



Facing Death with Peace

John 14:1-7

Think about people you have known who were dying. What feelings or fears did they express? What are some of your own feelings or thoughts about death and dying?

Hearing the Word

Read John 14:1-7. Jesus gave this teaching during his last meal with the disciples before his death. It was a time of intense anxiety and dashed hopes for the disciples. Notice the specific instructions Jesus gives in verse 1. The verses that follow reveal more about God and his Son, Jesus Christ. We learn why Jesus can confidently say to his anxious followers, “Let not your hearts be troubled.”

1. List the statements Jesus makes concerning his activities and identity in John 14:2-7.
2. Describe each of the following statements from the perspective of a person facing death.
 - *“I go to prepare a place for you”* (v. 2).

Some people feel anxiety because they think that when a person dies he/she disappears into the unknown. How would believing that Jesus prepares a place where we can go after death affect anxiety about the unknown?

Think about the characteristics of Jesus Christ seen in these Bible studies and other texts. What type of place do you think he would prepare for people?

- *“I will come again and take you to myself”* (v. 3).

How do you feel about going *alone* into a completely new situation? For some people, an underlying source of anxiety in facing death is their fear of being alone. What clues do people with serious illness give that they do not want to be alone?

What difference would it make to know that Jesus will escort the person who believes in him to a place he has prepared, and will remain with the person?

What do you think it will be like to be with Jesus Christ after you die?

- *“I am the way, the truth, and the life”* (v. 6).

Think about a time when you were driving and were lost or confused about the direction you were going. What were some of your feelings?

Define *way*, *truth*, and *life*. What is Jesus really saying about himself? What implications does this statement have for people searching for meaning and fulfillment in their lives?

Many people believe there is a place called heaven but are uncertain about the way to get there. What is Jesus' answer to this uncertainty?

- *If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well" (v. 7)*

What is Jesus saying about how a person can know God? What does it mean to know someone?

During a conversation with a nurse, a patient said that he was afraid of surgery because he thought that he probably had cancer and he was afraid of dying. The nurse asked what it was about death that made him feel afraid. He replied, "I'm afraid to meet God." What are ways that people you know, and those you serve in healthcare situations, express anxiety and fear about death and dying? How can you offer them hope from verses 6-7?

3. Summarize vv. 1-7 by restating the promises that Christ makes in your own words. Which promise stands out to you? Why can Jesus say, "Let not your hearts be troubled" (v. 1)?

Responding to the Word

Reflect again on thoughts and feelings about your own death. Think about patients and others you know who are anxious about dying. Apply what Jesus said in these verses to specific situations. Pray together for one another, and for your patients and friends

For More Discussion

Death is the ultimate crisis of our lives. Death is often the last thing we talk about. Our society denies death. Here are reflection questions about life and death to facilitate personal discussions with a family member, a friend, or in a healthcare situation:

1. When I think of death, I . . .
2. The thought of dying makes me feel . . .
3. My first experience with death was . . .
4. If I were told I would soon die, I would want to . . .
5. Ways I would want to be remembered . . .
6. What is important to me about living life now . . .