

JOHN CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Jesus Assures His Disciples

“In the aftermath of the attacks that toppled the World Trade Center, an Israeli company offered high-rise workers a new security option. APCO Aviation is now marketing a parachute for those who fear terrorist attacks on skyscrapers.

“The **Executivechute** was designed, tested and marketed in three weeks. The safety chute weighs four pounds and is available in the United States and Japan. The ripcord can be attached to heavy furniture so it opens automatically when the wearer jumps out a window.

“The managing director of the company says the parachute uses a military style round canopy instead of an aerobatic rectangular design. He says a round chute makes for a reliable, but hard landing from a minimum height of 10 stories. The company admits it is unlikely a user will know how to do the standard *"paratrooper roll"* upon reaching the ground, but they figure, *"a twisted ankle is a small price to pay for life."*

“Parachutes and increased precautions may provide a degree of protection, but they cannot remove every ounce of fear. Jesus offered these words of assurance to those living in an unpredictable world. "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart! I have overcome the world (John 16:33)."¹

Jesus' disciples were no different than any of us. We would all like a sense of assurance and confidence that everything in life is going to be all right, and that is exactly what Jesus provides for us in this chapter. We will begin by looking at the first fourteen verses.

John 14:1-14 NLT:

¹ *"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.*

² *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*

³ *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

⁴ *"And you know the way where I am going."*

⁵ *Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"*

⁶ *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one*

¹ —Fresh Illustrations

comes to the Father but through Me.

⁷ *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."*

⁸ *Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."*

⁹ *Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

¹⁰ *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."*

¹¹ *"Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."*

¹² *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."*

¹³ *"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*

¹⁴ *"If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."*

I have heard of a guy who is a real sports fanatic. Listen to what he says:

"I am a tremendous sports fan. Since many sporting events take place when I am not at home, I videotape them. When it's time to sit in my easy chair and view the tape, unlike most people, I don't rewind to the beginning to view it. Instead, I rewind to the climax to discover who won and who lost. If my team lost, I'll put the tape away, but if my team won I'll rewind the game back to the beginning, get out some snacks, and watch the whole game.

"Some have told me this method can't be much fun. On the contrary, no matter how bad things look for my team, I don't have to worry because I know the end of the story. That's how we ought to think about what Jesus did for us on the cross—we ought to have a VCR mentality: no matter how bad things look, we don't have to worry because we know the end of the story."²

The passage we have read beginning in John 14 gives us the same kind of assurance our sports fan has when he knows his team is going to win at the conclusion of the tape, and it is definitely worth looking at in some detail.

² Citation: Charles Ellis, Indianapolis, Indiana," in – *Perfect Illustrations: For Every Topic and Occasion*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "ASSURANCE".

John 14:1 NAS:

¹ *"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.*

Jesus knew what it was like to have a “troubled” heart (John 11:33; 13:31). ³ If we may be allowed to paraphrase what Jesus is telling His disciples, it would sound something like this: “*Do not worry! Everything is going to be all right. I am going away but do not let that worry you. If you believe the things I have taught you and believe in God, you can be assured that things will be okay.*” Both usages of the verb “believe” in this passage would most accurately be translated “keep on believing.”⁴ We would then read verse 1 to say: “*Do not worry, (Keep on) believing in God, (keep on)⁵ believing in Me and everything will turn out just fine.*” That means you do not give up or stop just because there are some problems or trials along the way. “*Keep on keeping on,*” as the saying goes. Keep on because God is in control. If you have ever wondered what trust in God is, it is this. Keep on believing Him through thick and thin because God is in control.

John 14:2 NAS:

² *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*

This is about the most wonderful picture of Heaven we can be given. Jesus tells His disciples that there are many places where one can live in Heaven, and wherever we live we will have a place that has been specially prepared for us by Jesus, a place where we will be with Him and with God. We should have no fear of death because Jesus has a place waiting for us in Heaven that He has already prepared.

John 14:3 NAS:

³ *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

In the original language “*I will come again and receive you to Myself,*” can be read: “*And I shall take you along to my own home.*” This blessed promise is fulfilled in death for all believers who die before the Second Coming of Christ. Jesus will come for believers then as well.⁶ Do you remember in the last chapter when Peter asked Jesus where He was going and Jesus told Him He could not come with at that time but would follow later (John 13:36). This is Jesus’ answer to that question.

If you read verse 3 carefully it says that Jesus will come for us at our death and personally escort us home. Is that possible? I do not know how He could possibly do that for all believers around the world that die every day. But if you read the New Testament Greek translation, the language in which the New Testament was originally written, that is what it says. That should definitely remove any fear of death. Can you imagine Jesus

³ Robertson, A.T.: *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Oak Harbor : 1997, S. Jn 14:1.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Parentheses added.

