
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: ***Are there many ways to heaven?***

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

According to this well-known passage there is only one way to heaven. If anyone wants to live forever in heaven, that person must submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most people who claim to be Christian would probably agree with that passage and statement. However, what most so-called "Christians" do not understand is that submitting to Jesus means we have no choice. Let me tell you about **five things** we have no choice about if we wish to go to heaven.

1) To be saved by Jesus means we have no choice about how to be saved.

Being saved is not as easy as TV evangelists make it seem. Being saved is more than merely believing in Jesus and saying a prayer. Consider these passages of scripture:

- Ja 2:24 – men are not saved by faith only.
- Heb 5:9 – Jesus is the Savior only of those who obey Him.
- Mt 7:21 – only those who do the Father's will can be saved.

According to Jesus, being saved includes four distinct steps:

- Jn 8:24 – one must believe that Jesus is the Son of God.
- Lk 13:3 – one must repent (or change his ways – change his lifestyle).
- Mt 10:32 – one must verbally confess his faith in Jesus.
- Mk 16:16 – one must be baptized for the remission of sins.

If someone is baptized thinking they are already saved, they did not get baptized for the correct reason. It is imperative that everyone examine their conversion experience. For unless one is *“born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”* (Jn 3:5).

2) To be saved by Jesus means we have no choice about how to worship.

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have already told us how worship is to be conducted. We have no choice. Consider the following passages of scripture:

- Mt 15:9 – we must worship as directed in scripture or else our worship will not be accepted.
- Eph 5:19 – singing is authorized in NT worship, but instrumental music is not authorized. This means we may worship God with vocal singing only and instruments are not accepted by God.
- Acts 20:7 – communion is to be observed on the first day of every week.
- 1 Cor 11:23-25 – communion is to be observed with one single loaf of unleavened bread and a single cup containing unfermented grape juice.
- 1 Cor 14:31-35 – the teaching is to be done by men only, speaking one person at a time. Simultaneous teaching is forbidden and women are also forbidden from teaching in public.
- 1 Cor 16:1-2 – the collection is to be taken up only on the first day of the week and is to be used only for members of the Lord’s church.

3) To be saved by Jesus means we have no choice about what to believe.

The word “doctrine” means teaching. Doctrine is important because what men and women believe affects how they act. When people believe they are animals, they act like animals. When people believe they are created in the image of God, they will act like God wants them to act. Consider the following passages of scripture:

- Col 2:14 – when Jesus died on the cross, the OT scriptures became invalid and obsolete for governing God’s people.
- Acts 2:42 – the disciples of Jesus began to follow the instructions of the apostles – not Moses and the prophets.
- Rom 15:4 – the OT scriptures are to be used for learning, but the NT scriptures are the guide and rule for belief and conduct today.

4) To be saved by Jesus means we have no choice about where to attend church.

The Lord died for His church (Acts 20:28). He died for and built only one church (Mt 16:18). He did not give anyone an option of where to place their membership. When men are saved from their sins, the Lord adds those saved people to His one church (Acts 2:41, 47).

In order for a church to qualify as the Lord's church, it must teach and practice exactly as the apostles instructed. Consider the following passages of scripture:

- 1 Cor 4:17 – the apostles taught the same thing in every place they went.
- Gal 1:8-9 – a curse was placed upon anyone who would teach anything differently than the apostles.
- Rev 22:18-19 – a curse is placed upon anyone who would add anything to the scriptures or delete anything from the scriptures.

Therefore, if we are to follow the instructions of the apostles and they all taught the same thing and if a curse is placed upon anyone who would teach anything differently, there must of necessity be only one church and each congregation of that one church should practice and teach exactly the same as the next congregation.

5) To be saved by Jesus means we have no choice about how to live our lives.

The Lord regulates not only our religious lives, but our private lives as well. We have no choice about how to conduct our lives, for the Lord Himself has legislated about the conduct of His people. Consider the following passages:

- 1 Tim 2:9-10 – Christians must dress themselves modestly. It is sinful to dress in a lewd fashion.
- Mt 12:36-37 – Christians must control their speech. It is sinful to use curse words and suggestive speech.
- Eph 4:25 – Christians are to be truthful. It is sinful to lie and deceive others.
- Mt 19:9 – Christians are not to divorce their spouses for trivial causes.
- Eph 5:3 – Christians are not to commit fornication, adultery nor acts of homosexuality. They are to keep themselves pure.

In summery, Christians are to live after the example of Jesus Himself. Christians should ask the question, "*What would Jesus do?*", and then act like Jesus would act.

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