

Why We Believe Man Needs a Savior and He is Jesus

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1) Why do we believe man needs a Savior?

A) Is Man a Sinner?

- Romans 3:23
- Psalm 32:1-2
- James 2:10

B) What is the Penalty of Sin?

- Romans 5:12
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:13

2) Why Do We Believe Jesus is That Savior?

A) The Criteria Met

- i) Sinless - 1 Pt. 2:21-22; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 John 3:5
- ii) Human - Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Heb. 4:14-16
- iii) God (infinite) - Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:6; John 5:18; Mark 2:1-13; Matt. 1:23

B) The Right Response

i) Faith in Him

- John 14:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10

ii) No Faith in Yourself

- Matt. 16:24; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:20

iii) Following Him in Worship All Your Days

- 1 John 3:1-3; Matt. 16:24; 1 Cor. 6:20, 16:22

(#1) Objections to the **sinful nature**

- People are basically good
- I'm a pretty good person
- I think I'm good enough to go to heaven
- My good outweighs my bad

Good Person Test #1

- On a scale of 0 to 100 how good have you been in your life? _____
- On a scale of 0 to 100 how good _____? _____

Good Person Test #2

- Have you ever used the name of God in vain?
- Have you ever dishonored your father or mother?
- Have you ever been angry with and said hateful things to your brother or sister?
- You have ever looked at someone other than your spouse with lustful thoughts?
- Have you ever stolen anything from anyone?
- Have you ever lied?
- Have you ever coveted someone else's anything?
- Estimate how many times you have done all of these things? _____
- Where are these questions from?
- What does God think about this? James 2:10

What is God's standard for people? How does He measure our goodness?

- Many people believe that mankind is basically good.
- Many people think they are good because they compare themselves with other people who they consider to be not as good as they are.
- But God does not measure our goodness against other people.
- God measures our goodness against Himself.
- In Matthew 5:48 Jesus said – "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
- Where does that leave us?

How did we get here?

- It started in the garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-7)
- Sin = missing the mark, disobeying God's law, rebellion, being your own god, lawlessness
- After the first sin it began to spiral out of control
 - Genesis 6:5
 - Romans 5:12
 - Psalm 51:1-9
 - Jeremiah 17:9
 - Ecclesiastes 7:20
 - Isaiah 53:6
 - Romans 3:9-18
 - Romans 7:18-19

How bad is sin, really? It's DEVASTATING!

- It severs relationships (Gen 3:8; Isa 59:2-14)

- It brings death (Rom 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3,12)
- It brings eternal judgment (2 Thess 1:5-10)

Can't I just do more good to overcome my bad?

- Isaiah 64:6
- Matt 5:48
- James 2:10
- Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16

If no one is perfect, and God requires perfection, how can anyone meet His standards?

- Acts 2:36-37
- Eph 2:1-4;
- Acts 2:38
- Eph 2:8-9
- John 3:14-18
- Romans 10:9-10
- 2 Cor 5:18-21
- 2 Cor 5:15
- Mark 8:34-37
- Phil 3:4-9

(#2) Objections to Jesus

- He did not exist at all. Jesus Christ is a myth
- Jesus' resurrection from the dead was fraudulent
- He was just a man
- He was not the messiah
- He was certainly not God
- He was probably just delusional

Who is Jesus? Why should people care?

- This is the most important question in the world?
- Everything hinges on the answer to this question.
- If Jesus existed...
- If Jesus is Messiah...
- If Jesus is the Creator God...
- If Jesus rose from the dead...
- Then these facts demand a response from every person
- McFarland explains the urgency like this, "Because for those who believe in Jesus and His resurrection, it is potentially the wonderful gateway into an everlasting life. But for those who reject the notion, it is possibly the one-way ticket to an eternity of unimaginable misery."
- But if these things are not true... Paul explains how foolish we are.
 - o 1 Cor 15:14 – "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain."
 - o 1 Cor 15:17 – "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."
 - o 1 Cor 15:18 – "Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished."
 - o 1 Cor 15:19 – "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

How do we know Jesus existed at all?

