

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2026 Benefice BCP Holy Communion,  
Stonegrave

*“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

It is the second week in a row when we are invited to think about one of the “I Am” sayings in John’s gospel. Last week, it was Jesus saying that he is the gate for the sheep. This week, it is Jesus saying that he is the way, and the truth, and the life. What does he mean by this?

First, Jesus says that he is the way; not the map, or the directions, but the way itself. Indeed, the first Christians were known as the “followers of the Way” because it speaks specifically of Jesus who provides the way. He is the way to heaven, to a meaningful life, to finding our vocation, our purpose. Jesus doesn’t just give us instructions, He shows us, he accompanies us. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Come, he says. Follow me. I happen to be going that way. I will show you. I will walk with you.

Secondly, Jesus is the truth. Once again, he doesn’t just tell the truth. He *is* the truth. Truth is a recurring theme in John’s gospel, going back to the first chapter, when we are told that grace and truth come through Jesus. In John 8, Jesus tells us that we will know the truth and the truth will set us free. In John 16, Jesus tells his disciples that when the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide us into all the truth. And then, finally, in John 18, Jesus tells Pilate he came into the world “to testify to the truth.” “Everyone,” he concludes, “who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” Jesus is the truth and it is through Jesus that we learn the truth about God. Jesus is the way

that we learn the truth about our creator, because he and the Father are one. When we learn about Jesus, we are learning about the creator of the universe, and the more we learn about Jesus, the more we learn about the God who created the heavens and the earth. Jesus is the truth, who teaches us the truth about God.

Thirdly, Jesus is the life. Like truth, this is a recurring theme in John's gospel, there are 39 verses mentioning "life" in this gospel. Whoever believes in him, we learn in John 3, has eternal life. He gives the water that gushes up to eternal life. He gives himself as the bread of life, which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. He is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, and who came that we may have life and have it abundantly. And finally, near the end of John's gospel, we learn that all of this was written "so that [we] may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing [we] may have life in his name."

Jesus is the life. Believing in him gives us life, not just life *after* death, but life *before* death, not only existing and lifeless, but a transformed abundance of life, filled with joy, peace, and most of all, filled with love, because without love, we cannot live, and without God's love, there is no love. God is love, John tells us in his first letter, and Jesus came to show us that love, and through that love that we live.

*"No one comes to the Father except through me."* So, what about this last part which has often been said to sound exclusive and leaving out non-believers, or people who are not sure, but that is not the correct interpretation, because, the important thing to note here is that Jesus

speaks these words only to his disciples, in the upper room, not to the world. These words are not meant to threaten or scare nonbelievers or non-followers; Jesus speaks these words to those who do believe. The words are not a threat, but a promise that we come to the Father through Jesus. who alone is our way, and our truth, and our life. He is the only way that matters, the only truth that endures, the only life that lasts. Jesus, for us, is the one we can trust to bring us to his Father's house, because he is our way. He alone can lead us into God's presence without fear or shame. He is the one we can trust to teach us the truth about our creator's love for us, because He is our truth. He is the one we can trust to give us a life filled with hope and peace and joy because He is our life. We don't have to turn anywhere else. Why would we? Only when we think we have a better way created by our selfishness and refusal to accept His promise that when in doubt, we follow Jesus, when we feel lost, we follow him, when we don't know who to believe, we trust Him, when we are struggling to find purpose in this life, we find it in Jesus because He is our way, our truth, and our life, now and always.

Thanks be to God. Amen.