

12 N Bible Study- May 17, 2023

ENCLOSURE

THE ONLY WAY

List several false belief systems. Then list at least one way you know each one is false.

Finally, write a statement affirming your belief in Christ as the only way to heaven.

False belief system	Why it is false
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

My statement of faith in Christ as the only way to heaven:

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."

ACTS 4:12

THE POINT

- ▶ The Koran claims Jesus was not crucified, but that He only appeared to be crucified (Surah 4:157-58). This assertion flies in the face of one definite fact of history: Jesus' death by crucifixion. The crucifixion of Christ is foundational to the Christian faith. Are we to believe the Koran, a seventh-century source that contradicts earlier sources from the first and second centuries about a first-century event?
- ▶ Contrast the ultimate goal of both religions. Scripture points us to a new heaven and a new earth where God dwells with His people. The Koran says nothing about eternity with Allah; instead, it refers to the garden of Eden, a place of lust.
- ▶ In Islam, Allah is unknowable. In Christianity, God says, "But the one who boasts should boast in this: that he

understands and knows me—that I am the LORD, showing faithful love" (Jer. 9:24a).

- ▶ In Islam, Allah seems unconcerned about those who suffer and does not love unconditionally; he only loves the good Muslim. Yet, in the Bible, we see a God who loves all unconditionally (Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:16-18).

No, Christians and Muslims do not worship the same God. We could say the same thing about every other belief system that is not grounded solely in the teaching of Scripture. As God said about those who follow idols and all false belief systems, they receive no benefit whatsoever from their beliefs and practices. As we shall see next, though, we receive great, eternal benefit from knowing Jesus.

JOHN 14:5-7

⁵ "Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him."



QUESTION 4:

How would you summarize the differences between Christianity and other religions?

Thomas, speaking on behalf of all the disciples, asked a question that indicated they did not comprehend all Jesus was telling them. Jesus responded with a profound statement: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (v. 6). He used three telling words that capture one great truth about who He is.

▶ **Jesus is the way.** Couple this with what Jesus said next—"No one comes to the Father except through me" (v. 6)—and we hear a statement that flies in the face of the claim that all religions lead to God. We have no other way to God outside of Jesus. "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

▶ **Jesus is the truth.** Jesus is the way to the Father because He is the truth. Jesus did not say He has the truth or He knows the truth. He said, "I AM the truth." What I appreciate about Jesus' statement is that truth is personal. We find truth in a Person, Jesus Christ. Truth has a personal quality in it. Truth is exciting. Truth is life-changing. Truth is exclusive and transformative.

▶ **Jesus is the life.** As the only source of truth, Jesus is the only one who can give life. He gives us life because He is the life. "In him was life, and that life was the light of men" (John 1:4). Jesus is everything we need—in every circumstance.

Many people are offended by the exclusivity of Jesus' claim, but He validated it by the uniqueness of His life. Jesus taught like no other. He backed up His teaching by miracles. He showed He had the authority and the ability to forgive sins. What an amazing claim considering only God has the authority to forgive. The ultimate proof that Jesus is God was His resurrection from the dead. There is no other route to a relationship with God.

QUESTION 5:

What are some practical ways our group can communicate that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life?

LIVE IT OUT

How will the truth that Jesus is the One and only true God affect your life? Choose one of the following applications:

- ▶ **Be educated.** Make time to study the distinctives of Christianity in light of other religions. A good place to start is at *4truth.net*.
- ▶ **Be prayerful.** Partner with your Bible study group in praying for individuals you know who might question the exclusive claims of Christ. Pray for opportunities to share, and pray they would be open to the truth of who Jesus is.
- ▶ **Be compassionately bold.** Speak up! Don't be silent when someone claims all religions are the same. As you share about the uniqueness and exclusivity of Jesus, be a model of His love and grace.

We can afford to buy a cheap knock-off from time to time to save money (though often it ends up costing us more in the long run). But when it comes to our eternal soul, the consequences are too grave. We must trust in the one Person who can offer real redemption: Jesus Christ.

MAY 17

Praise for His Unfailing Goodness

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."

EXODUS 34:6 (NIV)

THE BIBLE PROVIDES many examples of giving praise and thanks even during the most challenging times. Reflect on Jesus giving thanks for the food and drink right before He was given to the Roman authorities. Or Job, who despite great suffering did not curse God. Or the Psalmist, who gave thanks even though he faced injustice. Thankfulness is rooted in the firm faith that God's nature is one of unfailing goodness.

Lord, I trust You and praise You for your infinite kindness.
