

There Truly is Only One Way

⁶ *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)*

One of the most controversial aspects of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is its exclusiveness. By that I'm referring to the fact, that according to the gospel, there is only "*One Way*" for a man to be declared "*right with God*," and be permitted into His kingdom, what we refer to as heaven. And it is here in this passage, that Jesus Himself declares very clearly what that "*One Way*" is...through Him. ⁶ *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father...but by me.* When you understand what Jesus is saying here, you understand that He is declaring that "*No One*" will enter the gates of heaven apart from being one of His followers..."*No One!*" Now that is a very "*Exclusive*" statement isn't it? To say that "*No One Else*" will go to heaven, except for those who give up their lives here in this world, to follow this "*Jesus*" man, is a very bold claim. Because the automatic implication of that is, that ALL "*other forms of religion*," ALL "*other forms of faith*," (regardless of what they believe or think, or how good they might live, or how earnest and sincere they might be)...are excluded from God's kingdom! But yet, that is the very clear, emphatic teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. "*There is only one way to heaven, and that's through Jesus Christ.*"

It is this very thing that incites anger, disbelief, opposition and all sorts of other emotions of those outside the Christian faith. This is true even among those who don't profess anything in terms of belief in God. Maybe even more so in them, than others, for the simple fact, they live among all these various religious groups, with differing beliefs, and in their minds, there's some in each one of them that are really good people. People who they feel will go to heaven when they die. For one particular group to declare that all other's outside their system of belief will perish, and not be permitted into God's kingdom, is perceived as "*Narrow Mindedness, Judgmental, and Condemning.*" Which, when you think about it, is true. As Christians, we try not to come across as condemning or judgmental of others, but rather just the opposite, by showing love and forgiveness to all around us. But even so, regardless of how "*loving*" we may try to be to others, by the sheer declaration that "*No One*" outside of following Christ, will enter the kingdom of God, we are being "*narrow minded.*" You can't get much more "*narrow minded*" than to say emphatically there is only "*ONE way.*" Not only are we narrow minded, but we are also "*judgmental*," as well as "*condemning*" to those around us who are not with us. The sheer nature of the statement attests to that. By saying there is only "*One way*"..."*Our Way*"...the automatic implication is that all other's are wrong, and are condemned, and will never see the kingdom of God...in spite of what they believe, or how sincere or earnest they may be.

I can't tell you how many people I've run into (in the Church) that have a hard time accepting this fact. They find it hard to believe that God would send people of other faiths, people of other religions to hell, just because they don't align themselves with Jesus Christ. They point out their faithfulness to their beliefs, in how they pray faithfully, how they love others, and do good things for the needy and so forth. They point to their "*belief in God*," and their sincerity and earnestness to their beliefs, and cannot conceive the thought, that a "*loving God*" would reject them and deny them entrance into heaven. And, when you consider only what they are saying, they seem to have a good point. But the reality is, such a view reveals a lack of understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To even consider the possibility that there is "*another way*" other than Christ for a man to enter heaven, reveals an ignorance on the part of the individual to the purpose and meaning of Christ's death on the cross. The reason the gospel of Jesus Christ is so "*exclusive*" and declares that "*no one*" will enter heaven outside of Jesus Christ, stems from the understanding of what actually transpired there on the cross.

Here in this passage, Jesus mentions three things about Himself, that we need to understand, in order to properly understand why He is the only way to the Father. Jesus says, *“I am the way, the truth and the life...”* What does He mean by that? What does He mean, *“HE is the Way?”* What does He mean, *“He is the Truth?”* And what does He mean, *“He is the Life?”* It’s important that we don’t miss this, because these three things that explain why He is the only way. Let’s look at each one of these for a moment.

First He says, *“I am the WAY...”* What does He mean, *“HE is the WAY?”* Well, I guess you could say, He is the *“path,”* He is the *“road,”* or a better way to put might be, He is the *“means.”* *“I am the means by which a man gains access to the Father”*, (God). NO ONE can enter the presence of God, apart from an intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is through Him and Him alone, that we are granted access into the presence of God. The immediate question that arises out of such a claim, is why? Why is it limited to only Him? Why can’t there be other ways? Why can’t other leaders, why can’t other patriarchs of other religions gain us access to God? Well, that answer lies in what He did on the cross...

According to the clear teachings of scripture, all men are sinners, separated from a Holy God. Regardless of how hard he tries, in spite of how earnest and sincere he might be, man cannot restore himself to right standing with God...he is a sinner. A man may try to live right, by adhering to various religions, but it won’t help. True, outwardly it may appear that he is godly or righteous, by his adherence to his religion, but he is still a sinner none the less. Matter of fact, according to the teachings of scripture, man is totally depraved, meaning, that he hasn’t the slightest possibility of producing righteousness. It teaches that man has not the first fiber of righteousness in himself. Therefore, regardless of which religion he chooses to align himself with, and regardless of how sincere he is in his devotion to that religion, he is none the better. He is still every bit the sinner he always was, it’s just now, he has the appearance of being this good, righteous man of god. This is where many are deceived today. Many are under the illusion, that the goodness or quote “righteousness” produced by their adherence to their faith, will grant them access to the kingdom of God...when it won’t! There’s only *“One Way”* for any man to ever have the slightest hope of gaining access to God’s kingdom...and that is through Jesus Christ, and Him alone. Let me explain...

