

Worship Material
Family traits
Materials from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 7th May

Begin with an opening prayer

Almighty God, your Word has led us here;
your truth has echoed in our minds,
your Spirit has touched our lives, your being is within us.

You are more than we see and more than we know,
more than we can comprehend or imagine or wish for.

You are ours and we are yours,
and together, we are your family.

To you be all praise and glory.

Amen.

Read John 14: 1-14

Bible notes

Jesus has been speaking of 'going away' for some time in this Gospel (7:33ff, 8:21, 13:33ff), but his disciples still don't understand. Once more Thomas represents their confusion (v.5; cf. 11:16). In verse 6, Jesus again speaks of himself as a point of access (in 10:7 he is the gate of the sheepfold), using language drawn from the prophets and Israel's wisdom writings (Isaiah 40:3; Wisdom of Solomon 10:17-18; Ecclesiasticus 4:11-15). Now he promises to open up his relationship with his heavenly Father to his followers.

Jesus represents the Father to them because he embodies the Word of God, and the baptizing Spirit remains on him (John 1:14,32-33). The Father-Son relationship could not be closer. Their mutual indwelling echoes the way God's Wisdom lives in her disciples (Wisdom of Solomon 7:22-8:1), and it makes Jesus the human face of God (v.9). His character is so transparent to God's self-giving love that he reveals the Father's words and works.

The time is fast approaching when Jesus' followers will represent him in the world by extending his works (vv.10,12; 'greater' here is quantitative rather than qualitative). This gives the community's life together in the world a heavenly quality, because Jesus' going to the Father takes them to God's house (v.3). This passage is often used at funerals to provide reassurance that death opens the door to life with God in heaven. But in verses 2 and 3, Jesus is speaking of the coming of the Spirit through his death and resurrection.

Prayer

We praise you, O God, for your creation: for plants, for flowers and food, for animals and people, for sustenance and provision.

We praise you for sight and sound, for touch and taste and smell and feeling; for emotions and

inspiration; for your indwelling spirit.

For all of this and so much more that makes life what it is, and reveals what living and loving are.

We praise you for guidance; for dreams and visions that reveal you to us.

We praise and thank you for all people – the good, the bad, and everything in between – who have made us the people we are,
and who encourage us to be the people you want us to be.

You are our compass, our plumb line, our map through the choices of life.

To you, O God, we offer our thanks this and every day.

Amen.

A prayer to conclude

Send us out, Lord, into your world.

Draw us closer to yourself by your Spirit,
so that others may see your presence in us
in all we do and say and are.

In Jesus' name. **Amen.**