



Only One Way to Heaven

Christianity differs from every other religion because it makes an exclusive claim about Jesus Christ. He is not merely a teacher showing one possible path to God. He is “the way, and the truth, and the life,” and “no one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Acts 4:12 likewise says, “there is salvation in no one else.” Christianity draws moral and spiritual lines that modern culture cannot ignore. The Bible says there is one God and that worshiping other gods is wrong (Exodus 20:3). It teaches that certain sexual behaviors such as homosexuality and adultery are sinful (Leviticus 18:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11), that salvation cannot be earned through good works (Ephesians 2:8-9), and that eternal life is found only through Christ (1 John 5:11-12).

These claims matter because our faith in a religion or belief ultimately guides how we live and how we view the afterlife when we die. If all religions were simply different paths to the same destination, these differences would have little eternal significance. But religions make contradictory claims about God, humanity, sin, salvation, judgment, and the afterlife. Christianity therefore presents the most dramatic line in the sand: *Jesus is either who He claimed to be, or He is not. If He truly is the risen Son of God, then His words cannot be treated as merely one religious opinion among many. The question is not simply which faith makes us comfortable, but which faith is true.*

An unbelieving person sincerely searching for truth should examine the evidence rather than choosing a faith merely because it is familiar or culturally comfortable. First, we must examine the founder of each religion or belief system. What does the historical record say about him or her? How did they live? What did they teach? What happened to them? Jesus stands apart because Christianity is centered on His death and resurrection, there is historical proof from non-Christian sources that His followers and hundreds more encountered Jesus alive after his death on the cross. Other religions have founders whose lives also deserve serious historical examination, including difficult moral questions. Joseph Smith, for example, practiced plural marriage, a fact acknowledged in historical materials from his own religious tradition.

Second, we should examine archaeology and historical evidence. Christianity is deeply connected to identifiable places, rulers, cities, manuscripts, and archaeological discoveries. The Dead Sea Scrolls contain tens of thousands of fragments representing nearly one thousand compositions, including manuscripts of almost every book of the Hebrew Bible, dating from the third century BC to the first century AD. Archaeology attests that the Bible's historical record corresponds to reality. Finally, we must ask ourselves what each religion teaches when its central requirements are rejected. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity have substantially different understandings of sin, judgment, reincarnation, liberation, resurrection,

and eternal life. Christianity declares, “the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). The consequences are therefore enormous. If eternity is real, choosing what is true matters infinitely more than choosing what is comfortable.

The Bible also draws clear moral boundaries in areas where contemporary society may say that personal desire should determine what is acceptable. The Bible says, “You shall not sleep with a male as one sleeps with a female; it is an abomination” (Leviticus 18:22), and Romans 1:26-27 describes same-sex sexual behavior as contrary to God's design. The Bible also presents children as human life known and valued by God before birth, “For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb” (Psalm 139:13), and “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (Jeremiah 1:5). God specifically condemned the ancient practice of sacrificing children, saying, “You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech” (Leviticus 18:21).

Christianity also draws perhaps its most important line around salvation itself. Jesus said, “unless someone is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3), and “no one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). At the same time, following Christ means more than merely saying we believe. Jesus said, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me” (Luke 9:23). Galatians 5:24 says, “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” The Bible calls us to resist temptation, flee sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18), and live differently from the world. Christianity therefore offers extraordinary grace while making extraordinary demands. We cannot save ourselves, but having been saved by grace, we are called to surrender our lives to Christ.

This explains Jesus' startling statement, “Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34). Jesus immediately explained that His message would sometimes divide families, “For I came to turn a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother” (Matthew 10:35). He was not commanding violence. He was warning that truth creates division when people choose different masters. Following Jesus may put us at odds with family, friends, culture, or even the expectations we once had for our own lives.

Jesus therefore says, “The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me” and “the one who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:37-38). Christianity is not Jesus being added to an otherwise unchanged life. It is surrender. It means Christ becomes Lord over our desires, relationships, sexuality, money, ambitions, morality, and future. Sometimes following Him will cost us relationships. Sometimes it will require us to stand alone. Sometimes it will require us to reject something our culture considers normal. Jesus never presented discipleship as a comfortable addition to life. He called us to die to ourselves and follow Him. This line in the sand puts it at odds with every other religion or belief.

This dividing line ultimately comes down to one question: Who will have authority over your life? Jesus is Lord and following Him is worth every earthly cost because the decision does not merely determine how we live for a few decades. It determines where we will spend eternity.

Study Questions:

1. Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.” If Jesus meant exactly what He said, what are the consequences of rejecting Him? (John 14:6)

2. Jesus said, “Unless someone is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” What does this mean for someone who believes that simply being a good person is enough to enter Heaven? (John 3:3)

3. Jesus said, “The one who believes in Him is not judged; but the one who does not believe has been judged already.” How seriously should we take the decision to believe in Jesus Christ? (John 3:18)

4. Jesus said, “The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” What are the eternal ramifications of refusing to follow Christ? (John 3:36)

5. Jesus warned, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.” What does this tell us about assuming that most spiritual paths ultimately lead to the same destination? (Matthew 7:13)

6. Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven will enter.” What does this reveal about the difference between claiming to follow Jesus and actually following Him? (Matthew 7:21)

7. Jesus said, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” What does following Jesus require us to surrender, and what could it cost us if we refuse? (Luke 9:23)

8. Jesus asked, “For what does it benefit a person to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?” Are there earthly pursuits that are hindering your relationship with God? (Mark 8:36)

9. Jesus said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” How should this change the way we view temporary earthly consequences compared with eternal consequences? (Matthew 10:28)

10. The Bible says, “And inasmuch as it is appointed for people to die once and after this comes judgment.” If every person will face judgment after death, how should that reality affect the way we live today? (Hebrews 9:27)

11. Paul wrote, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.” Knowing you will personally stand before Christ and give an account, what would you change about your life today? (2 Corinthians 5:10)

12. Jesus said, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” What are you currently holding onto that may be keeping you from completely surrendering your life to Him? (Matthew 16:25)