). When Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)—He was telling us *how* to get to heaven, the place that He is preparing. The Good News of Christ is not a set of rules or teachings. When we invite Jesus into our hearts, we are inviting Jesus’ Spirit into our hearts. We are trusting in a Person, not a formula. Christ alone knows (*and is*) the way to heaven and entry into His presence will not be by human merit but by God’s mercy.

There is a sense of urgency in Jesus on the evening before His crucifixion. He reminds His disciples: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!” (v9) echoing what He publicly announced earlier: “For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me” (John 12:45). The Lord does not speak in riddles, ambiguity, or indirect ideas. He always communicates the truth. The Lord is not a cosmic bellhop, beckoning to our every whim and earthly expectation. But He does promise to answer our requests that are aligned with His purpose (John 14:13-14). Sometimes the Lord may delay in giving us an immediate answer to our prayer, but it is always for our benefit – to strengthen, or even push us. His Holy Spirit will often drive us to press into deeper faith.

2. In past experience, how has the Lord driven you to a deeper faith by not answering your immediate prayer? Did it cause you to think through your request, perhaps re-evaluate your motive?

Perhaps you have been disappointed in the Lord because of an unmet expectation. Would you be willing to re-present the request before Him, only this time, trust Him to answer His way, in His time? Write out your prayer request —

Jesus has the power to answer every request, just as Jesus has the authority to speak life into a dead body. In John, chapter eleven, news reaches Jesus that His friend Lazarus is sick, near to death. Jesus deliberately delays in going to Bethany to ‘heal’ Lazarus (brother of Martha and Mary) so that a greater work is presented. Christ wants His disciples, Mary and Martha, the mourners, the people of the village, even the skeptics to personally witness Lazarus walking out of the tomb, because here is the deal: Jesus is Lord over the grave!

**Read John 11:17-44**

3. What are Jesus' first words upon Lazarus' Resurrection, according to John 11:44?

"Unwrap him and let him go!" (v44). As Christ-followers, we are called to be witnesses of this same wonderful message of hope (see Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:45-49, and Acts 1:8). But it is hard for dead people to teach people how to live. It is hard for a dead person to 'command' a struggling brother or sister to come out of the grave, if they are still in the grave. The church is called to 'unwrap people and let them go!' – we must be free ourselves, unbound from our own grave clothes, in order to free others.

4. In what ways are you still bound up in grave clothes? (be honest with yourself)

What 'grave clothes' (negative voices from the past, old sins, regrets) will you shed?

As our plain truth states—

The disciples who sincerely desired to follow the Lord Jesus had to learn what we must learn today. Religious expectations imprison us. It is only through childlike faith in Christ (trust and obedience) that we experience true freedom.

**One Year Bible Reading**

May 24: 2 Samuel 4:1-6:23, John 13:31-14:14, Psalm 119:17-32, Prov. 15:31-32  
May 25: 2 Samuel 7:1-8:18, John 14:15-31, Psalm 119:33-48, Proverbs 15:33  
May 26: 2 Samuel 9:1-11:27, John 15:1-27, Psalm 119:49-64, Proverbs 16:1-3  
May 27: 2 Samuel 12:1-31, John 16:1-33, Psalm 119:65-80, Proverbs 16:4-5  
May 28: 2 Samuel 13:1-39, John 17:1-26, Psalm 119:81-96, Proverbs 16:6-7  
May 29: 2 Samuel 14:1-15:22, John 18:1-24, Psalm 119:97-112, Proverbs 16:8-9  
May 30: 2 Samuel 15:23-16:23, John 18:25-19:22, Ps. 119:113-128, Prov. 16:10-11

# Hope

God Makes Sense out of Nonsense

**Text: John 14:1-6, 8:21-36**

1. I am the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Plain Truth

**Religious expectations \_\_\_\_\_ us,  
while \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in  
Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ us.**

**May 23 & 24, 2020**