- Answer: the same way we know anyone in history existed – the testimony of others.
- We already know that the Bible claims that Jesus existed. All of the New Testament authors discuss Him by name
- At least 19 other ancient sources refer to Jesus Christ as a real person
 - o Thallus (historian, wrote in A.D. 52; references Christ's crucifixion) Cornelius Tacitus (called "greatest historian of Ancient Rome," lived around A.D. 64-116; confirms that Christ "suffered under Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea") Gaius Suetonius (Roman historian, wrote in approximately A.D. 120) Emperor Trajan (contemporary with Pliny) Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117-138) Lucian of Samosata (Greek satirist, A.D. 170; refers to Christians' worship of "a man," a "crucified sage" who is "their lawgiver") Mara Bar-Serapion (first-century Syrian writer, wrote about A.D. 70; says the Jews "executed their wise King." Places Jesus on the same level as other ancient leaders and gods, but says "the wise King" died for a good cause and His teachings live on in His followers) Phlegon (born A.D. 80; about A.D. 140 writes in reference to Jesus' suffering and the darkness that occurred at the time of His death) Plinius Secundus (also called "Pliny the Younger"; in A.D. 112 writes about the Christians' belief that Jesus was deity) Julianus Africanus (about A.D. 221; references Christ's death at Passover and the darkness that ensued) McFarland
- One of the most famous and respected secular historians, Titus Flavius Josephus, was born in Jerusalem just a few years after Jesus was crucified (37AD – 100AD)
 - o Josephus was a court historian for Roman Emperor Vespasian. He wrote the following as a secular author – "At that time lived Jesus, a holy man, if He may be called, for He performed wonderful works, and taught men, and joyfully received the truth. And He was followed by many Jews and Greeks. He was the Messiah." Josephus further authenticated that Jesus was tried by Pilate, accused by powerful Jewish leaders, was crucified and was seen alive three days later—"restored to life." McFarland
- To sum up, Clifford Herschel Moore, Harvard University professor states, "Jesus was a historical not a mythical being. No remote or foul myth obtruded itself on the Christian believer; his faith was founded on positive, historical and acceptable facts."

Who is Jesus according to the Bible?

- According to the Bible Jesus is like no other man in history.
- Why?
- His birth and life were prophesied hundreds of years in advance of Him being born with perfect accuracy.
 - o As was mentioned before Peter Stoner, a skeptic of the Bible turned believer, found 48 prophecies in the Old Testament that were all fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ. Coincidence?
- He had a supernatural birth being born of a virgin (Luke 1:31-37)
- He performed miraculous deeds (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
- He taught with authority like no one else. (Luke 4:32)
- Exercised authority over (people, nature, demons, diseases, etc) (MMLJ)
- He claimed to be God and was recognized by others as God
 - o John 1:1; John 8:56-59
 - o Luke 1:31-35; Luke 1:42-43; Luke 2:10-11
 - o Matt 1:20-23
 - o Titus 2:13
 - o Phil 2:5-11
 - o Many more...
- He claimed to be sinless and was recognized by others as being sinless
 - o Luke 1:35
 - o John 8:29; John 19:4
 - o 2 Cor 5:21
 - o 1 Pet 1:18-19; 2:22; 3:18
 - o Heb 4:15
 - o 1 John 3:5
- Although there are some people in history who have claimed one or more of these things to be true of themselves, none can claim them all, and none have the widespread acceptance by others that all these things are true of them. Jesus is unique.
- But there is one thing that happened to Jesus no one else has ever been able to claim with proof – resurrection from the dead.

How do we know that Jesus rose from the dead and why is that so important?

- Why is proving this so important?
 - o We already discussed its importance as explained by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 15.
 - o "... either the resurrection happened and Jesus is who He claimed to be, or it didn't and we are under no obligation to any of His teachings or example. We can— and should!— do as we please." – McFarland
 - o If the resurrection is true then it proves all that Jesus said about Himself, and all that others in the Bible claimed to be true of Him.
- "I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better, fuller evidence of every sort than the great sign that Christ died and rose again from the dead." —Thomas Arnold, professor of history at Rugby University in Oxford, England
- The following men attempted to disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In their efforts they came to believe exactly the opposite and instead became believers in Jesus Christ.
 - o Gilbert West (1703-1756)

- George Lyttelton (1709-1773)
- Albert Henry Ross (Frank Morison) (1881-1950) - Albert Ross was a lawyer, journalist, and novelist who grew up in Stratford-on-Avon, England. He was deeply affected by the skepticism of the times, particularly the attacks on the Bible by theological liberalism and Darwinism. After becoming a lawyer, he set out to write a book to disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Instead, he was converted and wrote a book in defense of the resurrection entitled *WHO MOVED THE STONE?* -- which is still in print today. He wrote the book under the name of Frank Morison.
- Simon Greenleaf (1783-1853) - Simon Greenleaf, Royall Professor of Law at Harvard University, was one of the most celebrated legal minds in American history. His *Treatise on the Law of Evidence* "is still considered the greatest single authority on evidence in the entire literature of legal procedure."

