

“Aren’t There Many Roads to God?!”

John 14:1-6

Intro. – We live in a time when most people are real uncomfortable with the idea “right and wrong” or of having “absolute truth”. You see, people would like to think their view of what’s right and wrong is just as good as anyone else’s. Is such the case? Does it matter what you, the other guy and I think? What if we don’t agree on what is right and wrong? Who is right and who is wrong or does it even matter? In most cases, people covet the idea of being the determiner of truth. But just because people want this and even covet it, does not make it so.

Pilate, the day Jesus was sentenced to death asked, “What is truth?” Our world asks the same question groping about aimlessly, trying to make truth a matter of “your way is just as good as my way.” To even suggest there is a higher authority stirs emotions. This being the case is it any wonder that a searching question of our modern times is “Aren’t there many roads to God?” Are there? Is one belief just as good as another? Is a loving God honestly going to send people to eternal punishment? Isn’t belief and sincerity all that really matters when it comes to salvation? After all, aren’t we all headed for the same place?

Illus. – Dave Mason (not the car dealer in Indy who “needs the money”) wrote a song. Lyrics reveal much:

“WE JUST DISAGREE”

Been away, haven’t seen you in a while
How’ve you been?

Have you changed your style and do you think
That we’ve grown up differently? Don’t seem the same,
Seems you’ve lost your feel for me
So let’s leave it alone, ‘cause we can’t see eye to eye.
There ain’t no good guys, there ain’t no bad guys.
There’s only you and me and we just disagree.

Purpose: to better understand when it comes to salvation truth is an absolute must

Theodore Roosevelt said, “It is a wicked thing to be neutral between right and wrong.” James 4:17 says it best: “*Anyone then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.*” I want to cement in our minds that when it comes to salvation, *truth* makes clear there is one *road*, one *way*. Show this in a series of 3 ?’s:

I IS JESUS REALLY THE ONLY WAY TO SALVATION?

- text makes clear there is one road to salvation/forgiveness = Jesus is the Answer
- world insists there are many roads, why it’s narrow-minded and bigoted to say Jesus is the only way to salvation. After all, Jesus, Muhammad, Buda, are all “symbols” of the same God aren’t they? Most religions of the world basically point toward same God, same destination = simply take different roads..

A. What World Religions Teach

1. If all religions point to the same God (and they don’t) fair to assume say same thing about God...
2. Didn’t we have a President recently say that Muslims worship the same God “Christians” worship? Are all religions of the world pointing to the same God?
3. It is noteworthy that all religions do share one key element – salvation comes by human works...
 - pray five times a day, give alms, fast, take a pilgrimage, use Tibetan prayer wheel, don’t eat certain foods, go to “church,” live a decent life... do this and many actually think they can earn/deserve heaven...

B. What Biblical Christianity Teaches

1. Christianity one will never earn/deserve heaven simply because “*all have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory.*” (Romans 3:23). Sin deserves death/hell (wages of sin are death – Romans 6:23).
2. Romans 6:23 “*...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”
3. Saved BY GRACE = God has taken the initiative and explains why Jesus is the ONLY WAY:

- a. lived a perfect life... died a sacrificial death... rose bodily from the dead...
 - b. no “religion” can point moment in history and say, “This is what God has done to save man.”
 - c. why? “religion” = man’s attempt to find God... “Xtianity” = God’s attempt to find lost man!
- Make no mistake – Jesus is the only way to salvation!

II IS BEING “GOOD” GOOD ENOUGH?

- Often hear: “I live a moral life... I’m a good person... or “I’m just as good...” = code “I’m better...”
 - “Aren’t all good people going to heaven? Answer: “no” -- but all forgiven people are!”
- A. All Have Sinned
1. If one would live a “perfect life” = 100% pure = liken to analogy of sports: batting a 1000, bowling 300 game, hitting hole-in-one every shot... That’s impossible! That’s the point!!
 2. Compared to Christ, none of us measure up to His holiness, purity and righteousness.
 3. If we could accomplish this “perfect life” without slippage/failure/sin we could attain salvation on our own... but the point of the Bible is that none of us can...
 4. Matthew 19:16-21 gives the account of the “rich young ruler” – young man who had everything... obviously thought he was good enough; yet, he was still busy serving another god (things/money) *“...Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life? ... ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then, come, follow me.’ When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.”*
- B. Jesus Died for a Reason
1. If it were possible that you and I could attain salvation by simply living a moral life (i.e. being “good person”) it would make the death of Jesus on the Cross totally useless.
 2. If it were possible for you and me to “earn heaven” why didn’t Jesus simply lay down a few guidelines, tell us to do our best and ascend back into heaven?
 3. Father worked His way back to you and men (sinful man) through His Son, Jesus = He took upon Himself what we deserve so that we could live like He deserves!
 4. Only way we can be holy again in the presence of Holy God is to embrace His gift of grace and become: “dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.”

Being good, isn’t good enough – we need to be 100% righteous! = only by grace, through faith, at baptism.

III IS SINCERITY WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

- Several say or at least think: “Doesn’t matter what you believe just as long as you are *sincere*.”
 - Based on idea there are no absolutes = *tolerance* becomes the queen of virtues...
- A. It Sounds So Good
1. Sounds enlightening and open minded to say/think that everyone is eventually going to heaven...
 2. Sounds so generous/benevolent/almost like it will fly...
- B. Many Fear the Truth
1. All are afraid to be unmasked in their lives... why people avoid reading/study of God’s Word
 2. If all religions lead to heaven, then people can continue to ignore their guilt... sin sickness...
 3. Compare our life with Christ’s true self-revealed... = light reveals darkness... run from the light...
- C. Hypocrisy is Despised
1. Saying, “It doesn’t matter what one believes as long as they’re sincere” is closing the door to truth and makes about as much sense as spending more money to improve the economy!
 2. Jesus denounced hypocrisy no uncertain terms – Matthew 23 always did so contrasting with truth!
 3. Reality makes clear that truth matters: e.g.
 - a. reality TV in its warped way helps illustrate this...
 - b. field of medical science... “doesn’t matter what medicine you take, just be sincere...”

- c. like student taking test for which they didn't study. Questions teacher why they flunked the test. "Did you study?" "Not, but I was sincere!"
- 4. We are guilty... we are sin sick... we really need God's grace...!

Conclusion: D. L. Moody tells of the time when a woman who approached him one day after he had told a group of church workers some very plain principles from God's Word. She made clear that she was a "busy worker in the church." "Mr. Moody," this agitated woman said, "do you mean to tell me that I, an educated woman, taught from childhood in good ways, and all my life interested in the church and doing good, must enter heaven the same way as the worst criminals of our day?" Moody responded, "No, madam I don't tell you at all: God does. He says everyone who would enter heaven, no matter how good they think they are, or how well educated, or zealous in good works, must be born again."

Aren't there many roads to God? Isn't one belief just as legitimate as another? Isn't sincerity all that really matters in going to heaven? Aren't we all headed for the same place even though we're taking different paths?

As this visual illustrates, listen once again to our text: "*Jesus answered, 'I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'*"