

# The Right and Only Way

Neil Gizzard

Christianity, as indeed do other religions and philosophies, claims to hold the keys to the right and only way to better, beneficial and even eternal life. Yet Christianity is divided into hundreds, even thousands of sects that each offer competing and differing views on how a follower is to attain to that life. One can devote one's life to analyzing and dissecting these various views and methods but all one is likely to accomplish is to produce yet another regurgitation of some pre-existing view or some syncretistic hybrid of pre-existing views that only further complicates the choices one faces in deciding what is the "right and only way" to follow Christ.

The first question that must be grappled with is:

## ***"Is there a right and only way?"***

The vast experience of mankind – as encountered in any realistic study of historical persons, peoples and their beliefs and practices – seems to suggest that the notion of one truth for all people of all times is merely a fantastic myth. Yet this superficial interpretation fails to reckon with the transcendent nature of God as He has revealed Himself in the recorded words of the Bible. Jesus said, "Wide is the gate and broad is the *way* that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. How narrow is the gate and difficult is the *way* that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Mt. 7:13-14) As elusive as the existence of a "right and only way" in life may seem to be, the unarguable and incontrovertible existence of these two destinations – death (destruction) and life (in all its wondrous complexities) – clearly show us the reality of there being ways to get to either of these destinations.

Jesus, in a claim which is not fully embraced by many of those who claim to follow Him, said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (Jn. 14:6) Jesus clearly taught that not only was there a "right and only way," He made it clear that *He Himself* was that right and only way! Other religions and philosophies make the mistake of rejecting Him as the right and only way to find God. Much of Christianity makes the mistake of presuming that their own myopic views, religion and practice incorporates all of, and is the same thing as, what Christ *is*. The latter error is more worthy of condemnation than the former.

The second question that must be addressed is:

## **"Can a right and only way be known by one person or group?"**

That is, can an individual or group of individuals know such a thing as one truth for all people of all times? Is it even possible for an individual to reach beyond the misguided preconceptions and ingrained paradigms that cloud and distort his ability to grasp realities larger than himself and beyond the scope of his own little world? Jesus said, "If you remain in My word (sayings and teachings), you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jn. 8:31-32) Here we must decide whether Jesus was, as He claimed, the Messiah who brings and is the right and only way or was He merely just another deceived, deluded and deceitful egomaniac as have been all the other claimants to being Messiah?

This is precisely where faith enters in. “Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Heb. 11:6) We are not asked to make “blind leaps” but rather to make informed choices. We are given many kinds of evidences to weigh and consider and then we are asked to believe that which seems most true. We are led and taught by the Spirit of truth (Jn. 16:13) so that we may know the things known in the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16) This spiritual insight, knowledge and revelation given by God to humble recipients is precisely how the individual overcomes his own misguided preconceptions and ingrained paradigms that cloud and distort his ability to grasp and know truth. This is liberty indeed!

Thus the basis for our “right and only way” is not the Bible as an intellectually absorbed book. Rather, our basis is the “rightly divided” (2 Tim. 2:15), untwisted (2 Pet. 3:16), *spiritual* (1 Cor. 3:1) word of truth that nests perfectly within “the *whole* counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27) The words will come from God (Mt. 4:4) and be brought to life by the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:26) within our own hearts and lives. This truth, much more difficult to attain to than one’s preferred doctrines, traditions and intellectualisms (because we must relinquish self, die to our own aspirations and follow Christ only – Lk. 9:23), is confirmed and ratified by those others who also seek and follow after Christ in this way. (Eph. 4:3, Jn. 7:17) Those whose lives and “wisdom” are characterized by arrogance and rudeness (see Jas. 3:14-16, 1 Cor. 13:5) are propagating a spirit different from the Spirit of Christ (2 Cor. 11:4) and are sent merely as the devil’s agents to disrupt and divert individuals and groups from knowing truth and attaining to the unity of the Spirit. (2 Tim. 2:25-26)

Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn. 13:35) This is the “ID card” of the genuine member of Christ’s family and kingdom. Anyone who claims to belong to Christ but does not have the Spirit of love that *is* Christ is not one of His. (Rom. 8:9) Truth – spiritually accurate knowledge and belief – is a product of spiritual maturity and is an integral part of following Christ but it must not be the only part. Truth must be spoken in love with the grace (power) given by the Spirit of truth (Eph. 4:15, Col. 4:6) or else all we have is a “dead letter” right-ness devoid of the life of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6) and if this is all we have, we are to be avoided! (2 Tim. 3:5)

It must never be missed that the “right and only way” is held together by the word *and*. We can be so exclusive that we are no longer right and we can be so “right” (in our own opinion) that we embrace anyone or anything as if it were Christ Himself. The right and only way to better, beneficial and eternal life is found first in the source – Christ Himself. There is not, has not and never will be any other name given in which we may find true and ultimate salvation. (Acts 4:12) He is the only way to the life, truth and righteousness that is God. Once we have found Him as source, we must remain in Him as the way or means by which we progress. (Col. 2:6, 1 Jn. 2:27) Anything – “church,” the “Christian” religion, ear-scratching “spiritual gurus” (2 Tim. 4:3-4), whatever – that curbs or prevents our ability to hear and follow Him is a thing that is robbing us of our abundant and eternal life. (Jn. 10:27-28) Do not be deceived!

The right and only way is not found by merely reading books and studying sacred texts, though these may indeed be milestones in one’s progress toward spiritual maturity. Knowledge – however extensive or meager – will not be the standard by which we are judged on the last day. Rather it will be our obedience and faithfulness – or the lack thereof – to what we did know to be true which will be used to show us whether our life was lived on the road that leads to destruction or lived on the road that leads to life. Once we have reached our destination,

however, it will be far too late to change the road we're on. The only opportunity we have to change the road we're on is found only in that time frame we call "today."

Let he who has ears hear what the Spirit of God is saying. While it is still called "today," hear the word of the Lord: "Repent! The kingdom of God is near."

Neil Girrard  
Paidion Books  
P.O. Box 327  
Capitan, NM 88316

Website – [www.paidionbooks.org](http://www.paidionbooks.org)

Email – [paidion@paidionbooks.org](mailto:paidion@paidionbooks.org)

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