⁶ Op cit, Robertson, A.T.: Jn 14:3.

coming for you when it is your time, perhaps taking your hand and walking through the valley of the shadow of death with you so that there is no fear of the process, and being right there with you to personally escort you to the place He has prepared for you in the house where He and His Father live? What assurance! What comfort! What a Savior! I cannot help but be reminded of the twenty-third Psalm which we believe confirms this promise.

¹ *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.*

³ *He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

⁴ *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, **for You are with me**; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.*

⁶ *Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And **I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.***

John 14:4 NAS:

⁴ *"And you know the way where I am going."*

Now all of Jesus' disciples should know how to get to the Father's house by this time. We hope you all know as well. If not, raise your hand and we will explain it right now. Do not be embarrassed, there was a time when none of us knew the answer to that question. Besides it is better to be a little embarrassed and go to Heaven than to look cool and knowledgeable and end up in Hell. But we are also available to speak with you privately at any time.

Jesus' disciples had been following Jesus around for three years. Every day and night they shared His life, they heard all of His teaching, saw all of His miracles, and saw all of the prophecies about Him fulfilled. How out of it they must have been. It is like some children who spend all day in school and when they get home and their mother or father asks them what they learned, and they say: "*I don't remember.*" Jesus' disciples must have had a lot of those kind of days.

John 14:5 NAS:

⁵ *Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"*

Well apparently Thomas was one who had a lot of "*I don't remember*" days because he did not know the way. But we admire him for not hesitating to admit his ignorance and ask. A lot of people would rather remain ignorant than admit they do not know something. Thomas was not afraid to ask, which we believe speaks volumes about the kind of Teacher he had. We are sure Jesus was glad that Thomas asked rather than

continuing in Hell-bound ignorance. So in John 14:6:

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father but through Me.**"

A poll that came out this week, and that you may have heard reported in the news, says that:

“America remains a deeply religious nation, but a new survey finds most Americans don't believe their tradition is the only way to eternal life -- even if the denomination's teachings say otherwise. The findings, revealed Monday in a survey of 35,000 adults, can either be taken as a positive sign of growing religious tolerance, or disturbing evidence that Americans dismiss or don't know fundamental teachings of their own faiths.

“Among the more startling numbers in the survey, conducted last year by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life: 57 percent of evangelical church attenders said they believe many religions can lead to eternal life, in conflict with traditional evangelical teaching. In all, 70 percent of Americans with a religious affiliation shared that view, and 68 percent said there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of their own religion.”⁷

The poll further indicated that only 24 percent of Americans believed that there is only one way to Heaven. That is in stark contrast to Jesus' words here in John 14:6 that He is the only way to Heaven.

If you do not believe that Jesus Christ is the one and only way to eternal life in Heaven, you are misguided. If you do not believe in the Triune God as the one and only true God, you are misguided. Now if you tend to levitate about two feet off the ground whenever you here such a claim by Christians or by Christ Himself, please allow yourselves to settle back down to earth or to your seat and just listen for a little while.

If you have come to believe that Jesus is who He claims to be, as we do, as the result of studying all that is taught in the Bible, this is the only logical conclusion you can come to. Let us just see if you do not agree. The Bible tells us that all through the Old Testament **the prophets**, under the leading of God, not only predicted the future coming of Christ as much as 2,000 years before His birth, but also predicted many other events which were to take place in the near and far distant future. **They all came true** except of course for those predictions that pertain to the end times, which are still to

⁷ <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Church/Default.aspx?id=150084>, June 24, 2008.

come. But think about it. If all of the predictions about the first coming of Jesus as well as other historical events that took place at or before the birth of Jesus came true, then it certainly follows that all the predictions about the end times will come true as well. You see no other religion in the world has a god who can predict the future. **That is because none of the other religions have a real God.** All they have are human beings or idols that have no real power. They simply cannot predict the future because they are nothing but false gods deceiving the people.

Then there are **miracles**. Jesus performed miracle after miracle. He did things that only a supernatural being could do. No human being before or since has been able to do any of the miracles that Jesus performed. Atheists, agnostics, and those who follow all the other religions have made every attempt possible to discredit the truth of the historical accounts of the Bible, including the life of Jesus, and they continue to do so. But all of their attempts can be proven false by actual accounts from secular historians who have no reason whatsoever to back up the accounts reported in the Bible, that is other than to report what their research has proven to be fact. Other religions do not have gods that can perform miracles. They did so in Moses' day and they will do a lot of that in the end times. (Mark 13:22). But they will never be able to do the wonderful works that Christ did. Jesus worked real miracles, miracles that glorified God and helped people. Satan's so-called miracles merely exalt himself.

