



Lie #2: “There Are Many Ways into God’s Presence”

Opening Prayer

Introduction

Truth is similar to mathematics in that there is only one way to be right but countless ways to be wrong. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to God in heaven, but that viewpoint isn’t popular in today’s society (nor has it ever been). Many people (including some Christians) have fallen for the pleasant lie that “There are many ways into God’s presence.”

1.) Former night talk show host Jay Leno often went out onto the street and asked people random questions. He called the segment “Jaywalking.” Imagine that you are stepping out onto the streets and asking a cross-section of Americans, “Describe God and who he is to you.” Let’s collect a list of what people might say.

2.) Can all of these responses describe the same God? Explain your answer.

More Than One Way?

Truth #1: God is holy and unapproachable.

Isaiah 6:1-5 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

1.) We might think, “How awesome it would be to see God!” But what was Isaiah’s reaction?

2.) What had suddenly become to apparent to him that he pronounced his own destruction?

3.) Often in Scripture we see similar reactions to being in the presence of holiness. People are terrified! Any examples come to mind? It would seem that fewer people today have such a fearful conception of God— why is that?

4.) What is missing from that picture?

Truth #2: We are not good enough to approach the holy God.

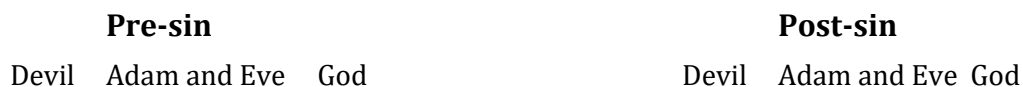
1.) Moses wanted to see God’s glory, but God replied: “You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live” (Exodus 33:20). God explained the reason for this to Isaiah: “All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away” (64:6). Paul writes, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). What misunderstandings does someone harbor who believes that God will accept him or her for being a good person?

2.) In Romans 6:23 it says, “The wages of sin is death.” How would you explain to someone why even one sin merits death?

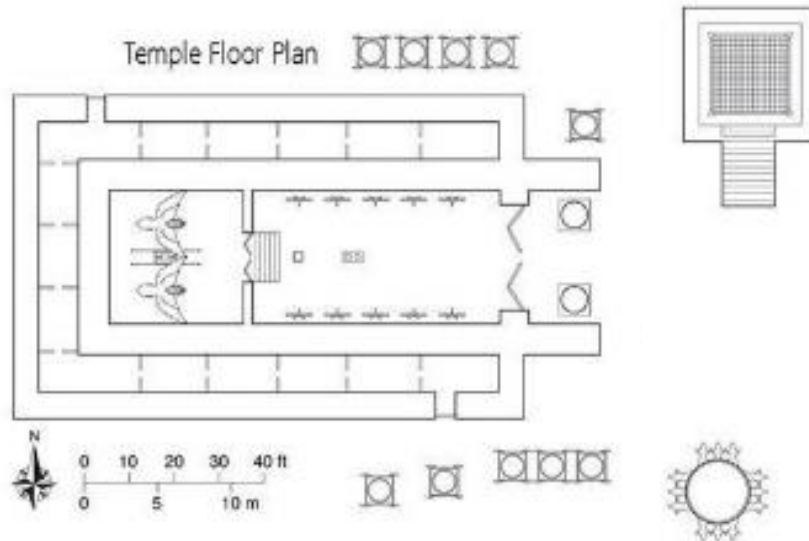
3.) Can even Christians do truly good works?

Truth #3: We need a mediator in order to approach a holy God.

1.) In Genesis 3:15 God says, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” Put the wall of enmity/hostility where it belongs in the illustration below:



2.) Except for the high priest on the Day of Atonement, no one could come into the Most Holy Place, or he would die. On the diagram below label the bronze altar, bronze sea, altar of incense, table of showbread, menorahs, Holy Place, Most Holy Place, and the ark of the covenant. What truths did this worship system communicate?



3.) Upon Christ's death what event happened to communicate that God had now reconfigured his worship system?

Truth #4: Jesus is the only way to the holy God.

1.) How would you respond to someone who says, "Christianity is too exclusive! No one can claim to have the truth exclusively!"

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

Acts 4:12 "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Revelation 7:9 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

Group Discussion

1.) Agree/Disagree: If there are many ways into God's presence, then the God of the Bible and Jesus Christ are fools.

2.) The message of liberalism says, "A God without wrath sent the Christ without a cross to a world without sin." If this were true, who is going to heaven and how will they get there?

3.) What are the differences between Christianity and every other world religion?

4.) On the basis of our study, how would you now respond to the statement: "There are many paths into God's presence"?

Closing Activity

Take two minutes to come up with a bumper sticker slogan illustrating that Jesus is the only way to God.