As a law professor, he determined to expose the "myth" of the resurrection of Christ once and for all, but his thorough examination forced him to conclude, instead, that Jesus did rise from the dead. In 1846 he published *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice*.
- "No intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that indeed the resurrection story is true." —Lord Darling, former chief justice of England

Main points of evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ

- Eyewitness accounts – Jesus showing Himself alive to over 600 people - Luke, the master historian explains in Acts 1:3 what Jesus did after He died and rose again.
 - Acts 1:3 – "To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a *period of forty days* and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God."
 - The Greek word for "convincing proofs" is "tekmerion". This word means "technical evidence, criterion for certainty". In other words, Jesus presented Himself to His disciples in such a manner as to prove to them, in a very technical manner, that He in fact had risen from the dead.
 - Resurrection appearances of Jesus
 - To Mary Magdalene (John 20: 11)
 - To "the other" women (Matt. 28: 9-10)
 - To Peter (Luke 24: 34)
 - To two disciples (Luke 24: 13-32)
 - To 10 apostles (Luke 24: 33-49)
 - To **Thomas and the other apostles (John 20: 26-30)
 - To seven apostles (John 21: 1-23)
 - To all the apostles (Matt. 28: 16-20)
 - To all the apostles again (Acts 1: 4-9)
 - To 500 brethren at once (1 Cor. 15: 6)
 - To James (1 Cor. 15: 7)
 - To Paul (1 Cor. 15: 7) (Who was Paul/Saul? A hater)
- The life altering responses of those who watched Jesus die and then saw Him alive are convincing testimonies to the validity of resurrection claims
 - Liars don't make good martyrs – "With the exception of John, the disciples each endured horrific deaths. They were variously crucified, boiled in a vat, and subject to other tortures and horrific ends. No sane person would willingly go through such torment simply to publicly "validate" a lie he had concocted. McFarland"
 - "It was therefore impossible that disciples] could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly

as they knew any other fact . . . The resurrection of Christ is the most verifiable fact of ancient history.” —Simon Greenleaf, founder of Harvard School of Law, after thorough investigation of whether or not Christ rose from the dead

- “In a matter of days, these cowards became fearless men, willing to die for the sake of what they’d seen.” McFarland
- “What evidence do we have for the resurrection of Christ beyond testimonies of the empty tomb, the numerous appearances of Jesus corroborated by several credible eyewitnesses, the instantaneous and absolute change in the disciples, and the complete silence of Jewish and Roman authorities (ever wonder why they were unable to silence the Christians?).” McFarland
 - Within 400 years Christianity became the official Roman religion
 - Despite constant worldwide persecution Christianity has grown and thrived
 - The main day of worship changed from Saturday (Sabbath) to Sunday (The Lord’s Day). Why?
 - All the NT authors claim the resurrection of Jesus
 - Early writings claiming the resurrection of Jesus
 - Pliny (Roman governor) (107 AD)
 - Ignatius (145-150 AD)
 - Justin Martyr (150 AD)
 - Iranaeus (152 AD)
 - Dionysius (170 AD)
 - Clement (194 AD)
 - Tertullian (200 AD)

