

**Show Us the Father**  
**John 14.7-11**  
**Series: Signs of Life**  
**April 11, 2021**

I. **Necessary Knowledge**

- A. When you are in over your head, when life's circumstances prove challenging, when the world seems like it's disintegrating, when you are afraid of losing some of the skills and capacities that you used to take for granted
  - 1. What do you need to know?
  - 2. What is the basic knowledge that you need to get you through the tough times?
    - a. What kind of knowledge will sustain you?
    - b. What knowledge will carry you?
- B. I often think about such things when I play golf
  - 1. When I step up to the first tee, I ask myself, "What do I need to know to play this game successfully?"
    - a. "What information do I need to remember as I prepare to take this swing?"
    - b. "What should I think about as I begin my back swing?"
    - c. "What should be my 'swing thought?'"
  - 2. Golf Instructor
    - a. "Try to flat load your feet so you can snap load your power package. That way you can amplify both lag and drag pressure through the impact phase. As long as your number 2 power accumulator doesn't break down you can reach maximum centripetal force with minimum pivotal resistance. The pivot is the utilization of multiple centers to produce a circular motion to generate centrifugal force on an adjusted plane, plus it makes the balance necessary to produce a two-line delivery path. Golf is geometrically oriented linear force. It involves a physical muscular thrust and geometry as a circle. You can divide the golf swing into 24 basic components, each having between 12 and 15 variations."
  - 3. Trust me, that kind of knowledge is useless in actually trying to play golf
    - a. It is often described as paralysis by analysis
  - 4. In life that kind and level of knowledge will also lead to paralysis by analysis
    - a. It is not the kind of knowledge needed when you are in life's hard places
- C. The disciples were about to plunge into life's hard places
  - 1. And Jesus knew it
    - a. He knew that He was headed to the cross
    - b. He knew that His disciples would be scattered, disoriented, disheartened
    - c. He knew that they needed some solid instruction which would carry

- them through the tough times that lay ahead
- d. And so as Jesus met with His inner circle of disciples in John 13-17, he shared with them the fundamental principles of faith that would get them through
2. John 14 opens with the comforting words of Jesus: “Do not let your heart be troubled.”
    - a. He urged them to believe, to have faith – in the Father and in Himself, no matter what should become of Him (**John 14.1**)
    - b. He promised them He was leaving to prepare a place for them in their heavenly home – where they would be in His presence forever (**John 14.2-3**)
    - c. Where they would never be alone again
    - d. Where they would find loving fidelity and joy in the presence of Himself and the Father
  3. And He tells them, “And you know the way where I am going.” (**John 14.4**)
    - a. That, of course, prompted Thomas to raise the question, “We do not know where you are going, how do we know the way.” (**John 14.5**)
    - b. Jesus replied, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (**John 14.6**)
- D. Then Jesus tells them the one thing they must know
1. The one “swing thought” that will get them off the tee and through the perils of the course and into the clubhouse victoriously
    - a. (Sorry for the golf stuff – it’s Masters weekend, after all)
- E. **John 14:7** (NASB95) — 7 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”
1. In order to get through the challenging times ahead
    - a. The times when Jesus will be taken from them, murdered, buried
  2. The one thing they must know is the knowledge of the Father
    - a. “If you knew Me, you would have known My Father; but from now on, you do know Him. In fact, you have seen Him.”
  3. This, of course, prompts another question; this time from Philip
    - a. **John 14:8** (NASB95) — 8 Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”
- F. Which prompts Jesus’ response:
1. **John 14:9–11** (NASB95) — 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.”
- II. **Believing is Seeing**
- A. There is a progression in these verses in which Jesus, with instructional brilliance,

