

Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends
5 Questions that Matter: Is Jesus the Only Way? August 11 2019

The Big Idea

Jesus is the only way, truth, and life. Apart from Jesus we cannot receive salvation. It is clear that the Bible really leaves no room for claims which speak of any other person or any other means to be reconciled to God. In the end, there is one Lord and one faith. The Scriptures unmistakably assert the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the one and only mediator between God and man. It is His death which is the sacrifice that satisfies God's hatred toward sin, and it is His resurrection which proves the sufficiency of His sacrificial offering.

Where we are in the Bible

This week's message comes from John 14:1-7. It was just hours before Jesus would be put on trial and crucified. The disciples were gathered with Jesus in the upper room and he lets them know that he will be leaving them, but to not lose heart because he will be back for them. Of course this was all very confusing to the disciples. They want to follow but do not understand where Jesus is going, so Thomas asks the question "How can we know the way?" The answer given by Jesus is powerful and yet controversial. Some would say that Jesus really meant he was "one of the ways" to God? Or maybe he was the way for the disciples, but not for everyone else for all time? Jesus, however, offers no other options.

Other scriptures to consider

John 3:18
John 14:6
Acts 4:11-12
Acts 17:16-34
1 Timothy 2:1-6

Finding a bit of ourselves

- Oprah Winfrey says that she is a Christian but believes there are many other paths to God other than Christianity. Oprah is not the only one who holds that opinion. Why do you think this view is so widespread? What are your reactions to this statement? Do you sometimes find yourself wishing it was true? Why or why not?
- Jesus says he is the way, the truth, and the life. What do you do to determine if something is true in your life? How have you come to the conclusion that Christianity is true?

Where do we go from here?

- How many ways are there to get to the Father? Doesn't Jesus seem narrow-minded? What does Jesus' statement say to those who think there are multiple ways to get to heaven and have a relationship with God?
- Why is Jesus the only way? (*John 1:1-18; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 2:1-6; Matthew 7:13-14*)
- Why is Jesus the truth? (*John 1:14, 12:45, 18:37; Romans 1:18-20, 25?*) What are some characteristics of truth?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the life? (*John 1:4, 5:24; 20:30-31; 1 John 5:12*)
- Jesus and the disciples lived in a very polytheistic society. This is evident when Paul visits the city of Athens in Acts 17 beginning with verse 16. How does Paul approach sharing the Gospel with these individuals? What can we potentially learn from Paul about our interactions with others in our culture who may believe that there are many paths to God? How can we avoid coming across as narrow-minded and arrogant?
- After hearing the message and considering the thoughts presented here, how would you begin a conversation with someone of another faith who is either antagonistic or at least ambivalent toward Christianity?

Prayer focus

Jesus promised the disciples that they would again be with him. His promise to us is very much the same – we will one day be with him forever! In the meantime we pray in the power of the Holy Spirit. Join us in praying for the following...

- We would experience the abundant life in Christ that he promised to his followers.
- For spiritual seekers in our families, community, and the world would find the one true way to the Father.
- We Christians would not be seen as arrogant in our faith, but we would be known for our authenticity, humility, integrity, and sensitivity as we share the Gospel with them.