Main claims that the resurrection was a fraud

- Claim #1 - The body was stolen – the resurrection was a fraud – Jesus is still dead
 - By the Jewish leaders
 - By the Roman soldiers
 - By the Disciples
- Response #1
 - Jewish leaders would have no motivation to steal or hide the body – just show the body and Christianity is instantly dead.
 - The Roman soldiers lives were at stake if the body was stolen – they would have been motivated to show the dead body.
 - The disciples would have no reason to promote a lie with the kind of suffering and martyrdom that they experienced. Would they have really been able to convince so many others?
 - How would the disciples move a 2-ton stone in front of the tomb without the Roman guards knowing about it?
- Claim #2 - Jesus never actually died at all – Fake death, so fake resurrection – “Christ was never actually dead after all. This theory claims that life never left His body on the cross, and that somehow in the cold, dank tomb, He revived.” McFarland
- Response #2
 - Flawed Reasoning
 - Flogged and whipped with 39 lashes
 - Carried 150lb cross across Jerusalem
 - Had his hands and feet nailed to the cross
 - Remained motionless for several hours (no signs of breathing)
 - Stayed this way while women wrapped his body head to toe in cloth, anointing it with 75 lbs of spices
 - He then moved a 2-ton stone

- Snuck by armed guards
 - Despite being wounded by a spear in his side, bloody, dehydrated
 - Convinced everyone he defeated death
 - ** But actually he had only been merely unconscious and had revived!
 - ** He was in critical condition like any other human would have been.
 - ** The disciples and women were extremely stupid because they could not tell the difference.
- Archaeology confirms that crucifixion was not survivable – “In Jesus’ case, Pilate sent a soldier for this specific reason, yet He was pronounced dead upon examination. Just to make sure, Jesus’ side was pierced by a massive spear, which if He weren’t already dead, would have surely killed Him. The heart is surrounded by a sac of water called the pericardium. Any breach of this membrane would have meant instant death. In fact, the pleural fluids that gushed out of Jesus’ side were medical evidence of this. The mix of blood and water clearly proved to everyone present that day that Christ was indeed dead.” – McFarland
 - “Jesus’ death as a consequence of crucifixion is indisputable.” —Gerd Ludemann, German New Testament scholar, who claims to be an atheist
 - “As a lawyer, I have made a prolonged study of the evidences for the events of the first Easter. To me, the evidence is absolutely conclusive. Over and over in the court I have secured the verdict on evidences not nearly so compelling.” —Sir Edward Clarke, nineteenth-century English lawyer
 - “It can be asserted with confidence that men and women disbelieve the Easter story not because of the evidence but in spite of it.” —J. N. D. Anderson, lawyer and institute director at the University of London

Conclusion

- The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are irrefutable facts.
- He chose (willed) the moment of his death (Lk 23:46; Matt 27:50; Jn 19:30)
 - He willed his own death – the separation of his body and soul
 - “He exerted control over life and had victorious power over death. No other figure in all of history can list these abilities on their résumé. Jesus stands alone.” McFarland
- The only logical conclusion is that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, Son of God in human flesh, Creator God, One who needs to be reckoned with.
- The proof is overwhelming... May the Holy Spirit persuade you!

(#3) Objections to **Jesus as the only way**

- There are many ways to get to heaven
- All religions are basically the same
- Each person should choose the way that's right for them
- Any religion that thinks theirs is the only way is narrow-minded

Believing that Jesus' way is the only way is not popular

- 80 % believe there is more than one way to get to heaven
- 91 % of Catholics believe this
- 68 % of Protestants believe this
- 65 % of Evangelical teens believe this
- 65 % of Evangelical teens say that you can't be sure which religion is right
- Classic writer G. K. Chesterton states it this way: "When people cease to believe in God, they do not believe in nothing, they believe in anything."
- "As a result, God— in whatever form you chose Him— is seen merely as a "life coach" to get you from point A to a much-better-you point B. "Rather than being about a god who commands you, it's about finding a religion that empowers you," McFarland – This is the lie that we see out of preachers like Joel Osteen
- Hank Hanegraff explains how some of this came to be: The year was 1893. The place was Chicago. Buddhists, Bahá'ís, and Bhakti Yogis had arrived from the East to attend the inaugural World's Parliament of Religions. While their contingent was sizable, they were vastly outnumbered by Bible believers from the West. Despite the disparity in numbers, however, the impact of the Eastern contingent was monumental. Swami Vivekananda, a disciple of the self-proclaimed "god-man" Sri Ramakrishna, used the Parliament to skillfully sow the seeds for a new global spirituality. Personifying tolerance and tact, he persuasively proclaimed the fundamental unity of all the world's religions. One hundred years later — at the centennial celebration of the original Parliament (August 1993) — the impact of Vivekananda's message could be seen in living color. Buddhists outnumbered Baptists, and saffron robes were much more common than Christian clerical clothing. The swami's message of unification and universalism had undergone a metamorphosis as well. Almost imperceptibly, it had evolved into a sinister creed: The fundamental unity of all religions except one — *historic Christianity*. With alarming fanaticism orthodox Christianity was denounced as the obstacle to harmonizing the world's religions. In a session titled "Voices of Spirit and Tradition," the director dogmatically declared that people must be weaned from the divisive doctrine that *only their own religion is true*. During a plenary performance titled "The Truth Spin Dance," the very idea of objective truth was mercilessly mocked. Loud laughter erupted at the mere mention of "the Gospel truth."
- In 2000, VATICAN CITY--Tempering a controversial Vatican declaration on salvation, Pope John Paul II said this week that all who live a just life will be saved, even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church. The pontiff, addressing 30,000 pilgrims in St. Peter's Square on Wednesday, strongly reasserted the Second Vatican Council's liberal interpretation of the Bible's teaching on salvation. "The gospel teaches us that those who live in accordance with the Beatitudes--the poor in spirit, the pure of heart, those who bear lovingly the sufferings of life--will enter God's kingdom," John Paul said.

