

Rev. Mike Cole
Providence Presbyterian Church
Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 3, 2026
John 14:1-14

"The Way to Love"

Years ago, I was walking through a large shopping mall and noticed a very small boy walking beside me quite unattended. Then I heard a voice on the public address system say, "Will Christopher Walker please come to the big clock in the center of the mall. Christopher Walker, come to the big clock in the center of the mall." Just then I looked down at my diminutive companion who exclaimed, "Darn it, I'm lost again!"

There are thousands of people walking around the world right now who are saying the same thing, "Darn it, I'm lost again!" Our world is filled with folks who have lost their way in the world. But the gospel of Jesus Christ has a message of hope for those who are lost.

One of the more assuring images Jesus presented was his comparison of the kingdom of God to a house with many rooms. All people seek a place they can call home, which is safe and secure. Jesus offers us such a place when we believe in God.

There is a sense in which all of us are transients in this world, not only geographically and temporally, but also spiritually. In our society, we tend to ignore our spiritual natures. We are very adept at addressing our physical needs. Jesus offers a home for our homeless spirits - a place where we can experience the peace and fulfillment of a loving relationship with God. This is a home which has more than enough space for each and every one of us. Jesus assures us that he has prepared a special place for each of us. There is a reservation made in our name. All we need to do is accept God's gracious offer without reservation.

When Jesus announced that he was going away to prepare this special place for all the disciples, Thomas became confused, frustrated and a little panic stricken. He couldn't imagine functioning without Jesus, and said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Once again, Thomas spoke on behalf of everyone. Thomas may have been looking for a geographical way, but what he got was spiritual direction, because our spiritual home is not a place to live; it is in a way of living.

I heard a story, once, of a mother who wrote a letter to the President of a small Presbyterian college. In her letter, she asked the President to see to it that her son, who was an incoming freshman, would be given a roommate who "does not smoke, swear,

drink, carouse, or tell dirty jokes. Furthermore," she continued, "my son's roommate should be someone who goes to church regularly, retires by 10 p.m. every night and has good study habits. After all," she concluded, "this is the first time that my son has been away from home, except for the four years he spent in the Marines."

We all want to spare our children harm and heartache. Jesus' announcement of his departure was his way of pushing them out of the nest, so that they could fly on their own. Jesus told them, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except **through** me." Through Jesus means through the actions of Jesus – his life, death and resurrection, which secured the future of all humanity.

Jesus' actions have shown us the true way to live. His actions were always outwardly focused. In his behavior, Jesus defined love in a new way. His way of love is not what comes naturally to us, because we are, by nature, self-concerned. Love as Jesus redefined it is self-sacrificing. Jesus' love for humanity was perfectly revealed upon the cross.

Before the incarnation of Jesus, the artery between the heart of God and the body of humankind had become clogged by sinfulness. Humanity's spiritual lifeblood had ceased to flow because we had allowed impurities into our spiritual systems. Through Jesus, God re-opened the spiritual artery of all humanity. Thus, it is that Jesus can say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

If we are looking for the way to love, especially when the world around seems to be falling apart, we need look no further than Jesus' actions. His love was and is all-inclusive. He paid attention to the lowliest of the low; he healed the sickest of the sick; he preached to anyone who would listen; he died for everyone – every one! That's the way to love. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Charge: Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God will equip you. God will accomplish a purpose in your being there. Christ who dwells within you has something He wants to do through you where you are. Believe this and go in God's grace, love and power. Amen