



The Voice of Truth



May 20, 2012

Only One Way! By Jimmy Pettigrew

You go to your church and I'll go to mine. We're going to the same place, only on different roads. This statement is made by many people who mistakenly believe there are many ways to God in heaven. However, the truth of the matter is, there is only one way to God, and Jesus said it is strait and narrow (**Matt. 7:13-14**). Christ declared, *I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me* (**John 14:6**). In **Acts 4:12**, speaking of Christ, Peter said, *Neither is there salvation in any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* Therefore, it is necessary to conclude that the only way to God is through Christ.

Being saved and brought to God is a spiritual blessing. Paul said, *all spiritual blessings are in Christ*, (**Eph. 1:3**). Moreover, Paul wrote of Christ stating that it is in Him *whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace*, (**Eph. 1:7**). Hence, *all spiritual blessings and redemption . . . according to his grace* are in Christ. Please notice these passages: Redemption is found in Christ (**Rom. 3:24**); There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ (**Rom. 8:1**); the love of God is found in Christ (**Rom. 8:39**). We are sanctified in Christ (**1 Cor. 1:2**); in Christ will all be made alive (**1 Cor. 15:22**); we are new creatures in Christ (**2 Cor. 5:17**); **Gal. 6:15**); we are reconciled back to God be being in Christ (**Isa. 59:12**; **2 Cor. 5:19**; **Eph. 2:13**); we are all children of God by being in Christ (**Gal. 3:26-27**); all blessings are found in Christ (**Eph. 1:3**); we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ (**Eph. 2:6**); the grace of God is found in Christ (**2 Tim. 2:10**); eternal life is found in Christ (**Rom. 6:23**). It should be obvious to all that one has to be in Christ to gain these wonderful benefits. But, how does one get into Christ?

One should be aware of the difference between **unto** and **into** as used in the English. **Unto** means going in the direction of or toward. **Into** signifies that the destination has been reached, entered.

Without faith it is impossible for one to please God (**Heb. 11:6**) and be saved (**Mark 16:16**). However, a person must understand that he does not believe **into** Christ. Belief is **unto**, going in the direction of Christ. Paul uses the **unto** with **belief** in **Romans 10:10** saying, *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.* No Scripture says one believes **into** Christ.

If one will not repent of his sins, he will perish (**Luke 13:3-5**). Yet, it must be understood that repentance on the part of an individual is another act **unto** or **toward** God. As a matter of fact, Paul is recorded as saying that both faith and repentance are acts which are **toward** rather than **into**. Paul testified *both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ* (**Acts 20:21**). No Scripture says one repents **into** Christ.

Confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (**Acts 8:37**) is absolutely essential for salvation (**Matt. 10:32-33**). But again, confession is **unto** salvation. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (**Rom. 10:10**). No Scripture says one confesses **into** Christ.

Faith, repentance, and confession are **unto** but do not place one **into** Christ. Just as there is only one way to God (**that is through Christ**), there is only one way **into** Christ, in whom all spiritual blessings are found. Faith, repentance, and confession are essential for one entering **into** Christ, but one does not enter **into** Christ by any one of them or by all three of them together.

The only way revealed in the Bible for one to get **into** Christ is by being baptized in water (**Acts 8:36**), in the name of Christ for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**), washing them away (**Acts 22:16**). **Roman 6:3** finds Paul stating, *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.* In **Galatians**

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3:27 Paul wrote, *for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* When one believes

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, repents of his sins, and has confessed Christ with his mouth, he is only then ready to be **baptized into Christ!**

"One And Only One"

By Jarrod Jacobs

The story is told of a man who had several apple trees. As the year progressed, he watched the apples grow. He could hardly wait for the apples to be ripe. In watching his apple trees, he also noticed several boys walking past those apple trees, waiting for the apples, themselves. Knowing that if he didn't watch, those boys would steal all his apples, he went out one day and said, "Boys, if you'd like, you can have an apple off of these trees, but you can have one, and only one."

