

# Only One Way to God

by Mariano Di Gangi

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*Jesus is the only way to God, and we must have faith in him to have eternal life.*

**Duration:** 39:43

**Scripture:** John 14:1

**Topics:** "Jesus", "Exclusivity of Christ", "The Way to Salvation"

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## Description

Mariano Di Gangi emphasizes that Jesus is the only way to God, drawing from John 14:1-6, where Jesus reassures His disciples amidst their confusion and fear. He explains that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, highlighting that no one can come to the Father except through Him. Di Gangi elaborates on the significance of Jesus as the embodiment of truth and the source of eternal life, urging listeners to seek a personal relationship with Christ rather than mere knowledge about Him. He concludes by affirming the exclusivity of Christ as the only Savior, encouraging all to embrace Him for true salvation and purpose.

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## Transcript

Let us turn our attention to the Word of God, reading from the Gospel of John, the 14th chapter, and beginning there at verse 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me.

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way? Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would have known my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.

Philip said, Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us. Jesus answered, don't you know me, Philip? Even after I've been among you for such a long time, anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? I've read to the end of the ninth verse of the chapter, may God follow with his blessing the reading of his holy and inspired word.

We turn to the Gospel of John, the 14th chapter in our series, Self-Portraits of Jesus, and the subject that is before us, Only One Way to God. And the text, of course, is the sixth verse of the 14th chapter, when Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

This passage of Scripture is one of the better known passages. It's so well known and familiar that the danger is that we might miss its tremendous truths. You know the story, I'm sure.

Jesus has announced his death several times. He has mentioned it. He's told his disciples what is going to happen, the events of the cross, the events of the resurrection.

But somehow the truth has not sunk in. The disciples evidently did not understand what he was talking about. So when he mentions it again, they become disquieted.

They become troubled. They're bothered by the thought of his leaving them. And so Jesus responds to their need with these tremendous words of comfort, words that were no doubt precious to them at that time, but words that have become comfort to many, many people down through the centuries who bear the sadness of separation through death.

He assures his disciples that in leaving them, it is with purpose. And the purpose he had in mind was that he would prepare a place for them so that where he is there they may abide. In other words, he is preparing a place for them, a dwelling, a house, a mansion, a room.

The various translations differ. But it is eternal in the heavens. But then he assures his followers of the fact that they must be prepared for that prepared place.

And he tells them that he will come back to take them with him. And he says, you know the way to the place where I am going. You know the way to the place where I'm going.

He assumed that. He assumed that they knew. He had told them that so many times, you see.

But that's when Thomas interrupts. And Thomas, you know, was always the doubter and the questioner. The one who could never give in if he really didn't understand.

And so he speaks. And he says, Lord, we don't know where you are going. So how can we know the way? What was it? Ignorance.

They weren't really listening. They didn't understand. What was it? And yet it brought forth from the lips of Jesus, from the mind of our Savior, one of those amazing answers that give us a glimpse of who he is.

If Thomas had not asked the question, we might never have the reply. Jesus says, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

And what I propose to do this evening is just to take that text and work our way through it. Phrase by phrase. First of all, Jesus says, I am the way.

I suppose there are many ways of viewing life. One that scripture clearly mentions is that of a pilgrimage, a path away. We may think of the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 35 verses 8 and 9 as an example.

The scripture is full of examples. But here is what the prophet Isaiah says, and a highway will be there. It will be called the way of holiness.

The unclean will not journey on it. It will be for those who walk in that way. Wicked fools will not go about on it.

No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it. They will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there and the ransom of the Lord will return.

They will enter Zion with singing. Everlasting joy will crown their heads. What does the prophet say? He speaks of this highway that will be a path of holiness that would not have any unclean thing upon it.

He tells us that no lion will be there, nor will there be any other ravenous beast. Isaiah tells us that the ransomed of the Lord will walk there and they will go to Mount Zion with a song upon their lips in praise of God. I suppose Isaiah never imagined in his wildest dream that God Himself would become the path.

That God Himself would become the way to Himself. And yet that is so. Jesus, you see, fulfills the prophecy perfectly.

Jesus is the way for all. For royalty, for the wealthy, for those of influence, but also for the commoners, for the poor. Jesus is for every man and every woman.

Do you remember how he described this to us? He said, Whosoever will, let him come. And so you see we may step out tonight. We may begin the pilgrimage by committing ourselves to Jesus Christ.

He's the way for all. But second, Jesus is the way of holiness. Isaiah said that no unclean person may travel upon this way.

And surely, that's the whole point of the gospel, is it not? That this Jesus cleanses us from all sin. That he grants to us forgiveness. That he ransoms, that he heals, that he restores.

He leads us in the paths of righteousness. He's the way of holiness. And then Isaiah describes that the way is plain and straight.