Then there is the **perfection of the Bible** itself. It is a book that was written over some 1500 or 1600 years by a different author in nearly each generation covering a period of time, and there are no inconsistencies in the events recorded or in its fundamental teachings. Each book is consistent with the will of God as reported in every word from Genesis to Revelation. No other religious literary work can boast one hundred percent consistency and accuracy.

Knowing all these things, we can read John 14:6, "**I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father but through Me,****" and say, "Yes, that is true." We can believe everything that our God and His Son have told us. We can know that He is capable of doing things no one else can do, and therefore we can rest assured that when He says, "*If you believe in Me and all that I have told you, you will be with Me and the Father one day in Heaven.*" We know we can take that to the bank.

John 14:7 NAS:

⁷ *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."*

Thomas and certain of the other disciples may not have really come to know Jesus over the course of His ministry in spite of their being dedicated to Him. We might better translate these words in verse 7 as, "*you are beginning to know the Father from now on.*" Because they had seen Jesus who is the Son of God, the Image of God, and like God (1:18), then they could know that God is like Jesus Christ. Jesus is again stating that He is

God and that God is like Him. Therefore you may better understand the verse if read: ⁸

"If you had come to know Me, then you are beginning to know the Father and will continue to know Him better and better from now on because the Father and I are one."

John 14:8-9 NAS:

⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

We now see that **Philip's** elevator may stop a few floors short of the top floor as well. Those of you who can be as dense as I can be should be encouraged as I am that Jesus' disciples were not thinking at the Rhode's scholar level. After what Jesus just told them, Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father. Obviously Jesus had a great deal of patience as we see by His reply to Philip.

John 14:10-11 NAS:

¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?

The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but **the Father abiding in Me does His works**.

¹¹ "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

Jesus has done everything He can to show His disciples that He is God. There is nothing else He can say so He tells them that if they cannot believe what He says, they should believe based on the miracles alone that He has performed.

John 14:12-14 NAS:

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. ¹³ "Whatever you ask **in My name**, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ "If you ask Me anything **in My name**, I will do it.

Jesus' followers would be capable of performing whatever Jesus would allow through the power of the Holy Spirit. They would also now be capable of reaching more people with the Gospel message of Christ. They were armed not only with the teaching of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit to help them understand it, but they also had the information about Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. In just one sermon Peter was able to gather some 3000 decisions for Christ. Just think of the number of people that came to faith through the work of evangelists like Billy Sunday, D.L. Moody, and Billy

⁸ Op cit, Robertson, A.T.: S. Jn 14:7.

Graham. The numbers could well be in the tens of millions or even more.

The phrase, “*In My name,*” in verses 13 and 14 are not the magic words to say to get whatever you want. Whether you are a follower of Jesus or not, you may ask God for a brand new convertible and ask it in Jesus’ name and it will most likely not do you any good. Whether you are a follower of Jesus or not, you may ask for your wife or husband to stop nagging you and ask it in Jesus’ name and most likely nothing will happen. But the prayers of those who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior which are asked for the glory of God and are within the will of God, and asked in Christ’s name, **will bring results**. You might pray for someone to be saved who is presently not a believer. You might say, “*Lord, I pray that Mark will be saved in your time in order to glorify you and I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our precious Savior.*” That prayer will be answered. It may not be answered in your lifetime, but it will be answered. I know now that when I was an atheist for all those many years, there was probably someone praying for me to be saved. Listen to what John writes in 1 John 5:14-15 NAS:

¹⁴ This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

So if you have prayed and there was no answer, do not give up on God or stop trusting Him. Consider these things: Are you in a personal relationship with God? Are you living in obedience to Him? Are you praying according to His will?

Prayers in the New Testament are usually addressed to God the Father, but prayer addressed to **the Son** is proper also [e.g., Stephen’s prayer to the “*Lord Jesus*” (Acts 7:59)]. The prayers we pray should all be for the purpose of **glorifying the Father**. Bearing fruit also glorifies the Father (John 15:8).⁹ These are the prayers that will be answered.

Now that you know you are assured that everything is going to work for good in your life, that in the end you will be in a perfect place; and now that you know Jesus will grant you anything you pray for that is within His will, why not go tell someone this week what a great and loving God that you have, and how He assures you of all these wonderful, breathtaking promises.

We pray that these words from Jesus will encourage you and bring a fresh vitality to your own spiritual life. As a dear departed saint¹⁰ used to say, “Walk with the King today.”

⁹ Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 2:323.

¹⁰ The late Robert A. Cook.