As the days passed, he saw the boys looking and walking around the trees. They were going to choose which apple they would eat. They walked, and looked, and thought, waiting for the time when those apples would be ripe. Finally, the day came when the boys chose which apple they would eat. They did so, and enjoyed every bite. The man also got to enjoy his harvest of apples.

What can we learn from this story? We ought to learn that with God, as with the man who owned the apple trees, there are times when we have one, and only one option.

Marriage

Concerning the subject of marriage, God has told man that he can have one, and only one spouse with which to live for the rest of his life. He established this in the beginning (**Gen. 2:18-25**). Jesus said, *"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (**Matt. 19:4-6**). Notice please, Jesus spoke of one man and one woman living as husband and wife -- one and only one. If people today respected God's will concerning being married to one and only one, perhaps they would not be so quick to jump into marriage in a frivolous manner. Perhaps if they respected **Matthew 19:4-6**, being careful as to who they would choose for their marriage partner, there would not be a divorce rate of 50% in this country! Yes, when it comes to marriage, one can choose one and only one as a spouse for life (**Matt. 19:4-6**).

Remember, those boys in our story waited until the right time to choose which apple they wanted. They did not take bites out of many apples, deciding that they were not ripe enough, not big enough, etc. They thought and considered the apples because they knew they could have one and only one. Perhaps a correct understanding and application of God's will would slow some people down and they would be more considerate of who they are marrying before they make a tragic mistake!

Divorce And Remarriage

In connection with the above point, I understand that Christ has given us an exception in **Matthew 5:32** and **19:9**. But, did you notice that He has given us one, and only one exception? Not just anything will sever the bond between husband and wife. Christ said fornication will do it, but that is the only exception to His rule of one man and one woman for life! And, when this tragedy occurs, there is one and only one person who has the right to remarry -- the innocent spouse! The guilty has no right to marry another. In the case of divorce, there is one and only one authorized reason for which one can divorce and remarry (**Matt. 5:32**). Let us never forget this, and respect the will of God.

The Church

Paul used the illustration of one husband and one wife to describe the Lord and His church (**Eph. 5:23-33**). Jesus has not joined Himself to, nor did He establish two, three, or any plurality of churches. He established one and only one church, just as the illustration of one husband for one wife declares! A careful reading of **Ephesians 5** shows us that singular words such as "body," and "it," declare that there is but one church. Christ said He would build His "church" (**Matt. 16:18**). He was not building "churches," but one and only one "church."

The church is also described as the body of Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24**). Again, we read of one and only one body. This one body has one and only one head -- Christ (**Col. 1:18**). The New Testament speaks only of the Lord's church, and any other church is man-made, is

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Standard For Living

headed by men, and is foreign to what is revealed in the Scriptures. Let us stay away from these, and be a part of the one and only one body of Christ, His church!

Plan Of Salvation

When we discuss the Lord's plan of salvation, we find one and only one plan! To hear most people today, one might think that he/she could get to Heaven any way they wanted! Not so. There is a world of people who think that just being a good, moral person is enough to be saved. Some think that one can just pray to God, and the result will be salvation if they simply ask God for forgiveness. Still others look for their salvation inwardly, thinking that if they could achieve "inner peace," then this is all that is necessary. Besides these, it seems that there are untold numbers of inventions men have offered to bring about salvation. In light of all these things, some will say that it is your "choice" as to what you will do. Is this what the Bible has said?

In truth, none of these things we have mentioned will save men. There is but one way to be saved, and it is the way that has been taught since Christ resurrected. We find that those who follow the Lord's plan for salvation have: 1) Believed in Jesus as the Son of God. 2) Repented of their sins. 3) Confessed Christ as the Son of God. 4) Been baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:36-38, 41; 8:5, 12, 35-39; 10:34-35, 48; 16:30-34; 22:16**). Yes, living a moral life and praying to God are important, but at no time in the Bible does God say a person is saved based on his/her morality. Nor does He tell us to pray for salvation. We find one and only one plan of salvation mentioned in the book of Acts. The question is will we or will we not submit to it?