Are all religions basically the same?

- Illustration from "Light in the darkness" sadhu, all religions are "same same"
- R.C. Sproul tells about the following conversation with a Bahai priest (religion that is attempting to unite all religions into one): "I once had a conversation with a Bahai priest. He told me that all religions were equally valid. I began to interrogate him concerning the points of conflict that exist between Islam and Buddhism, between Confucianism and Judaism, and between Christianity and Taoism. The man responded by saying that he didn't know anything about Islam, Judaism, or the rest but that he did know they were all the same. I wondered aloud how anyone could assert that all religions were the same when he had no knowledge of what those religions professed or denied" (Reason To Believe, p. 39)
- How can all religions be the same when they have major differences?

Major Differences (a few examples)

- Buddhism denies the existence of a personal God but Christianity affirms that God is personal.
- Orthodox Jews deny life after death but Christianity affirms it.
- Classical Islam endorses the killing of infidels but Christianity affirms loving your enemies.
- How can Buddha (agnostic), Hindus (pantheistic), and Christians (monotheistic) all believe in the same God?
- These religions are not the same they are CONTRADICTIONARY!

Only 2 Religions in the world

- Human achievement – man earns his own “salvation”
- Divine accomplishment – what man cannot achieve, God provides as a gift

Is any faith sufficient, even if it is sincere?

- Mormonism and Jehovah’s witnesses even claim to believe or have genuine faith in “Jesus”
- Problem:
 - They believe in a different Jesus, not the One who is God.
 - Does that work to just believe in someone named Jesus?
 - What saves a person? Faith? Or the object of that Faith?
 - If I believed that President Obama could save me... with all my heart... would that work?
 - So then believing in the wrong God or the wrong Jesus will not work either.
- What does the Bible say about this?
 - 2 Cor 11:2-4
 - Gal 1:6-9
 - John 8:23-24

So far here is what we have discussed:

- God is real
- The Bible, is God’s Word, and is verifiably authentic, accurate, trustworthy and authoritative
- Jesus Christ lived, died, and fulfilled his claim as God’s Son by rising from the dead

What does the real Jesus say about Himself? How does He think people should view Him? One option?

- John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- Matthew 11:27 - “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.
- John 18:37 - Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth.

Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

- John 6:40 - “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”
- John 6:47 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.
- John 3:14–17 - 14 “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. 16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.
- John 10:28–30 - 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 “My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father’s hand. 30 “I and the Father are one.”
- John 11:25–26 - 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”
- John 8:31–32 - 31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”
- Matthew 10:32–33 - 32 “Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 “But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.
- Matthew 7:13 - “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.
- Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way *which seems* right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- Isaiah 43:10–11 - 10 “You are My witnesses,” declares the Lord, “And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me. 11 “I, even I, am the Lord, And there is no savior besides Me.
- 1 Timothy 1:15 - It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*.

