

**Who is Jesus?**  
**The Way, the Truth and the Life**  
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost  
July 19, 2009

As we continue in our series, “Who is Jesus?” we are looking at this passage in John that says, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” Specifically, we are looking at Jesus calling Himself, “The Way.”

This verse, verse 6 of John 14 is really the root of all of John’s theology. “I AM the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the father except through me.” If you wanted a single dominant thought from the book of John: this would certainly be a candidate. John is always showing Jesus’ sayings as a revelation of His personal identity and His relation with the Father. This verse is one of the best pictures of who Jesus is that we have in all of scripture. This verse describes tells us that we can trust Jesus because He is Truth, as well the Way to life, that He *is* the Life, and that there is no other way. John 14:6 would be an excellent summary of who Jesus is: short, deep, and to the point.

In our world today, tolerance is king. Life has choices, options. That seems to be what many think life is all about: choices. The thought goes like this: “Heaven is a place right? There are all sorts of ways to get someplace. Jesus isn’t the only way...He is just one of a few different ways.” Think about it: you can get anywhere you want to go by a number of different routes: there are so many streets and paths that you can take to get someplace. If you want to get to Wal-Mart from here you can make a right out the church parking lot onto 139, then a left on 53 to the Mall. Or, you can turn left and take 139 to Silver street, turn right, take that to Old Washington street, then turn left on to 53. Or if you wanted to take a little drive you could take 139 left to Main Street, and take that to Union Street, which eventually turns into Old Washington. Or you could forget about Wal-Mart altogether, and just go to Target in Rockland!

Sure there is an easy way. Sure there is a faster way...but there are always options. Many people in today’s world think the same is true with heaven. Maybe Jesus is just the most direct route but there are other roads that will get you there. I mean seriously there can’t be just one way! There is more than one way to get everywhere! Heaven can’t be that different, can it?

How can this Jesus say: I am THE way? Jesus doesn’t say I am A way. He doesn’t say I am one of many possible ways. He says I am THE way the one and only, the exclusive way. Somebody should have told Him that if He wanted people to follow Him, He would have to offer more choices than that.

Many try to view religion like this. They try to mix and match the things they like and dislike. “I really like that religion makes me feel spiritual so I will take that...but I really do not like it when my church asks me to do something. I really don’t like it when I have to sacrifice stuff for the kingdom of God. I mean I love that the church watches my kids for me for an hour...but I also want to be able to go out and get drunk all the time. I love knowing that I am saved, mark me down for salvation all the way...but persecution...no thanks. So I want a church like that. A church that meets *my* needs. I want a religion that fits around *me*.” And somehow we take something that is all about God...and make it all about ourselves.

Church is evaluated on the style of music that people like...the way the preacher talks, how people *feel* about the service...the vibes that we get from the people...me...me...me... Here’s a bit of news that many forget: since it wasn’t us on the cross...it’s not about us. Christianity is not a route that we can take out of convenience or because it happens to fit with our way of thinking. Christianity follows Christ...and Christ is the way.

A lot of us think of religion like a buffet: you can go up as many times as you want. You can change your mind over and over again. You can pick out the food that you want and leave the food that you don’t. That would be fine if Christianity was a buffet you could take what you want and leave what you don’t. But Christianity is not a buffet, Christianity is a bridge. While there may be many different options for what you eat...there is only one way to cross a bridge – that is to cross it! How do we get across the bridge from earth to Heaven?

Jesus is *the* way. Jesus is not a way...not one way...He is *the* way. This implies exclusivity or uniqueness in nature. The inclusion of the word ‘the’ tells us something...but the *exclusion* of something else tells us something as well. Jesus does not say: I am the *right* way. He simply says He is *the* way. Ok, but what does that mean?

If Jesus was the right way it would imply that everyone is moving. That everyone travels down a path and some of those paths are wrong, but Jesus is the right path. That is not what He is saying. Not moving is still wrong. If Jesus was the ‘right’ way then the only problem would be people needing to find His path. If Jesus is ‘the’ way...not only do they have to find His path...they have to *stop standing around and follow it*. Staying put does not help you. If you get lost a lot of times people will tell you to stay put and not to wander. This will keep you from getting more lost. But that is not the case here. You see, you may be lost, but you have directions. Directions that will lead you down the way. Directions that will lead you to the life. For that is the question isn’t it? If Jesus is the way...what is He the way too? Jesus is the way to Life. If you follow His path...you will find life.

More to the point, we will find Him. We will find Him standing with arms open wide waiting to receive us into the place He’s been preparing for us.

He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and the only way to get to Heaven, and He comes to us in His Word to show us Himself; to show us the heart of the Father; to invite us to receive the Holy Spirit, be made new, and come into His Kingdom.

Amen.