



Finding Home

Jesus' Invitation to a Transforming Friendship

"Make your home in me, and I will make my home in you."—Jesus

Spiritual Direction

How we understand Jesus's identity and character will influence the nature and depth of our relationship with him. Reverence is rooted in respect.

Exploring

Some antagonists characterize Jesus as a "gentle cynic" who got caught off-guard in a political tug-of-war; the pathetic victim of bad timing and a non-conformist personality, whose execution as a criminal "just happened." The whole New Testament presents a different Jesus: The ruler of the Cosmos who came to earth to reconcile humankind to God through his planned death and resurrection.

For centuries, God was working out a way to bring us back to himself. In the Old Testament, 2 Samuel 14:14 says, "God devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from him." *Devises* means "weave, fabricate, or invent." God in his majesty interweaves time, place, and people for his purpose. "And I, when I am lifted up [in crucifixion] from the earth, will draw all people to myself."¹ Jesus reconciles us with the Creator by atoning for our sin, and invites us to live in the kingdom of God now, by trusting (relying on, putting our confidence in) him.

Satan's last chance to keep Jesus from getting to the cross was the Garden of Gethsemane, but Jesus would not surrender. The "cup" he asked the Father to let pass from him² was not death on the cross, but *death in the Garden*, which the early Christians understood.³ Jesus refused to be defeated in his mission to provide a way to bring us back to God. One wonders what our lives and the world would look like had he failed.

Question

"God works out ways to get the exile back."⁴ What has been your experience of this?

¹ John 12:32.

² Matthew 26:39.

³ Hebrews 5:7.

⁴ 2 Samuel 14:14b, *Message Translation*.