



# IS JESUS THE ONLY WAY?

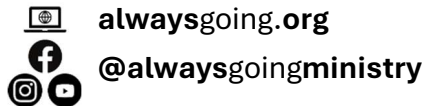


**COMMON  
QUESTIONS**



At Always Going, we don't teach tips and tricks, but an outward-focused worldview that will excite you to join God's mission and have you looking for gospel conversations with anyone, at any time, and anywhere.

Visit the website or reach out to learn more or get involved!



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## Conclusion

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The exclusivity of Jesus Christ shouldn't diminish our confidence, cause us to shrink back in fear, or keep us quiet. Rather, it should spur us on—igniting a deeper urgency and joy within us. Knowing that Jesus is the only way for sinners to be right with God is not a burden, it's our motivation to share the good news.

Now that we've explored the question, opened God's Word, responded to some of the most common objections from the Pluralist and Inclusivist views, and examined our own hearts, it's time to bring our knowledge to life.

Knowledge can't stay locked away in our heads. It must move into our hearts and out of our mouths. The truth of Christ's exclusivity isn't about closing doors but calling out to those who need rescue. Like a firefighter evacuating a burning building, we are the ones pointing the lost toward the door that will bring them to safety. This image is an urgent reminder of the need for the gospel our call to speak boldly, act compassionately, and trust deeply.

As you go, remember that evangelism and apologetics are not about winning an argument or scoring the most points but about pointing people to Jesus. Jesus is the *only* way. Because of Him, there's hope for all who call upon His name.

## Introduction

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Think back to the moment you surrendered your heart and life to Jesus Christ. This moment is often accompanied by great excitement, joy, and an overwhelming desire to tell others, "He changed my life, and He can change yours, too!"

However, this excitement is sometimes short-lived as we're met with questions or critiques we weren't prepared to address. Embarrassment, fear, and discomfort creep in as we feel unprepared and caught off guard. Sound familiar?

There are many questions and critiques we should expect when sharing the gospel. These questions can stem from deep emotional trauma, militant anger, sarcastic mockery, or genuine curiosity. The question, "Is Jesus the only way?" can come from those in any category. Some ask, like the Philippian jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" while others mock the exclusive claim of the gospel.

This booklet will break down the various assumptions and questions *behind* this question. It will look to God's Word to help us understand, discuss various ways to respond, and, most importantly, it will use this question of eternal exclusivity as an opportunity for *us* to reflect deeper.

Rather than presenting a "how-to" guide in Bible thumping, this booklet will call you to examine your heart and life—motivating you to love your neighbor by sharing the good news of Jesus.

## Understand

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The first step to answering this question and building a response is fully understanding the assumptions behind it. These are often referred to as *presuppositions*. When we're asked this question, it's clearly in the context of salvation. The question isn't, "is Jesus the *only* way to the store?" but if Jesus is the *only way to be saved* or *to go to heaven*.

Before we answer that question, however, let's look at what is already being admitted or assumed by anyone asking it:

- 1) The existence of a higher power(s)
- 2) That there is an afterlife
- 3) That Jesus *can* save

Recognizing these areas of common ground makes it so much easier to explain the gospel. Now that we have the groundwork laid, let's return to the question, "Is there only one way to be saved or do all roads lead to salvation?" Let's discuss two prevalent views behind questions like this.

**PLURALISM** – the belief that all religions are equally valid paths to salvation. There are many gods. There are many ways.

This idea resonates deeply in today's age—in a culture where tolerance and inclusivity trump truth and objectivity. In this world, people are discouraged from making objective truth claims, especially if they lead to division or hurt feelings. The idea that one religion could hold the exclusive truth about salvation is often met with resistance. The claim of Pluralism is that all religions lead to the same place.

## Reflect

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Before using proof texts to beat people over the head with the Bible, let's take a step back. Sharing the gospel isn't *just* about knowing the right answers or having airtight arguments. We need to fill up before we go out. Let's examine our own hearts and lives by reflecting on the same passages we've already studied.

### John 14:6

*"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"*

Am I walking in Jesus' way daily?

Does my lifestyle reflect that I believe He is the only way?"