The way of Jesus, my friends, is plain and it is straight. He reminded us that the wise and the prudent would miss it because it would be hidden from them. And yet he said babes would be able to see it.

Isn't that so? My plea tonight is that there'll be nothing complicated about this. No confusion, surely. Jesus makes his way plain.

And straightway it leads through Christ to the very heart of God. And even a child can see it. And a child can understand it.

And there's no one in this assembly within the sound of my voice who cannot know it. A number of years ago in the city of Chicago, the late Protestant theologian Karl Barth was giving a series of lectures. And I don't know whether you've read Karl Barth.

If you have tried to read him, he's a very deep, deep theologian. I know in my training I found him very difficult to read and to understand. So after he had finished these lectures, no doubt profound, he was asked by a questioner if he could sum up the gospel in a few sentences so that it could be plainly understood.

And Karl Barth answered that he could. And he suggested that he could do it by quoting a hymn that he learned at his mother's knee. And the hymn was this, Jesus loves me.

This I know, for the Bible tells me so. Plain and straight is the way that leads to God and all of us here may understand it. But Isaiah also spoke of being kept from harm, didn't he? Protection.

Of not having to fear the lion or any other ravenous beast. Surely that's the offer of Jesus, the way. He has said he will never leave us.

He will never forsake us. He will be the beginning. He will be the ending and everything in between.

You remember the words of Fanny Crosby, the hymn writer, all the way my Savior leads me. What have I to ask beside? Can I doubt his tender mercy who through life has been my guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in him to dwell. For I know what e'er befall me.

Jesus doeth all things well. He is the way we begin with him. He protects, he keeps us all the way through to the very end.

And then Isaiah said that the pilgrims would go to Zion with a song of praise on their lips. How can I describe the waves of joy that that sometimes roll in upon us in our journey with Jesus? There's a peace to be sure, isn't there? And our hearts sometimes are like to burst so much so that we want to break forth in a song. We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion.

We're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God. Have you ever been lost in a city? I'm sure you have. And sometimes you've even had a map in your hand when you're lost.

It still doesn't help you. You've been in the situation even with the map in your hand, you don't know where you are and you certainly don't know how to get where you're going. That's happened to me more times than I can tell you.

But I remember an experience I had traveling with my mother and father. We were going to visit an uncle in Cleveland, Ohio, and I was at the wheel of the car. I couldn't blame my dad and we were lost.

I'll never forget it. A car pulled ahead of us at the side of the road and this man got out and he came back to our car and he asked me if I was lost. And I confessed that I was and then he gave the usual reply, you know what it's like.

He told me to go down to the corner, to make a right turn, to go to a stoplight, and then to make a left turn, to go four blocks past the Esso station. It sounded so easy, but you see I didn't have a pad and I didn't have a pen and they went on and on these directions. And when he was finished I was as confused if not more so than when he had started.

And he saw the pleading look in my eyes, and you know what he said? Look, he said, I'll take you. Just follow my car. And that's what happened.

But do you see it? Do you see the significance? He gave the directions, but more than that, he became the way. He took me to my destination and that's exactly what Jesus is. He gives the directions, oh to be sure, but more than that.

He himself is the way. We begin our pilgrimage as Christians in the knowledge and in the faith of Jesus Christ and in no other way. And then he takes us on our journey right through to God.

So he says, I am the way. And then the second phrase, Jesus says, I am the truth. Now what did he mean by that, the truth? Well, let me make a couple of suggestions.

And the first one is this, that Jesus when he said that meant that he was more than a teacher. More than a teacher. Jesus certainly was a teacher, but he was far more.

He taught us many good things. You remember, this was the mistake of Nicodemus, for example, when he came to Jesus. That encounters in the third chapter of John's Gospel.

And Nicodemus said to Jesus, we know that you are a teacher sent from God. You see, there have been many, many men and women who have told us good things. They've taught us good things.

They've taught us truth as they've understood truth. But Jesus is more than that. You see, no person I know ever claimed that he was the embodiment of the truth he was teaching.

And that's what Jesus did. I suppose a teacher can teach things such as mathematics or science or Latin or whatever. And his or her character does not affect his subject or her subject at all.

But not so when someone proposes to teach moral truth. Not so when someone proposes to teach about God and to speak about God's law and God's attributes and God's love. One commentator has put it this way, an adulterer who teaches the necessity of purity.

A grasping person who teaches the value of generosity. A domineering person who teaches the beauty of humility. An irascible person who teaches the beauty of serenity.

An embittered person who teaches the beauty of love is bound to be ineffective. Truth of this sort must be conveyed by example. The truth he taught, he embodied.

We may say from our perspective, I have taught you the truth. Only Jesus could say, I am the truth. He was more than a teacher.

