

***Jesus is Exclusive/How Can you Say there is only One True Faith?***  
**John 14:1-7, Philippians 2:5-11**  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." These words from the lips of Jesus are defining. The claim is not hazy, unclear, left open to interpretation. It was the last night of Jesus' life, he is with his guys in the upper room in what was his last teaching moment which had already included the washing of their feet and where He would redefine the Passover in the event of the Last Supper. This specific section begins with a glorious promise, that Jesus was going to help build His Father's house, preparing a place for them and one day He would return to take them to be with Him in glory. He then makes a puzzling statement, "And you know the way where I am going." Of course, this is a bit confusing, telling a group of men who have never been to heaven that they already know the way, as if Jesus had sent them a link for Google maps. So Thomas speaks up. Bro, we don't even know where you are going, how can we know the way. Jesus' answer is even more bizarre. Jesus does not say, I will show you the way. He tells them that He IS the Way. Jesus does not claim to be a religious leader with a better, more advanced way to God. He is the way. Jesus does not come as a rabbi with a system of truth to disseminate in the world. He is the Truth. Jesus does not come as a life coach to show us how to have a full and meaningful life. He is the Life. Yet, his words do not end there. What He stated in the positive is repeated in the negative. Nobody comes to the Father, to the True and Living God "except through Me." Jesus closes the door on our culture's core doctrine, that there are many paths to the idea of God.

On the one hand, this text offers us great hope. Jesus is ushering a universal invitation inviting people to Himself as the only source of salvation from our sin and in a fallen world. On the other hand, the exclusivity of Jesus is also uber clear, and not just here, but throughout the Bible. The central claim of the Scriptures and the Christian faith is that people are sinful idolaters who have abandoned the True and Living God for cheap human made deities. These gods are fake and cannot save. Yet, every human being is unable to save him or herself and therefore we are desperate need of a redeemer, a Savior. The story does not leave us in this hopeless state as fallen sinful people separated from God. Jesus comes, God who became human. He lives the righteous representative life and then dies in our place as the sacrifice for our sin, and then rises on the third day. He is our redeemer, the only way back to God, the only way to Salvation.

Still, for the most part the doctrine of the exclusivity of Jesus is heresy to our culture, viewed as dangerous, narrow minded, and intolerant. How could we look at other people and actually claim that if they do not adhere to our religion they are worshiping a false god and they are doomed to hell. This does not sound loving, rather it seems arrogant and hateful. Truthfully, there are also authentic reasons for people in our culture to feel this way about followers of Jesus. We do not lack examples of hateful people who mistreated people from other religions or moralities in the name of Jesus and His exclusive claims. Couple this with the track record of imperialism in the name of Jesus, where native peoples were conquered while missionaries told them about Jesus, and then were often forced to convert at the end of the spear. We need to know that the critiques from those in our culture claiming that the Christian doctrine of the exclusivity of Jesus is nothing more than a way for us to grab power and force people to agree with us.

So what do we do? Do we abandon the doctrine of the exclusivity of Jesus in order to gain a hearing in the culture? Absolutely not. There is no way to ultimately lose the Gospel if we lose the claim that Jesus is the only way of Salvation. Paul wrote the joy-filled encouragement letter to the church at Philippi in ancient Greece. In chapter 2 he is explaining how the Christian life should model the life of their Savior, with loving humility and self sacrifice. To illustrate the sort of kind, loving, gentle humility that should permeate the Christian life Paul reminds them of a hymn they would sing about the incarnation, life, sacrifice, resurrection, and

exaltation of Jesus. The hymn ends with the glorious declaration that Jesus Christ is Lord, and the truth that this will eventually be the confession of every tongue. Jesus is Lord was the central confession of the early church. And this was not a polite little platitude of respect about Jesus. The Roman confession was that Caesar is Lord, meaning allegiance to Rome and her ruler was the central truth for life and the binding center for existence. To this Christians declared their trust in and allegiance to Christ alone. He is the binding center of reality and the only source for redemption. Furthermore, at some time, either in this life or at the judgment every knee will eventually bow and every tongue confess this truth. The early believers knew it would be unloving to Roman culture to not proclaim this truth. Yet, they also exemplified the idea that this belief actually created a different type of people, those who loved people whom they disagreed deeply, and who approached the culture with a gentle humility that looked like Jesus. We can't lose this doctrine, or we will eventually lose the Gospel. Yet, we must also reject every power craving, self-seeking, angry expression of Christianity that does not really look like Jesus as equally sinful and non-Christian.

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
I Timothy 5	1 Timothy 6	2 Timothy 1	2 Timothy 2	2 Timothy 3	2 Timothy 4	Joshua 1

Reading from this past week: John 14:1-7, Philippians 2:5-11  
 Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Exodus 34:4-9

**Family Worship**

Song - *Jesus Messiah*

<https://youtu.be/tdxSC1tHJn0>

Gospel Project

Unit: The Miracles of Jesus  
 Story: Jesus calmed a storm  
 Big Picture Question: Is Jesus God or human?  
 Answer: As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.  
 Scripture: Mark 4

New City Catechism

Question #23: Why must the Redeemer be truly God?  
 Answer: That because of his divine nature his obedience and suffering would be perfect and effective.  
 Verse: Acts 2:24

Scripture

John 14:1-7, Philippians 2:5-11

- What is the difference between Jesus saying he would show them the way, and saying that "I am the way?"
- How do people in our culture feel about people who believe there is only one way to heaven, one truth, and one path of life?
- What was the early church declaring with the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord?
- What are some ways we can we hold the doctrine of the exclusivity of Jesus with the humility and love of Jesus?

Prayer

\*Pray that we would hold to the truth that Jesus is the only way, truth, and life, and communicate that truth with compassion to our world.

\*Pray for the Cotinga Team as they leave for Ecuador this week, and also pray that our church would be a missionary sending church.