

#5: How Can You Say Jesus Is the Only Way?

Sunday Evening Bible Study, October 14, 2018

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. This redemption He accomplished by voluntarily giving Himself as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, thereby satisfying God's righteous judgments against sin. After substantiating the accomplishment of that redemption by His bodily resurrection from the grave, He ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes on behalf of those who trust Him.

—First Bible Church Constitution, Article III

Reasons to Believe Jesus is the Only Way

1. The mutual exclusivity of the world religions: Since all of the religions contradict one another, either all are wrong and none is right, or one is right and the rest are wrong, but it cannot be the case that all of them are right. There cannot be many ways to heaven. An example of contradiction: Islam vs. Christianity:

Quran 4:171: O people of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion, nor utter anything concerning God save the truth. Verily the messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, was only a messenger of God...

1 Jn. 1:1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2. The uniqueness of Jesus (God): If Jesus is the only way to be saved, we would expect that he would be substantially different from all other religious founders. See “Isn’t the Trinity Illogical?” (9/23/18).
3. The resurrection of Jesus (Grave): If Jesus is raised from the dead, his claims of exclusivity are validated. Consider these lines of evidence for the resurrection:
 1. Something happened. All historians acknowledge that something unprecedented happened in Jerusalem in the middle of the first century. The result is the largest and most widely distributed religion in the world today and a global calendar that uses his birth as a point of reference.
 2. The testimony of the eyewitnesses who claimed to see what happened was secured in writing within their lifetime (see “Is the Bible Reliable?” Defensible Hope, #1, 9/16/18).
 3. The testimony of these eyewitnesses contains “embarrassing” elements about the eyewitnesses (i.e., their cowardice, stupidity, unbelief, reports of women as the first eyewitnesses to the resurrection, etc.).
 4. Sources outside of the Christian community corroborate the early Christian testimony (Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Seutonius).
 5. Those who testified to what happened suffered for their testimony. They made two claims: a) they had seen an empty tomb; b) they had seen the risen Lord. Their consistent testimony led to a loss of status, property, freedom, and for most of the apostles, a loss of life. *While many will die for what they think is true, no one dies for what they know is false.* If Jesus was not raised, no one knew it better than those who claimed he was.
4. The claims of Jesus: He was aware that he was the only way.

Matt. 7:14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

5. The claims of the apostles: True Christianity is built on the apostles’ teaching.

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

1Tim. 2:5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

6. The conduct of the apostles: If Jesus is the only way, you would expect his disciples to urgently take the gospel to the world and try to persuade people to renounce their false religions and turn to Christ.

Mt. 28:19: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Mt. 28:19)

Ro. 10:13-15: For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?

Ro. 15:20: and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation,

Acts 17:24: The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man

Eph. 2:12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

1Th. 1:9 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God...

7. The cruelty of the cross: If there is another way to heaven, God would have said, “Take that way and spare my son!”

Rom. 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Gal. 2:21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

8. Conclusion: While there are many reasons to *believe* that Jesus is the only way, there are three good reasons to *say* that Jesus is the only way.

1. It is true. Christians follow the example and command of Christ to be speak the truth.

Eph. 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him...

2. It is loving. Christians love their friends and enemies and want them to be saved.

Matt. 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Prov. 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend...

3. It is right. Christians have a duty to warn. When one party has the opportunity to warn the other of a hazard and fails to do so, that party is liable for injuries caused to the other.

Ezek. 33:6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand.