

**Red Letter Edition: Did Jesus Really Say That?  
"An Exclusive Way"**

**Introduction:** Red words of Jesus-the hard sayings

**Last Week:**

*"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.  
Luke 14:26 NKJV*

**The Broad Context**

- ✓ A portion of the Farewell Discourse of Jesus that took place at the Last Supper (John 13:31-56:33)-there He washed their feet
- ✓ Likely left the upper room at the end of chapter 14 (14:31-"Arise let us go from here.")
- ✓ Jesus continued to teach as He made His way to the garden (15, 16)
- ✓ High Priestly prayer in the garden just before his arrest (17)

**The More Narrow Context**

- ✓ Jesus Himself is facing agony and is troubled in spirit-yet He comforts His disciples by telling them not to be troubled
- ✓ The disciples were under extreme emotional pressure, on the brink of catastrophic failure (would flee/deny/betray)
- ✓ Challenge: You believe in God....believe in me also
- ✓ Promise: I go to prepare and will return
- ✓ Expectation: "Where I go you know and the way you know."
- ✓ Question of Thomas: We don't know-how can we know the way?

**Claim of Jesus**

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6 NKJV*

Hard! Controversial! Debated!

This shocking claim-The marvelous promises-The liberating hope

## I. The Shocking Claim

“I am the WAY and NO man cometh to the Father...”

### A. Support of this claim in biblical text

*If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:9-12 NKJV*

*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:11 NKJV*

*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Timothy 2:5 NKJV*

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:16-18 NKJV*

### B. This claim is persistently challenged (4 specific challenges)

1. As too narrow, rigid, exclusive, or intolerant
2. Jesus is only one of many ways to God and salvation is achieved by living a good life rather than by faith in Christ
3. Gospel-proclaims a message that “all roads lead to God as long as you are sincere.”
4. God will accept you if you are sincere and seek to do good deeds

### C. This reasoning however, is faulty-2 main reasons

1. All religions claim exclusivity

NOTE: 10 of 11 major world religions teach salvation through human effort. ONLY Christianity recognizes the futility of human effort and declares salvation rests in the provision and grace of God.

- a. Hindus-Won't compromise on doctrines of Karma and reincarnation
- b. Buddhism-Birthed out of rejection of Hindu Vedes (texts) and caste system
- c. Islam-Very exclusive claims to God; Mohammed the prophet, and none will ever say what you believe about God is unimportant

NOTE: Islam says-"kill infidels," Christianity says love your enemies

## 2. Law of non-contradiction

- a. Two contradictory statements cannot both be true
- b. Only one can be true or both false
- c. Truth, by definition is exclusive

## D. The truth claims of Christianity pass the test of scrutiny

- 1. Christianity provides for man's basic need-forgiveness of sins
- 2. Christianity resolves the problem of God's dual nature of absolute justice and absolute love

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16 NKJV*

*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV*

## 3. Christianity answers the fundamental questions of humanity

- a. Origin- Where do I come from?

"We are the loving creation of an all wise and benevolent God who made us in His image."

- b. Purpose- Why am I here?

- ✓ Hindus-Say we live in an eternally existent universe which every million years or so is destroyed by Shiva (destroyer of worlds) and humanity is repeatedly reincarnated till they "get it right" and finally achieve Nirvana
- ✓ Buddhists-Learn to overcome life's eternal suffering and fear of death-find perfect peace of mind
- ✓ Christianity-

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10 NKJV*

c. Morality-How should I live?

NOTE: Most world religions speak of a living good, but Christianity says that Jesus did not come to make bad people good, but dead people-live!

(ILL) Exodus pattern-redeemed from Egypt, given the law, provided the tabernacle

TRUTH: Only God, by Christ, can redeem me, make me alive, and enable me to live godly

(ILL) Romans 1-7 (plight) Romans 8 (hope) 9-11 (responsibility)

- ✓ Don't push ourselves to accomplish the wheel of life or 5 pillars of Islam
- ✓ We die to self and allow the life of Spirit to make us live

d. Destiny- Where am I going?

Nirvana? Cycle of reincarnation?

*In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:2-3 NKJV*

4. Christianity demonstrates objective evidence of its truth claims

a. Proven reliability of scripture and prophecy

Plato (Tetralogies) 427-347 B.C.

- ✓ Earliest copy A.D. 900 (1000 years span)
- ✓ 10 Copies

Aristotle 384-322 B.C.

- ✓ Earliest copy A.D. 1100 (1400 year span)
- ✓ 49 copies

Homer's Iliad 900 B.C.

- ✓ Earliest copy 400 BC (500 year span)
- ✓ 643 copies (87% accuracy)

## New Testament AD 50-100

- ✓ Earliest copy AD 125 (25 year span)
- ✓ Over 24,000 copies (99.7% accuracy)

### b. The demonstrated perfection of Christ

- ✓ Matthew's Gospel records the perfection of Jesus
- ✓ 3 phases of Roman trial-no accusation
- ✓ He is guiltless

(ILL) Quest for historical Jesus-supernatural is impossible-most of gospels must be fabricated

BUT-19<sup>th</sup> century historian Phillip Schaaff-proved from text the ethical purity of Jesus-this he said was a miracle so all the other miracles are clearly true

- c. Observations and examinations serve to prove that the principles of life and human nature are consistent with those taught in Christianity

(A merry heart, prayer)

- d. Evidence of uniquely transformed lives of individuals and a huge mark on history

## One Solitary Life

*He was born in an obscure village  
The child of a peasant woman  
He grew up in another obscure village  
Where he worked in a carpenter shop  
Until he was thirty*

*He never wrote a book  
He never held an office  
He never went to college  
He never visited a big city  
He never travelled more than two hundred miles  
From the place where he was born  
He did none of the things  
Usually associated with greatness  
He had no credentials but himself*

*He was only thirty three*

*His friends ran away  
One of them denied him  
He was turned over to his enemies  
And went through the mockery of a trial  
He was nailed to a cross between two thieves  
While dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing  
The only property he had on earth*

*When he was dead  
He was laid in a borrowed grave  
Through the pity of a friend*

*Nineteen centuries have come and gone  
And today Jesus is the central figure of the human race  
And the leader of mankind's progress  
All the armies that have ever marched  
All the navies that have ever sailed  
All the parliaments that have ever sat  
All the kings that ever reigned put together  
Have not affected the life of mankind on earth  
As powerfully as that one solitary life-Dr James Allan*

NOTE: It is a shocking claim but it passes the scrutiny of truth claims—"I am the way...."

## **II. The Marvelous Promise**

*In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:2-3 NKJV*

## **III. The Liberating Hope**

- A. Don't remove from context
- B. Peter's great failure

*Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times. John 13:38 NKJV*

- C. The hope

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. John 14:1 NKJV*

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“I am the way...not your goodness, holiness, exploits...”

1. Truth-I embody the truth-supreme revelation of God
2. Life-because I have life in Him
3. Because of both-I AM THE ONLY WAY TO THE FATHER!

**Conclusion:** G.K. Chesterton

*“The problem with Christianity is not that it has been tried and been found wanting, but rather than it has been found difficult and left untried.”*