A second observation I would make is this. I think we have to distinguish between Jesus as truth and the truths about him. Because you see, Jesus is more than truth about him.

We are not saved by truths about Jesus, but by Jesus himself, the truth. Not the fact that Jesus died. We may agree to that.

That does not save until the person of Jesus who died and lives forever comes to abide in us and we experience him. Not the certain fact that Jesus lay in the grave, that he died for us and lay in the grave, but the blessed man himself coming to us who experienced all of this for us. And we encounter that in him.

Not even the incontestable facts of his resurrection and ascension, those great facts. But you see that he has born my nature and he has achieved a victory which helps me in the daily struggle of my life right here and now. Not until then do I know him and experience his truth.

We may accept all kinds of truths about Jesus and they may be authenticated for us in the gospel as indeed they are, but we are not saved. I want to stress this. We are not saved until we have claimed him

for ourselves personally and until we have entrusted our lives to him as our Savior and our Lord.

He says, I am the way, then I am the truth. And the third statement, Jesus says, I am the life. It was into a world of death that Jesus came.

We tried to describe that this morning for you. Mankind was dead in trespasses and in sin. Not only then but now.

The declaration of the Word of God on this subject is clear and it is confirmed by human experience. And the divine verdict upon us all is that we are dead in trespasses and in sin. If you go back into the Old Testament and see how the prophets viewed the earth and mankind, we have many examples.

Ezekiel pictured the earth and mankind as full of bones, very many bones and very dry. The prophet Jeremiah pictured the earth and mankind as broken cisterns. The reservoirs of life were spent.

The fountains of water had died away into wastelands of sand. Those were the pictures of the prophets. And then the Son of God brought life from the eternal throne of God.

His words were spirit and life. He was himself the resurrection and the life. Those who believed in him were partakers of the divine nature.

He said, I give them eternal life. They shall never perish. He said, he that believes on the Son has eternal life.

And so it comes to this. If you want life this evening, abundant life, life to the full, life that will bring purpose and meaning to your existence here and now, and will hold the promise of eternity, then you must have Jesus Christ. Do not seek life.

Seek him. Do not just listen to his words, but go beyond his words to the word himself, the very Word of God. Jesus Christ is life and light to all of us.

And you see, if you have Jesus Christ, you have life. You may not be able to define it exactly. You may not be able to say where it happened, or at what time it happened, or the circumstances of it happening when it first broke in upon you.

You may have trouble distinguishing it from the workings of your own everyday life. But I want you to understand that you must take it on the authority of scripture itself. If you have Jesus Christ at your heart tonight, you have life.

And the reverse, if you do not have Jesus Christ at your heart tonight, you do not have life. He that has the Son has life, he said. And he that does not have the Son of God does not have life.

I am life. And one closing word, because I'm sure if I stopped, you would say you didn't finish the verse. There's another phrase, probably even more disturbing than the first three phrases, the arrogance of it, the exclusiveness of it, the narrowness of it.

Jesus says, No one comes to the Father except through me. In a day when many are saying there are several avenues or highways or ways to God, when many are saying that one religion is as good as another, when many, even in our own denomination, are suggesting that what is needed is to bring the best of all religions together, that we ought not be trying to convert anybody in this modern day, Jesus is

saying, No one comes to the Father except through me. In his book, *The Intimate Gospel*, Earl Palmer, who is the minister of First Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, California, tells of an incident that occurred when he was attending Princeton Seminary.

And again, it has to do with that notable Protestant theologian Karl Barth, because he was lecturing at Princeton. And a student asked Barth, Sir, don't you think God has revealed himself in other religions and not only in Christianity? Earl Palmer said that Barth's answer was like a shock of bright lightning. He answered, No.

God has not revealed himself in any religion, including Christianity. He has revealed himself in his Son. He's revealed himself in his Son.

Philip said, Show us the Father. We'll be satisfied. And what did Jesus say? Jesus said, You're looking at him.

You're looking at all the God you're going to see, the revealed Son of God, and only Savior, Jesus Christ. If you're here tonight, and you're looking and seeking for an answer to the dilemma which you find yourself, and you've never taken this Christ to your heart, I ask you in the closing moments of this service to think upon him. Not the great truths about him, not the fact that he's a great teacher, but that he is the only Savior of mankind, and that no one comes to the Father except through him.

Shall we pray? Eternal God, how we thank you for this word. From your Son. So clear.

We all understand it. There's only one way to know you, and to love you, and to serve you, and that is by faith, to accept your Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior and our Lord. Oh God, by your Spirit, open our hearts that we may do this, if we've never done it before, and having done it, to recognize and to know that we're on a pilgrimage, a glorious pilgrimage with Jesus.

We begin with him, and oh our Father, we will end with him as he ushers us into your glory. Hear our prayers. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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