

Tuesday's Touch #47

...from Pastor Ed ...December 15, 2009

The Exclusive Christ

I am the way, the truth and the life- no one comes to the Father but by me. John 14:6

...no one knows the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him. Matt 11:27

Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12

There is only one road that passes by our church. I cannot leave my office to begin my journey home on any other road. I have only one option. No one has ever come to me after a service and said, "Pastor, it isn't fair that I should have to get on that one road to start home. All roads should be equally suitable on which to leave." We all understand that there is only one option— "*it is what it is.*"

Now the message of the Bible is, *there is only one road that goes "home"*. To most people today, that sounds way too narrow-minded and bigoted. But, what if that is simply the way it is? What if there really is only one road to God?

Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth and the life- no one comes to the Father but by me.*¹ and, *...no one knows the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him.*² The Apostle Peter dogmatically states, *Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved.*³ While, at first blush, this may seem unreasonable, when we carefully consider who Christ is revealed to be in the scriptures, it should become evident that there can only be one road to God. Please consider these seven exclusive truths about Jesus Christ.

1. Only in Christ is our need to personally know God addressed. When we consider that God in His full essence is an eternal, infinite, and transcendent Spirit, we could not possibly comprehend Him in any personal way unless He condescended to reveal Himself to us. By the fact and evidence of creation people are accountable to recognize His existence, and to seek after Him.⁴ But if we are left on our own to figure out who God is, we will (as many do) invent a god according to our own imagination. Only through Jesus Christ has the true and living God personally revealed Himself to man. This is the miracle of Christmas. Consider this testimony from the Bible:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*⁵ *All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.*⁶ *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*⁷ *No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*⁸ *[He] is the image of the invisible God.*⁹ *For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, ...all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.*¹⁰ ***For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.***¹¹ *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...*¹² KJV *God, who at various times and in divers manners spoke in time past ...by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, ...Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high... But unto the Son He says, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.*¹³

As Jesus said, *No one knows the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him.*¹⁴

2. Only in Jesus is the debt of our sin paid. We all have an unimaginable sin debt before God, who is holy, and of purer eyes than to behold evil.¹⁵ *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*¹⁶ *There is none righteous, no not one.*¹⁷ *All have sinned and come short of the*

glory of God.¹⁸ Even in human terms, we understand that trying to do something good after we've done wrong cannot erase our legal debt. If I get a ticket for speeding today, I can't pay it by driving well tomorrow. The debt still stands. How much more does our debt stand before a holy God. He cannot pardon us without also dealing justly with our offenses committed against Him. But in Jesus *mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*¹⁹ Through Jesus God can remain holy and just and still justify the ungodly.²⁰ Isaiah beautifully portrays the atoning work of Christ on the cross:

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ^{Isaiah 53:5-6}

Only in Jesus do we have the remedy for our sin:

*[The Son] having made peace through the blood of His cross, ...you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet He has now reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.*²¹

3. Only in Christ Jesus is our need for a new nature– a new “heart”– provided. The root of all human need lies in the heart. Jesus said, *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*²² The Bible says, *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*²³

The reality is, we don't become sinners because we sin– we all sin because our hearts are corrupt. We all need a new heart– a new nature. This is why Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a devout religious leader, *You must be born again, and, that unless a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*²⁴ Only Jesus can resurrect the dead heart, giving a person a new nature within that truly loves the one true God, and desires to please Him. *...even when we were dead in trespasses and sin [He] made us alive together with Christ...*^{Eph 2:5} The Bible says that *if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation...*²⁵

4. Only in Jesus can we be robed in a perfect righteousness acceptable to God. *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags* before God.²⁶ In addition to being forgiven and having a new nature, we must have a perfect record of righteousness to be accepted by God. This is called *justification*– being declared righteous, “just as if I'd never sinned”. Jesus, as mankind's representative, lived that perfect, sinless life before the Father.²⁷ His perfect record is *imputed* (credited) to our account when we come to faith in Christ. *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,*²⁸ *...not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.*²⁹ *For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous.*³⁰

