

sermon study summary

April 6 / 7, 2024

Come and See Weekend – Why Jesus is the Only Way to God

Speaker: Dr. Henry Schorr

Jesus made many claims which are considered *outrageous* by non-Christians. When Christians say: '*Jesus is the only way to God*', negative emotions are evoked by some; however, JESUS said it about Himself. He also made other claims which many claim as 'offensive'. Jesus did not give an option such as He was 'A' way or 'one of several' truths, and His disciples affirmed all His claims by witnessing to others about His miracles, crucifixion and resurrection.

However, this is not the only religion that claims exclusivity; Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Bahaism, and Atheists do the same. Furthermore, some perceive Christianity to be intolerant, and that there will be no peace on earth as long as religious leaders claim that their faith is true and other faiths are not. We should be tolerant of those with whom we disagree and strive to create a world with religious freedom/tolerance in order to dialogue with others who follow different religious convictions, without fear of physical abuse or prosecution by law. But tolerance should NEVER be confused with truthfulness. We should not violate rationality. It's okay for all religions to be 'equally tolerated', but quite another to insist that being 'tolerant' means we see all religions as equally *true*. For example, it is illogical to say, simultaneously, God DOES vs God DOES NOT, exist.

Truth is outside subjectivity; it is discovered! 'Truth is what is, no matter whether we like/dislike it, or we can prove/disprove it, or have varying perceptions/beliefs about it. For example, you may choose to sincerely believe there are no such things as trucks. But if you step into the pathway of an oncoming truck (believing that it isn't real) you are going to get run over in reality. In the physical and natural realm, most people understand this. Truth is exclusive and intolerant_of error or falsehood. The significant differences between world religions, both at the surface level and the core cannot all be true since they contradict each other.

People also struggle with Christianity because they think it's narrow-minded, and people react negatively, assuming that means it's either wrong or completely crazy. In life, there are many instances where there is only one way; and, sometimes, 'narrow' is a good thing.

No other religious leader, except Jesus, claimed that He was the Son of God. He lived a sinless, perfect life, performed miracles for all to see, had mastery over nature, Satan, sickness and even death, and proved He was God when he rose from the dead, as He said He would. We are all sinners; the heart of sin is pride, leading us to do what we want and not obey God. We hurt ourselves and others when we sin, it separates us from God and every religion (except Christianity) preaches good works to earn God's favour. Because of God's amazing love for us, He vindicates us through the death and resurrection of Christ who came down to earth and died for the remediation of our sins. Only Jesus is a perfect substitute because He is God! Our salvation is through the grace of God – not by works!

Everyone is invited to become a friend of Jesus and to become part of the family of God, but it requires us to receive Him in faith – HE IS THE ONLY WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE!

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. When you go into a restaurant do you like many menu choices or fewer? Why?
2. What true claim can you make about yourself that others would find hard to believe?

UP – PURSUE GOD

3. Read John 4:13-14; 11:25; 14:6 and Acts 4:12. These claims are exclusive. Who is included and excluded? How do Jesus' claims about Himself differ from claims about other religious founders and/or their faiths? Why do some people oppose Jesus on this basis?
4. Read Romans 3:23 and Ephesians 2:8-9. How do other religions believe they can connect with God and find God's favour? How does faith in Christ differ from all other religions?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. Christianity is presented as (1) intolerant, (2) exclusive and (3) narrow-minded. Are each of these accusations true or false? Why or why not?
6. Why is 'truth' important? How can you use the truth to reach out to people of other religious beliefs in your neighbourhood?
7. Do you know someone who is trying to reach God by doing good works? How can the story of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43) help in explaining the truth that Jesus Christ is the only way to God?

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

Where do you sit regarding the exclusivity of Jesus and Christianity? Or of the gospel being one of grace alone? Meditate on the verses presented here.

If you know someone who is finding it hard to accept this truth, remember that it is not up to you and me to convince them. Our job is to present the truth and let the Holy Spirit do the convincing.

THE WORD (NIV)

John 4:13-14

¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 11:25

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

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 mankind by which we must be saved."

Romans 3:23

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

This week's writers: Asha Phillips, Sandi Somers, Elsa Henderson, Gene Gibbs, and Jorel Quemuel