

Reflection on John 14:1-14

This may seem a frivolous or ironic request just now, when most of us cannot go anywhere much, but think of a destination. How do you get there? By car, public transport, cycle or on foot? Which route do you take? Or do you take different routes depending on the time of day? Is one more direct, but busier? Is another more interesting, quieter, but less direct? Either way, these various routes should get you to your destination.

Anyone who has travelled with me will know that there is another possibility- that of getting lost. I am expert at looking up a route, confidently stating I know where I am going, then finding that the road layout does not in practice look the same as on the map, and so going astray. Then I usually need help from a sympathetic navigator to get back on track.

So- there is more than one possible route to a destination, but it is also possible to leave the route, to make a mistake.

Jesus says I AM the way, the truth, and the life.

I AM is the name God uses when Moses meets God in the burning bush. God is therefore the way, the truth, and the life. God is our route, travelled moment by moment, but also our destination, as we increasingly see, experience, and share God's holy truth and fullness of life. Jesus embodies that truth and fullness of life. Becoming more Christ-like, closer to God, is what we aim for during our lives of discipleship, but we can only draw closer to our destination in company with God, who is for us as Christians experienced in Jesus.

All of us are starting our journey from different places; geographically, temperamentally, culturally and in terms of our experience. Therefore, the route each of us takes will be different. We will meet different people and have differing experiences along the way. Jesus is our internal compass, guiding us, keeping us travelling towards our destination in God.

The problem we all have is that sometimes that internal compass gets covered in grime. We cannot see where we should be going. Or we do, but deliberately set off somewhere else instead. Then we lose our way.

Jesus, our compass, remains true. Once we have gone far enough and realise we need to come back, then, once the compass has been cleaned (we have recognised our failure and our need, and ask Jesus for help) then we can continue on our journey. We might abandon God for periods of time, but God does not abandon us. God is waiting at every present moment for us to recognise and to accept God's guidance in Christ.