

## **Day One**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 14:1-6 is a great word of comfort and peace. Jesus will not abandon. He will not leave us cut off and alone. He has prepared a place for us in His Father's house. He has prepared a seat for us at His table. And His promise is that if He went away to prepare a place for us, He will come back so that He can take us to be with Him where He is.

He has prepared that place for us through His life, death and resurrection. He who knew no sin became sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God in Him. He fulfilled the Law by His perfect obedience. He fulfilled its every demand in our place – including the penalty of death for breaking God's Law.

By His work, He has made us worthy to enter into God's house – to sit at His table. By His work, He has prepared our place. He has made our future secure. Living in hope and the resurrection that He shares with us, we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

## **Day Two**

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When Jesus tells John's disciples to go and tell what they have seen and heard (Luke 7:18-28), I think of the Marks of the Church. Luther calls God's Word and the Sacraments the Marks of the Church. He calls them that because where God's Word is preached and taught in its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered according to His command, then the Church exists in that place.

It exists in that place because the Holy Spirit works through those visible means to call and gather the Church – to enlighten and create faith. Those visible elements are what we see. And the Holy Spirit is at work through those means to do what God's Word promises.

In Baptism, we are joined together with Jesus in His death and life. If we have died with Him, we will certainly be raised together with Him. In the Lord's Supper, Jesus tells us that the bread and wine is His body and blood. He tells us that through these means – through eating the bread and wine – we receive all that He promises to us – forgiveness and life.

## **Day Three**

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The Jews are wanting Jesus to tell them plainly if He is the Christ (John 10:22-30). Jesus has told them. Earlier He identified Himself as the God of Abraham. Here He tells them that the miracles that He has done in His Father's name speak for Him. He is doing the work of the Messiah.

Then He talks about the key to knowing if He is the Christ or not. It is about knowing His voice. Jesus' sheep – those who believe – listen to His voice. He knows them and they follow Him.

We hear His voice speak to us through His Word. Through the waters of Baptism, He called us by name. He marked us as one of His own. We continue to listen to His voice as He speaks to us through His Word. We respond to His invitation to join Him at His table. We hear His voice say to us that He gave up His life as the sacrifice that was needed to forgive our sins.

## **Day Four**

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Here in Hebrews 1, the writer is comparing the Son of God with angels. He says that God never said to any of the angels, "Today I have begotten You" or "I will be His Father and He will be My Son." The angels are to worship the Son. The angels are God's servants.

He also makes a distinction between us and the angels. He says that all angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation (us). Angels are messengers of God sent to minister to us. When we die, we don't become angels. We have been set apart. We are being conformed to the image of God's Son.

We are adopted children of God.

## **Day Five**

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Here in John 13, Jesus gives His disciples an example to follow: “As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Jesus, their teacher – their leader, takes on the form of a slave and washed their feet. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah – the Son of the living God. Performing the work of a slave was beyond the disciples’ comprehension. He was to proclaim His kingdom. He was to take His throne. This was supposed to happen here at this supper.

And it does! Jesus is indeed proclaiming His kingdom. And He is on His way to His throne. But that way goes through the cross. Jesus will take on the form of a condemned man. He will die in Peter’s place (and ours) as the sacrifice needed to rescue us from the penalty of death that is ours to die because we are sinful human beings.

He goes to the cross to defeat all the enemies of God that would keep us bound – prisoners – separated from God. He paid sin its wage by dying in our place. He became the ransom price that was paid to set us free from the devil.

And now as free children of God, we are to love each other in the same way that Jesus loved us – sacrificially – unconditionally – by choice (even when those we are to love are not that lovable). We are to become Jesus’ hands and feet to them.