The reason Christ is man’s only hope, the only way, is because He is the only *“Sinless”* one. According to scripture, He is the sinless, Son of God, who came to the earth, taking on the form of a man, for the express purpose of offering Himself up on the cross, for the sins of man. He came to make atonement for our sins, thus cleansing us from our guilt before God. Outside the righteous, atoning blood of Jesus Christ, no one has the slightest hope of being just before God. No amount of devotion to religion will ever justify a man, because it’s not possible. For the righteousness produced by that man’s efforts, is not true righteousness, because it was produced by a sinner. It is only by the righteousness of Christ, imparted to us as believers, that we are cleansed and declared just before God, and granted access to His kingdom. That is why Jesus can emphatically say, *“I am the WAY”...no man comes to the Father but by me.*

He adds, *“I am the TRUTH”*... What does He mean *HE is the TRUTH?* Well this is best understood by looking at it in light of its counterpart, which is *“FALSE.”* Jesus declares here to be *“Truth among the False.”* It is a comparison to *“His Way”* and the *“Way of the current religious establishment”* of the day. Jesus came to show us, to reveal to us the truth about God, and what He is like, and His will for man, His deep abiding love for sinners and so on. Which was a conflicting contrast with the image being displayed by the religious leaders and their system of the day. I speaking of the Scribes and Pharisees we see throughout the N.T. writings. These men considered themselves as *“Just”* before God, based on their strict adherence to the Law of God. They considered themselves to be these righteous, holy men of God, who would certainly be granted access into His kingdom. While at the same time, they judged and

condemned those around them. They despised sinners, separating themselves from them, wanting nothing to do with them, declaring how that they would be judged by God and destroyed for their unfaithfulness. Well, the simple TRUTH of it is, none of that is true. These men thought they were “righteous,” they thought they were “holy” by the way they lived, but they weren’t. Though they did appear to be, as a result of their adherence to God’s Law, the TRUTH is, they were none the better. They only thought they were. So we see here, that Christ came to declare the TRUTH that men are not made “just” on the basis of their adherence to God’s Law, no man will be justified by his quote, righteousness. And then, at the same time, He came to declare the TRUTH of God’s view of sinners. The religious leaders of the day gave the perception that God hated sinners, and that He wanted nothing to do with them. Which was simply not true! Jesus came to dispel the FALSE perception by walking among the sinners, the very ones the Scribes and Pharisees despised and rejected and wanted nothing to do with. These men constantly condemned Jesus for walking with them, and having anything to do with them. Here when Jesus declares, “I am the TRUTH”...He’s stating the fact that He’s come to dispel the FALSE teachings and perceptions about God by these men, and to reveal the TRUTH about God, what he is really like, and just how much He loves sinners.

Then finally He says, “***I am the LIFE***”... What does He mean, “*HE is the LIFE*”? Simply put, that HE is the LIFE that we are seeking for. Matter of fact, He is LIFE itself! The whole reason men subject themselves to any religion, is the hope of attaining “*eternal life*.” Think about it, if there was no hope of life after death, if there was no hope of heaven, but only the fact that man would cease to exist, then no one would concern themselves with religion. There would be no reason to. Man’s hope is, that he would LIVE in such a way that he’d be granted access into his God’s kingdom, after this life. But here, Jesus declares to be the very “*LIFE*” they are seeking! Which He is! (We must understand this) There is no religion in the world, that can produce this “*LIFE*” that we all so desperately want and seek for. If we’d be honest, all religion produces is “*Deadness*.” There’s no true life produced by our adherence to religion. But Jesus IS LIFE! He is LIFE itself! We are all as “*Dead men*” without Him. It is only when “*His LIFE*” is imparted to me, that I truly become “*Alive*”. He is the resurrection, He is the Life of God, the eternal life. I love the way John put, “*He that has the Son, has life. He that has not the Son, has not life.*” So simple, yet so profound. I’m convinced that there are so many in our churches today, who have not the Son. All they have is religion, and it breaks my heart.

When you consider all three of these statements Jesus made here, and their meaning, you come to understand the truth, that there truly is only ONE WAY to God, and that is by His Son Jesus Christ. For anyone to deny that fact, falls into one of two categories. One, it reveals they are ignorant to the truth and claims of the gospel...or...they simply reject the Christ of the gospel.

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