In all aspects of life, there is one and only one standard that we must follow, and that is God's word! Paul taught that we are to live in accordance with the authority of Christ (**Col. 3:17**). Of course, this is only possible when we know His word (**Jn. 12:48**). Peter said that if we are going to speak, we need to "*speak as the oracles of God*" (**I Pet. 4:11**). Therefore, such things as the Koran, the Book of Mormon, denominational creed books, Masonic writings, the sayings of Confucius, etc., are not the source of truth, nor are they our standard for living in this world. There is one and only one standard – the Bible! How do I know this? It is because God's word is the truth (**Jn. 17:17**), incorruptible seed (**I Pet. 1:23**), and light (**Ps. 119:1-5**). Nothing else deserves such descriptions. Do we appreciate the fact that one and only one thing has the power to save men (**Rom. 1:16**)?

Friends, if we spend our years immersed in the works and doctrines of men, we will have wasted our lives. There is one and only one thing that God has given which fills the hungry soul (**Matt. 5:6**), strengthens the weak (**Ps. 119:28**), convicts and exposes sin (**Eph. 5:11; II Tim. 4:2**), purifies the soul (**I Pet. 1:22**), and can lead us to Heaven. That is God's word, our standard for living! Are we following that one standard?

Conclusion

Yes, at times, God allows men options and choices, but on many occasions, God has said there is one and only one option that is authorized to men. May we respect God's will and follow what He has said that we can see Heaven together one day. *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com* ♦

THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. *"Upon this rock I will build my church"* (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living to-day is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

One Church By Mike Thomas

There are literally hundreds of churches in the world, maybe even thousands, each with a peculiar slant on salvation, worship, the godhead, eternal life, and other important doctrines. What hope does a person have of finding the true church of the Lord?

Immediately, some would say that all churches belong to God and that He is the Father of them all. The only problem with that idea is that it is contrary to Bible teaching. God does not receive all religions, nor does He respect all who claim to love and follow Him.

Consider what Jesus taught while He was on earth—*“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21).

Notice He didn’t say this to people who had no interest in living for God. The people He was referring to were those who *“cast out demons, and performed many wonders”* in His name (Matthew 7:22). Yet they were rejected by God for not following all of His will in love and humility. They were only righteous enough to win the approval of others.

People may claim to have a devotion to God while practicing denominational doctrines, but if they are diligent students of the Bible, and genuine seekers of truth, there is no way they can say they are obeying all of God’s will. The Bible doesn’t teach the modern philosophies of salvation apart from water baptism, a universal bishop, church-

sponsored recreation, the sponsoring church arrangement, divorce and remarriage apart from adultery, women preaching before men, infant baptism, instrumental music, and so on. These are not taught in the New Testament.

I am not suggesting that all who practice these things are dishonest hypocrites who have no love for the Lord. I cannot read people’s minds. But what I am saying is that they are not practicing the Father’s will as stated in the Bible, and they are in jeopardy of missing out on eternal life with God. Remember, Jesus said salvation is not in what we claim before men (calling Him, Lord, Lord), but in seeking and applying the will of God. This is true whether we accept it or not.

If every church would seek the pattern found in the New Testament, we would all have unity in matters of faith; that is, we’d believe alike on salvation, worship, eternal life, God, etc. The reason I know this is so, is because the Bible only teaches one faith for the Christian age (Ephesians 4:1-4). This is why God can ask and demand that we all practice the same thing in religion (1 Corinthians 1:10; Philipians 1:27). We can have unity because only one pattern for Christianity was revealed (Jude 3) — the pattern that God, Jesus, and the Spirit believe in (John 17:20-21).

Are you honestly seeking, or are you dishonestly satisfied? Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

THINK ABOUT IT!

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. *“By their fruits ye shall know them,”* (Matthew 7:20). ♦

About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
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How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
<p>Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> </div>	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div>	<p>Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</p>
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