

Why do Christians claim that Jesus is the only Way to God?

This session may pick up on and overlap with some of the areas you came across with the question "Do All Religions lead to God"

Welcome (7.30)

How do you feel about the claim that Jesus is the only way to God?

- a) Appalled by it - how arrogant
- b) Embarrassed by it - its in the bible but I wish it wasn't
- c) Delighted by it - How great that we can know the way to God.
- d) Confused by it - what does it mean to say that Jesus is the Way?
- e) Other

Worship (7.45)

Place a cross in the centre of the room (the larger the better.) Hand out some post-its. Play some quiet worshipful music. Invite people to write down their questions to God and place them on or at the foot of the cross. As the music draws to a close lead a prayer offering all our questions to Jesus and asking him to guide us in seeking answers.

Word (7.55)

Jesus is unique amongst religious leaders in history because his claim is

- To be God
- To be the Saviour (Acts 4.12)
- To have risen from the dead (Acts 4.10)

Read John 14.1-6.

1. What do you think Jesus means when he says "Nobody comes to the Father except by me"? Do we have to know Jesus and all about him or might some people come to God through Jesus without knowing it?

2. Do you see it as an arrogant claim for Christians to say that Jesus is the only way to God? Why/Why not?

Watch "What about Other Faiths?" which is session 3 of the dvd "With no Apology by J John and Joe Boot. It is about 20 mins in total and covers a lot of interconnected questions so feel free to turn off part way through the conversation to discuss some of the issues which arise from the video

3. Share anything which Joe said in the video that seemed to you useful and perceptive

4. Share anything from the video with which you disagreed

J John asks Joe whether those who have never heard about Jesus will be automatically condemned by God. Joe says that they will be judged according to what they do know (through God's revelation of himself through creation) and not on what they don't know.

The bible doesn't answer this question directly. As well as Joe's answer, we do have 4 pointers which may be useful: -

- God will be just (Genesis 18.25)
- No-one is saved by their religion - but by God's grace through faith. (Eph 2.8, Luke 18.19-14)
- The bible speaks of some people as being saved by faith even though they lived before Jesus eg Abraham (Romans 4.3)
- The bible hints that many will be saved since Abrahams descendants will be as numerous as the stars in the sky - genesis22.17 - and because God's grace is so much greater than Adam's sin- Romans 5.2

5. What would you say if someone asked you "What about those who have never heard about Jesus, will they go to hell or heaven? (Prepare an answer in twos or threes and share it with the group)

Witness (9.00)

"What about those who have never heard about Jesus" is partly a hypothetical question since only those who have heard about Jesus can ask it. To us Jesus instructions are clear to accept and spread the good news about Jesus.

If Christians believe it is possible for those who have never heard about Jesus to be saved, why do we still want people to know about him?

Pray for each other in your daily witness particularly for anyone who is being asked tricky questions.

Plan for your cell's future witness activity or for the witness activities of cell members
Here's some ideas

- A Party for Pentecost or a summer barbecue (invite friends and neighbours)
- Local House of Prayer Night or Prayer Night for Who Cares?
- Helping with visiting for Who Cares?
- Offer to help with a potential cafe church (contact Martin)
- Offer to help with looking after children in a morning so mums of little ones can have a cell bible study (contact Sally)
- Invite others to a night for looking at one or more tricky questions (ask Jessie)
- Litterpick
- Offer to cook for the next Alpha Course