



Once Linda and I were in a Mexico and we wanted to eat at a “safe place”. The place we thought was safe was at a hotel on the beach. As we began to walk in the door we were approached by one of the workers. He asked how he could help us and we said, “*We would like to eat at one of the restaurants in the hotel.*” He asked if we were guests at the hotel. We said, “*No, but we would just like to eat a meal here.*” He then told us that the restaurants at the hotel were only for guests. The best I can remember, he moved directly in front of the door. His body language said- *If you do not do as I say I will stop you.* We left the hotel and went somewhere else.

Jesus said, *in my fathers house are many dwelling places, if it were not so I would have told you. I go there to prepare a place for you.*” (John 14:2). NASB

Unless you were looking for a place to stay, Jesus’ words seem a little unusual. His words were more than unusual, they were spectacular. For the Jewish listener, his or her frame of reference for God’s dwelling was the Temple. Sometimes their temple was a tent. God was there. The tent signified his presence among them.

In John 14, Jesus is using a picture word of heaven. We have a safe place in God’s heaven. This is more secure than any reservation at a hotel. God dwelling among us casts out our sin. It is a humbling idea that he takes the sin from us and puts it on his son on the cross. Christ’s picture of heaven is a very precious one. We will live with God in a place he prepared for us. Heaven is ours now, but not fully yet. John describes us as being “IN Christ” in 2:21. He also tells us that God dwells with us (John 14:15-17).

This changes the picture of the hotel attendant stopping us from entering to the picture of Jesus greeting us at the door of heaven. Instead of stopping us to ask us questions, Jesus greets us and welcomes us. Yes you still have to go through him, because he is the way. The reservation you have is not of your own doing, but because the Father loved us so much that he sent his son. Our place in heaven is secure because God made it. It cannot be canceled. Faith receives it, and it brings us joy that we need to go nowhere else.