leads his disciples into the kind of knowledge which will sustain them

B. **Show us**

1. The question which Philip raises is perhaps one which we all have raised at one time or another
  - a. “Lord, show us the Father”
2. I’ve often said I thought Thomas was the one from Missouri
  - a. “I won’t believe unless I see the nail imprints in his hands”
  - b. Missouri: the “show me” state
  - c. If you’re from Missouri, you won’t believe unless somebody shows you – “prove it to me!”
3. Now, it turns out, Philip was Thomas’ neighbor
  - a. “Show us the Father, Jesus”
4. Surely, we all think it would be nice to actually “see” the Father
  - a. To lay our eyes on the Ancient of Days
  - b. And that would solve all of our problems
5. Not the first time one of God’s people wanted to see God
  - a. Moses: “Show me your glory” (**Exodus 33.18**)
  - b. God told him that “no man can see Me and live”
  - c. God put him in the cleft of the rock
  - d. And He passed by Moses, allowing only see His back side (as only the Hebrew could put it) (**Exodus 33.23**)
6. Elijah wanted to see God
  - a. Strong wind, earthquake, fire – God was not in any of them
  - b. God came to him in a “still small voice” (**1 Kings 19.11-13**)
  - c. But a direct encounter with the God of all creation would not be Elijah’s experience
7. We want to see God with our eyes; we want have an experience with the Almighty that impacts our senses
  - a. We want to touch Him, feel Him, embrace Him, hear Him audibly
8. But God is without form
  - a. He has no body that we can describe Him
  - b. God is Spirit
  - c. His only appearances are what we call theophanies
    - (1) Burning bush
    - (2) Pillar of fire, pillar of cloud in the wilderness
  - d. But Himself we cannot see
9. But Philip says, “Show us the Father, and it is enough for us”
  - a. All we need is to see Him!
  - b. **“Show us” – deiknumi (Gk)**; a physical demonstration
  - c. That’s all we need

C. **Seeing**

1. But as it turns out, this is the “show and tell” version of knowing God
  - a. “Show and tell” – what we did in kindergarten
  - b. Jesus wants the disciples to move into grade school, at least, spiritually speaking

- c. There is something better than “show and tell” theology
2. **John 14:9** (NASB95) — 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’?”
3. Jesus then moves from showing to seeing
  - a. And it is a particular kind of seeing that Jesus has in mind
4. Maybe you think showing and seeing are the same thing – two sides of the same coin
  - a. But the Greek language is much more descriptive in this way than English
  - b. There are at least three Greek words that we translate into the one verb “to see” in English
5. These words are perhaps best understood through an episode recorded later in John’s gospel in the resurrection account – Chapter 20
  - a. You remember the story
  - b. The women have gone back to the disciples and told them that the tomb was empty
  - c. Peter and John ran to the tomb to investigate
  - d. John outran Peter; got there first
  - e. He got to the entrance to the tomb, without going in, looked in and “saw” the linen wrappings
  - f. **“Saw” = blepo (Gk); simple visual observation**; images of light had struck the retinas of John’s eyes
  - g. Then Peter gets there, and he hustles past John and goes into the tomb
  - h. And the text says he “saw” the linen wrappings in the form of a body, but with no body; the face-cloth separated from the other grave clothes which had been on Jesus’ head
  - i. **“Saw” = theoreo (Gk); saw and considered**; thoughtful seeing
  - j. Then John goes in and sees the same things
  - k. And the text says about John, he “saw” and believed
  - l. **“Saw” = orao (Gk); see with understanding**
  - m. And it was the kind of seeing that created faith; John “saw and believed”
  - n. He got it! John finally got it!
  - o. He understood the meaning of data; of the visual impressions
  - p. Jesus was alive! Just as He said He would be!
6. So when you go back to John 14, and Jesus says “He who has seen Me has seen the Father”
  - a. “Seen” is not blepo; not just a visual impression
  - b. “Seen” is not theoreo; not just a thoughtful consideration of visual data
  - c. This “seen” is orao; it is seeing as perceiving, as understanding
7. Jesus is saying, “You have been with Me long enough. You have seen Me – seen Me with understanding, with perception; which means you have

- seen the Father with understanding, with perception
  - a. And that's better than any visual impression
- 8. Philip says "show us the Father" – give us a visual impression
  - a. If that were the case, if that was the kind of knowledge needed – then even if Jesus had given that theophany to Philip
  - b. We would all be disadvantaged – because we would not be privy to that kind of knowledge, that kind of seeing
- 9. But Jesus says, "No, Philip – and no, for all of us. There's something better; there's seeing with understanding"
  - a. There's the kind of seeing which comes from believing
- 10. And Philip, and the disciples, and you, and me – we all can see the Father with the eyes of faith
  - a. Because in our study of the Word – we "see" Jesus
  - b. We see Him with understanding
  - c. We believe Him
  - d. And because we believe Him, we know the Father

