

What Should I Do with My Life?
The Problem of Commitment
John 13:31-14:6
Sermon Outline

Introduction: We all suffer from “commitment phobia” (or, at least, reluctance). One reason is that we have too many options. Options are not in themselves bad things, but they can become problematic because to have them is to be tempted to try to keep them open. That means resisting commitment, and we need commitment to grow.

I) What makes us commitment phobic (or reluctant)?

A) Afraid of missing out

B) Where does this fear of missing out come from?

Functional secularism:

Regardless of what we say, we act as if this is the only life

John 14.1: Let not your hearts be troubled...I go to prepare a place for you...

II) Jesus frees us to commit

A) He introduces us to a radically liberating (and counter-intuitive) vision for finding ourselves

Implicit in all his talk of glory

John 13.31: Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

- Jesus’ glory found in his commitment to the Father and us in crucifixion

- Our glory found the same way
Matthew 16:24-25: If any one would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

B) Jesus is himself the best reason for heeding his call

Let not your hearts be troubled

This is not the only life

Many rooms

I will prepare a place for you...I will come again and take you to myself

Despite the fact that we are like Peter and Thomas

He prepares the place by going *where you may not come* (13.33, 36)

- Crucifixion/atonement
- Perhaps our deepest problem with “life after death”...

III) Take away: Commit!!!

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Why do people find it hard to make serious commitments—to work, to marriage, to religion? Why do you find it difficult?
- 2) Some people resist commitment because they want the freedom of keeping their options open. Is it wrong to want to keep one's options open? What are the downsides to wanting to keep our options open? Illustrate the down side from your experience or from the experience of someone you know.
- 3) What is Jesus talking about in John 13:31-32? What does “glory” mean and what is glorifying about what Jesus is about to do?
- 4) Read Matthew 16:24-25 (quoted above). According to what Jesus says here, the secret to really living is the discovery that it's about God, not about me. Life, in other words, is about finding myself only as I abandon myself to the honor of God and his Messiah. Does this make any sense to you? If not, why not? If so, why?
- 5) In John 14:1 Jesus tells his disciples not to be troubled. Why might they be, given (i) what Jesus says in 13:33 and (ii) what Jesus predicts in 13:38?
- 6) Read carefully through John 14:2-4. Reflect on the meaning of each of the following phrases: *there are many rooms, I prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself.*
- 7) Imagine Jesus speaking John 14:1-4 directly to Peter immediately following the prediction Jesus makes in John 13:38. What impact would this have had on Peter? Put yourself in Peter's shoes and then spend a few moments thanking Jesus for the undeserved kindness and care of his promise to you.
- 8) Jesus tells his disciples that he had to go alone to his crucifixion (it was a place where they could not follow (John 13:33, 36). Peter would one day follow Jesus in such a death (see vs. 36) but even then his suffering would be different from Jesus'. What made Jesus' crucifixion unique—a place where the rest of us could never go?
- 9) How do Jesus' words in John 14:1-6 free us in this life to commit ourselves to God, to people, and to endeavors (including careers), even though we know that such commitments will reduce our options in this life? Is there a commitment that you have been putting off that you need to make?

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