5. Only through Jesus do we have the indwelling presence of God – the Holy Spirit, to equip, instruct, lead and empower our lives for Him. Along with the promise of a new heart, this is the great reality of the New Covenant promise given to the people of God in the Old Testament. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you.*³¹ Therefore, Jesus is first introduced to us by John the Baptist as the one who gives the Holy Spirit.³² Jesus, Himself, indwells believers by the Holy Spirit.³³ Jesus said, *Without me you can do nothing.*³⁴ The New Testament makes clear that it is the reality of the indwelling Spirit that distinguishes the people of God. *As many as are led by the Spirit of Christ, they are the sons of God.*³⁵ *If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*³⁶

6. Only in Jesus do we find victory over the grave. Death came because of sin. *For by one man's sin death came upon all men for all have sinned.*³⁷ Jesus alone, having dealt with sin, has conquered death for all believers. *For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.*³⁸ *O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting that brings death is sin... but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ!*³⁹ *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly*

body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.^{Phil 3:20-21} The great and glorious news that consumed the early disciples was that even physical death had been conquered by Jesus Christ!

7. Only Jesus will be our Judge in the end. He said, *For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father.*⁴⁰ *For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ...So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*⁴¹ *And whoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*⁴² But if we have fled to Him in this life to receive by faith all that He has done for us, then *there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ.*⁴³ Jesus assured us that the true believer *shall not come into condemnation but has passed from death to life.*⁴⁴ *...For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*⁴⁵ *For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*⁴⁶

Conclusion. Exclusively in Jesus Christ are these otherwise insurmountable needs of man completely met: 1. The need to **personally know God**- 2. to have our **sins forgiven**- 3. to have **a new heart**- 4. to have **a perfect record of righteousness**- 5. to have **the indwelling Presence of God**- 6. to have **victory over the grave**- 7. to have **no condemnation in the judgment**. There is no other religion or religious leader who adequately addresses even one of these issues, much less all seven. Prayerfully consider the claims of Christ. Ask the Father to reveal Him to you. If you will believe, then cry out to Him for mercy and repent— that is, turn from your life without Him to follow Him as Savior and Lord. Jesus said, *Whoever comes to me I will in no wise cast out,*⁴⁷ *For whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*⁴⁸

May this be your most blessed Christmas ever!

Holy Father,

Only because you sent your Son into the world, can we call you, “Father.” You have made the Captain of our salvation the perfect Savior in every aspect (Heb 2:10). You have given him a name which is above every name, that before him every created being should bow (Phil 2:9-11). How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation (Heb 2:3)? Thanks be unto you for your inexpressible gift (2 Corinth 9:15).

Amen

Bible References: 1. John 14:6. 2. Matthew 11:27. 3. Acts 4:12. 4. Rom. 1:20; Psalm 19:1-3. 5. John 1:1. 6. John 1:3. 7. John 1:14. 8. John 1:18. 9. Colos 1:15. 10. Colos 1:16. 11. Colos 2:9. 12. 1 Tim 3:16. 13. Heb 1:1-8. 14. Matt 11:27. 15. 1Peter 1:16; Habbakkuk 1:13 et al. 16. 1 John 1:10. 17. Rom.3:10. 18. Rom.3:23. 19. Psalm 85:10. 20. Rom 3:26; 4:5. 21. Coloss 1:21-22. 22. Mark 7:21-23. 23. Jeremiah 17:9. 24. John 3:1-7. 25. 2 Corinth 5:17. 26. Isaiah 64:6. 27. Heb.4:15; 7:26, John 8:29. 28. Rom 3:23. 29. Philip.3:9. 30. Rom.5:19. 31. Ezek 36:25-27. 32. Matt 3:11; Lk 3:16, John 1:33. 33. John 14:18-23; Rom 8:9-11; Colos 1:27. 34. John 5:15. 35. Rom 8:14. 36. Rom.8:9. 37. Rom.5:12. 38. 1Corinth.15:21. 39. 1Corinth. 15:55-57. 40. John 5:22-23. 41. Rom 14:10-12. 42. Rev.20:15. 43. Rom.8:1. 44. John 5:24; 45. Eph.2:8-9. 46. John 3:16. 47. John 6:37. 48. Rom.10:13

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