

The One and Only

Ice Breaker: What is the most exclusive place that you have ever been to?

John 14:6-7 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."*

Acts 4:10-12 *then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is " 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.' 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."*

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,*

1. What did Jesus claim about himself? (John 14:6-7) What did Peter claim about Jesus? (Acts 4:10-12) What did Paul claim about Jesus? (1 Timothy 2:5)

2. Why do you think that some people get offended by the Christian claim that Jesus is the only way to salvation?

Pastor Brian said that there are lots of reasons people are offended by the exclusive claim that Jesus is the only way. He separated them into three categories, **Intellectual**, **Behavioral**, and **Heart** reasons.

Intellectual

3. Pastor Brian said that we live in a pluralistic society. What does “pluralistic society” mean to you?

4. What do you think is the source of authority for this pluralistic society? The Intellectual reason for pluralism seems to follow a reasoning, “Who are we to insist that OUR religion is better than other religions.” What is wrong with this line of reasoning?

5. What is the source of authority for Jesus claiming that He is the only way to God? (Colossians 1:16-17)

Colossians 1:16-17 *For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

6. What is the central issue regarding our need for salvation? (1 Peter 3:18, Romans 3:23-24, Proverbs 9:10)

Romans 3:23-24 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.*

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Behavioral - The Behavioral reasons that people reject the exclusivity of Christ comes down to the actions and unloving attitudes of Christians.

7. Does the behavior of people make any objective facts more or less true?

8. How can we Christians be more effective at being imitators of Christ?

9. How can you be more loving to people around you?

Heart - The final category of reasons people are offended by the claim that Jesus is the only way, comes from the Heart. The cause of this offense is people we have known and loved who have not been Christians, and may be gone.

10. How do we handle the argument that the God who would send “good and decent people” to hell, must not be very loving? (John 3:16-18, 15:13; 2 Peter 3:9b) How can we show empathy, yet still stay true to the truth of the gospel?

John 3:16-18 – *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.*

John 15:13 *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*

2 Peter 3:9b – *9 ... Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

11. Pastor Brian said that a survey of American Christians found that only 29% said that Jesus is the only way to be saved. How would you explain “American Christians” believing there are other ways of finding salvation? (Matthew 7:21-23)

Matthew 7:21-23 *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and, in your name, perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’*

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.*

12. What does that fact that there is only one way to God say about our good works? (Can’t everyone do good works?) (Ephesians 2:8-9, Isaiah 64:6)

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Isaiah 64:6 *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like **filthy rags**; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.*

13. How does the fact that Jesus is the only way help you to live out your faith? What would be the result if more of us live as if Jesus alone by faith is our only hope of salvation?

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” - Jesus