



**Sermon for August 30, 2009**  
Text: John 14:1-7  
8:30am, 10am, & CS Worship

**Title: "The Road Home"**  
Rev. Donald W. Hackett, D. Min.  
First Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, PA

*Main Idea - Jesus invites us to trust him on the road of life and make our home in him and with him, now and forever.*

### *Introduction*

**Have you taken any road trips this summer?** I love to travel. I love to figure out how to get places. These days I try and cover all my bases. I get the latest map from AAA. I download two different routes off of MapQuest or Google maps. I also have my cell phone navigator as a backup. My last resort is to pull out my Rand McNally Atlas of US Maps if I want to wing it on my own. Earlier this month as we were making our way back from Cape May, NJ on a busy Saturday morning, I worked my way through all my options until it was just me and the Rand McNally Atlas. It had the best and most detailed map of New Jersey. That map and prayer, enabled us to get home, eventually. To say the least, I felt a little lost and confused as we made our way home.

### *Background*

**This sense of feeling lost and confused was the mood of the Last Supper.** Jesus had gathered his inner circle of disciples for this last Passover meal before he was arrested and killed. This was to be the time for intimate conversation with his disciples. The Passover Supper had not gotten off to a good start. Remember, they all arrived and there was no servant or host to wash their feet. Being self-absorbed at the moment, none of the disciples thought to serve the others. So they all reclined at the table with dirty feet, probably grumbling among themselves. Jesus quietly got up and washed their feet. They are embarrassed and ashamed as Jesus reminds them that the lifestyle of his disciples is not that of the rich and famous. His followers were to follow his lead and serve.

**Jesus then proceeds to let them know that one will betray him** and the rest will run away. The mood becomes sober, heavy, and the air is thick with confusion, questions, and sadness. Jesus lets his close friends know that they cannot go with him now, but later they will follow him. They are going to lose their way, but they will get back on track, on the right road. Let's hear his words for ourselves.

### *The Text - John 14:1-7 (The Message)*

<sup>1-4</sup> "Don't let this throw you. You trust God, don't you? Trust me. There is plenty of room for you in my Father's home. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm on my way to get a room ready for you? And if I'm on my way to get your room ready, I'll come back and get you so you can live where I live. And you already know the road I'm taking."



<sup>5</sup>Thomas said, "Master, we have no idea where you're going. How do you expect us to know the road?" <sup>6-7</sup>Jesus said, "I am the Road, also the Truth, also the Life. No one gets to the Father apart from me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him. You've even seen him!"

**The disciples are clueless.** Where is Jesus going? Why can't they come along? Why does he have to go alone? Who is going to betray him? Why is he saying they are all going to desert him? What is going on here? What in the world is going on!! **Have you ever felt like that? What in the world is going on here?** Has your world been turned upside down by sudden tragedy... an auto accident, loss of a job, a divorce, cancer, or the death of a close friend or relative? On the road of life, we hit unexpected major detours. At this very moment we have a number of people in our congregation who are struggling against cancer and others in hospice care. Where are you and I encountering rough roads? What does Jesus say to us in these tough times?

**At this point in writing my sermon,** I stopped and said to Jesus, "I do not know where you are going in this sermon. How can I write if I do not know what you are trying to communicate to me?" I felt Jesus was saying to me, "Don, trust me. I am going ahead of you, but I will come back for you. I will bring you along. Don, I am the place this sermon is going. I am trying to communicate myself to you. I am God in human form and I am here revealing God to you. In me, you will find the road for your life. In me, you will find the truth in life you are seeking. In me, you will find the life you have always dreamed about. I am your guide, your path, and your destination. You will find all you need and desire in me."

**To the bewildered disciples in the upper room Jesus says, "Trust me. Don't let this throw you."** Jesus reminds them that all relationships are based on trust.

1. They have lived their lives to this point learning to trust God more and more.
2. They had come to know Jesus over the last three years in their life together on the road.
3. They experienced the truth and wisdom of his words.
4. His teachings and healings brought hope and new life to people.
5. "Now", Jesus says, "Trust me." Then he gives them a glimpse into the future and a promise. **"There is plenty of room for you in my Father's home. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm on my way to get a room ready for you? And if I'm on my way to get your room ready, I'll come back and get you so you can live where I live."**

**Think about it. Jesus is preparing a home for you and me.** Like the disciples of the first century, Jesus is making room for us in His Kingdom. We were made to live with and enjoy God. God designed you and me to be in close relationship with Him and each other.



That was the original design and intent, but we mess it up. Throughout human history we keep hurting each other. We become self-absorbed and isolate ourselves from each other and God. We become trapped in the quicksand of our own greed, lust, and addictions. Our human condition without God is frail, sickly, self-destructive and without hope.

**This is where God comes in.** Not content to let us rot in the mess we have made, God is preparing a new place for us. Jesus said I am getting a room ready for you and I will come back for you. Jesus came to earth to get us ready for our new home. He came to get us ready to be reunited to God. Now, he is telling his followers that he is leaving so he can get Heaven ready for us. But for us to regain that connection, that reunion with God, something big has to happen. Something that no one else in human history could do. Jesus needed to break through the wall of sin, death, and evil that was choking the human race.

**Stay with me here. This is crucial to understand.** Jesus said he was the way, the truth, and the life and that no one comes to the Father except through Him. This is not an egotistical claim. It is a simple statement of fact, of physical and spiritual reality.

- Jesus knew that he alone could deal with all the shame, guilt, and evil in the world. Only God could handle something so big.
- Jesus knew his death on the cross would cancel out the sin, pay the penalty, and free us from evil's grip.
- There are many wise people who have large groups of followers around the world. Each of these leaders is highly respected, studied, and worshipped. Each of these leaders has a grave somewhere with their remains, their bones and ashes.
- Jesus is the only one with an empty tomb. He is the one who conquered death, the grave, and now is risen and alive. Jesus is the only one who is able to keep his promises. We can trust Jesus. He will do what he said he would do.

**Where are you on the road of life today?** No matter where we are Jesus comes to each one of us and says, "Trust me." Talk with me. Follow me. Allow my teachings to infuse your thinking and living. Invite my Holy Spirit to come into your life to forgive and help you. Listen for me in the Bible (read John 13-17 this week), in your quiet times of prayer, and in your holy conversations with others. Let me be the road of your life. Let me use your life to help and bless many others. Trust me. I have important work for you and me to do. And when your work is complete, I will bring you home to my house. I have a place prepared just for you.

**Prayer:** O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful your name is in all the earth. We thank you for loving us. We thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to guide and save us. Help us now to trust you...with our past, our sins, our fears, our hopes, and our very lives. Forgive us, cleanse us, comfort us, and heal us today. Use us to serve and bless others in Jesus' Name and by his power and love. Amen.