D. **Believing**

- 1. And that's why the conversation turns from showing, to seeing, to believing
  - a. "Show" or "see" is used four times in vv 7-9
  - b. None in vv 10-11
  - c. But "believe" is used 4 times in vv 10-12
- 2. **John 14:10-12** (NASB95) — 10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? ... 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.
- 3. You see, dear friends, the world's way of knowing is upside down and backwards
  - a. The world says, seeing is believing
  - b. Biblically, it's the other way around
  - c. Believing is seeing
  - d. We believe in order to know
- 4. Genuine faith leads to true knowledge
  - a. True knowledge of Jesus
  - b. True knowledge of the Father
- 5. You want to know the Father?
  - a. Believe in Jesus
  - b. Then you will know the Father
- 6. And that will truly be enough for you
  - a. Enough to get you through the difficult times
  - b. Enough to give you the strength you need
  - c. Enough to sustain you amid life's greatest challenges

III. **The Foundation of Genuine Believing**

- A. **John 14:11** (NASB95) — 11 “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.”
- B. Let’s talk about the nature of faith for a moment
1. We believe in order to know
  2. But the kind of faith we’re called upon to have is not a blind faith
    - a. It is not a leap in the dark
    - b. It is not a conjuring up of a savior out of our imagination
  3. Biblical faith is rooted in historical reality
  4. These people had been with Jesus for three years
    - a. They had experienced Jesus
    - b. They had come to know Jesus
    - c. **Know** in this passage **is ginosko (Gk); knowing with understanding;** knowing with completeness; knowing, not just by linguistic proposition but by experience
  5. So Jesus was compelling belief on the part of His disciples based on historical reality
    - a. They really did know Jesus
    - b. Arguably, knew Him better than they even understood!
- C. **Knowing Jesus**
1. The first foundation of belief, then, is Jesus Himself
    - a. “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me”
  2. “You know Me – believe Me”
  3. “Believe what I have been teaching you all these years!”
  4. “Believe My word”
- D. **The works of Jesus**
1. But maybe, under these trying circumstances
    - a. Maybe, under the threat that Jesus is leaving
    - b. Maybe that’s hard for you to do
  2. Jesus understands that
    - a. So He says, “Otherwise believe because of the works themselves”
  3. What works?
    - a. The miracles – the signs
  4. Gospel of John – purpose
    - a. **John 20:30–31** (NASB95) — 30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.
    - b. Gospel of John is organized around signs – major miracles that Jesus uses to communicate about who He is
  5. He’s not just a miracle worker
    - a. He feeds the 5,000 – He is the bread of life
    - b. He raises Lazarus from the dead – He is the resurrection and the life
    - c. The signs signify something

- d. They signify who Jesus is
- E. The faith that Jesus urges upon His disciples is rooted in historical reality
  - 1. Historical reality in which they have participated
    - a. Which they have already experienced
- F. How do we get that kind of faith?
  - 1. We get it by the word
    - a. **Romans 10:17** (NASB95) — 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
- G. That's why we do Study with the Pastor
  - 1. Study with the Pastor – daily devotional Bible study
    - a. Systematic Bible study – using Scripture Union's Encounter with God
    - b. In five years we will have studied the whole OT once and the whole NT twice
    - c. And we'll see, over and over again, how the whole Bible is all about Jesus
  - 2. It's a spiritual discipline
    - a. I've been using this material as my daily devotional for more than 35 years
- H. I'm going to challenge you this morning
  - 1. TVC: building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
  - 2. What better way to build a community than to have the whole body, the whole community, studying the same passage of scripture every day, every week
  - 3. It's the same passage that your pastor is using to feed his own soul
  - 4. Why wouldn't you want to do that?
  - 5. Our staff is all doing it together; each week we get together and share what God is teaching us
  - 6. You can do it in 15 minutes a day to begin with; or you could do even more with it
  - 7. If you use the book, it only costs \$5 a quarter; if you do it on-line it can cost you nothing!
  - 8. Then we get together once a month and share what God is teaching us
  - 9. That's building a community
- I. And it's the way you build a community in the right way
  - 1. Faith comes by hearing; hearing by the word of Christ
  - 2. Foundation of faith is in Jesus, and in His works, His signs
    - a. And the Word of God is where we learn about Jesus and His works
    - b. And that's how we know God
  - 3. And when we do it together – we build a God-knowing community
- J. Study with the Pastor – tomorrow at 10 a.m.
  - 1. Would you consider sharing in this ministry?
  - 2. Many ministries in the church – most of them are not for everyone
    - a. This is a ministry that is for everyone

- b. For the community
- c. The community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus

IV. Conclusion

- A. “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him”
  - 1. “Seen” Him – orao (Gk); seeing with understanding, perception
  - 2. “Know” – ginosko (Gk); knowing by understanding, experience, intimacy
- B. Will you join this God-knowing community?
  - 1. This is what you will need to get you through these challenging times