- How do we summarize all of this?
- Two words: _____

- “No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Yes, that includes Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus and anyone else worshiping another god. But it also includes the “good ol’ boy” who assumes he’s going to heaven because he’s always tried to do the right thing. It includes the couple that has been in church every time the doors are open but who have never accepted Jesus as their savior. And it includes you and me— if we do not profess that Jesus is Lord and seek His salvation.” - McFarland

- Other claims of exclusivity from the Bible
 - Acts 4:12
 - 1 Tim 2:3-6
 - Col 2:20-23
 - Psalm 2
 - Rev 19:11-21
- Lee Strobel – “While other religious leaders can offer wise sayings and helpful advice and insights, only Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of God, is qualified to offer himself as payment for our wrongdoing. No other religious leader even pretended to be able to do that.”
- Theologian R.C. Sproul puts it this way, “Moses could mediate on the Law. Mohammed could brandish a sword. Buddha could give personal counsel. Confucius could offer wise sayings. But none of these men was qualified to offer an atonement for the sins of the world. Jesus alone was qualified.”

a. Reality

i. We have a problem

1. Many people who are diagnosed with cancer for the first time have this reaction: "How can that be? I feel great."
2. This is same thing with people who don't realize that they have a sin problem, and it's deadly.

But isn't this the age of tolerance?

- Many people view tolerance in relationships, and religion as a virtue.
- But all people view tolerance in "truth" is recognized as absurd.
- Silly examples:
 - In engineering is $2 + 2 = 27$, then nothing will stand
 - If I decide to pay for a Mercedes with a \$1 bill then I will be charged with grand theft auto
- Tolerating and accepting as valid things that are false in every arena is insanity
- Arguing with the God of the universe = insanity

Often narrow-mindedness is a good thing

"A few years ago, some friends' baby girl developed jaundice, which is a disorder of the liver that caused her skin and the whites of her eyes to turn yellow. Of course her parents were very concerned, so they took the child to the pediatrician. The pediatrician told them jaundice is a potentially devastating disease, but it is also easily cured: all they had to do was to put the baby under a special light that stimulates healthy liver function. The parents could have listened to this from the doctor and said, "That sounds too easy. Just put her under a light? What if instead we scrub her with soap and water and dip her in bleach? Certainly if we worked hard enough we could get her normal coloring back."

The doctor would have looked at them and said, "You don't understand. There is only one way to cure your daughter." They could have replied, "What if we just ignore all this and pretend everything's okay. The jaundice is your truth, doc; it's not our truth. If we sincerely believe that, things will turn out for the best in the long haul."

The doctor would have said, "You're going to jeopardize the life of your child if you do that. There is only one way to cure her. You're hesitant to pursue treatment because it sounds too easy. But look at the credentials on my wall. I've studied at medical school. I've used what I've learned to treat and to cure countless babies. Trust me."

Would anybody accuse those parents of being narrow-minded if they trusted a doctor with credentials and pursued the only course of treatment that was going to cure their little girl? Of course not! That is not being narrow-minded. That is acting rationally and in accordance with the evidence."

The same story applied to the illness of our soul:

- Every person has a terminal illness called sin
- Jesus is the Great Physician who has told us the only way to cure the illness
- People can try to scrub away their sins with good deeds
- Others can believe and live as though there is some other cure
- These people can be very sincere in these beliefs
- But Jesus has the credentials to back up His claim as the only cure
- But as Romans 1:22 states, "Professing to be wise they became fools."

Conclusion

- If there was more than one way to get to heaven then why did Jesus go to the cross? He died in vain!
- Conclusions from a message on the same topic by Dr. Paul Brown:
 - Religious toleration in our country does not mean that all religions are equally valid in their truth claims.
 - Objective evidence, not arrogance, must be the basis for Christian truth-claims.
 - All religions do not teach the same thing but differ at key points.
 - The uniqueness of Christ and His own exclusive claims are the heart of the issue.
 - Believing something doesn't make it true anymore than failing to believe truth makes it false. Facts are facts, regardless of people's attitudes toward them. The basic religious question still remains, is it true?
 - In spite of the world's constant rebellion against God, He has provided a way of redemption.
- Jesus is the only way
 - Acts 4:12
 - 2 Cor 5:14-21

Recommended Reading

1. *The Bible* – by God
2. *The 10 Most Common Objections to Christianity* – by Alex McFarland
3. *Can I Really Trust the Bible?* – by Barry Cooper