### 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."*

Am I willing to proclaim Jesus boldly, trusting the Spirit to work, even when it's hard or uncomfortable?

### 1 Timothy 2:5-6

*"For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people."*

Am I trusting Jesus as my mediator and relying on His grace, or am I trying to add to His finished work?

### Romans 10:13

*"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Do I reflect on my own salvation, and is that motivating me to reach others with the gospel?

## Respond

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Now that we've seen how Scripture answers the claims of Pluralism and Inclusivism, let's look at some of the most common statements or objections from those viewpoints.

1. *"All religions teach basically the same thing, so why does it matter which one I follow?"*
2. *"If God is loving, wouldn't He accept everyone, no matter what they believe?"*
3. *"I believe all paths lead to God, whether it's Jesus, Buddha, or something else"*
4. *"It's arrogant to claim that your religion is the only way."*
5. *"People who have never heard of Jesus are judged only based on what they do know."*
6. *"It doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you're sincere."*
7. *"What about people who have never heard of Jesus? Surely God won't condemn them for that."*
8. *"I believe in Jesus, but people of other religions can be saved as long as they are following God."*
9. *"It doesn't seem fair that someone who's never had the chance to hear about Jesus would go to hell."*

Each of these claims or objections has its own nuance. Take some time and consider how you would respond to each one, but remember that you are not trying to win an argument, you're trying to point them to Christ.

**INCLUSIVISM** – the belief that people of all religions can be saved through Christ. There is one God. There are many ways.

Inclusivism takes a different approach from Pluralism. It affirms the one true God and that Jesus is the *only* savior. But it also claims that people can be saved through Him without ever explicitly *knowing* Him. It is essentially bridging the gap between Pluralism and Exclusivism—the belief that faith in Christ is the only way to be saved.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Both Pluralism and Inclusivism are attempting to address the same difficult claim: Jesus is the only way to salvation. They both seek to soften the blow, but in doing so they undermine the core of the gospel message. The good news is that God has provided a way back to Him when there was *no* other way. Though salvation is *exclusively* found in Christ, this invitation to faith is *inclusive*, calling on all to believe in Him for salvation.

Next, let's look at how Scripture answers this common question.

## Read

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When we are asked questions like this, it is important to understand the issue at hand, but we cannot give a sufficient answer without knowing what God says. Let's look at three key passages that address the question of Christ's exclusivity.

### John 14:6

*"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"*

This is one of the most central verses in the entire Bible when it comes to the exclusivity of Christ. Jesus makes it obvious by saying it Himself. What's the problem? Eternal separation from God and our inability to come to the Father on our own. What, or better yet, *who* is the solution? "I am." Jesus is the only way to the Father. His claim leaves no room for other ways of salvation. His statement is explicitly exclusive. He isn't *one of many* options but clearly states that He is the *only* option.

### 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"*

Early in the life of the Church, the Apostles were going around and preaching the gospel message. On street corners and in synagogues, they would proclaim that Jesus died and rose again. The Apostle Peter boldly preached to Jews and Gentiles alike that this Jesus is the only way to salvation. He rules out all other names that people could ever trust in and in the face of torture and imprisonment, he calls them to wholeheartedly trust in Jesus.

### 1 Timothy 2:5-6

*"For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people."*

Whether it's from the mouth of Jesus, the preaching of Peter, or the pen of Paul, we hear the same message: Jesus is the only way. This isn't a difficult answer to see... it's a difficult pill to swallow. Yet, there are still those that would say, "Yes, Jesus *is* the only way, but what about those who *believe* in God but have never heard about Jesus? Isn't His mercy big enough?"

Before we respond, let's pause and remind ourselves of God's goodness—that He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked but is pleased when they turn from their ways (Ezekiel 18:23). We'll use this last passage to address our natural tendency toward Inclusivism.

### Romans 10:9,13-15

*"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"*

What is the prerequisite for salvation? Faith in Christ as Lord. Jesus is the only way, and everyone who calls on Him will be saved. Then, Paul topples the domino that leads to the implied conclusion: Believers need to get out there and preach the gospel! He warns us that if we don't tell people, they will never know. As believers, we must hold the tension between this mission and the sovereignty of God. He is in control, *and* He has chosen to use us to reach the lost.