

Chapter 4

All Religions Are Equally Good

Background Scripture: Matthew 7:13-20; 28:18-20; John 14:6; Acts 4:8-12; 17:16-34; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 2:11

In This Session: We will examine Jesus' claim as the only Way to know God over against the claims of other religions.

Getting Ready

1. Choose three of the answers you think your adults might give in **2A**. Ask three group members to research those religions in an encyclopedia and bring the information to the session.
2. Provide card stock and craft materials for use in **4A**.
3. Provide hymnals for the closing song in **4D**.

1. Getting Started (10 min.)

A. Display the statement "All paths lead to the top of the mountain." Ask your adults to respond to these two questions:

- What do you think that statement means to the average person?
- What does that statement mean to you?

B. Invite each of the participants to turn to his or her neighbor and share an opinion as to why so many people would rather try their own way than to be saved God's way.

Transition: Living in North America, we may not be aware of how many paths there are up the religious mountain. Let's look at some of the variety that exists within the world.

2. Reflecting on Life (10 min.)

A. Ask the group to name as many different world religions (besides Christianity) as they can.

Then share the basic beliefs of the three religions that participants have researched in an encyclopedia.

Invite your adults to think about the fundamental difference between most (if not all) world religions and Christianity.

B. Invite your group to respond to the following:

- What have you heard someone say that indicates he or she believes in the equality of all religions?
- How does culture reflect (or try to reflect) the equality of all religions?

Transition: Though there is a wide variety to the religions of the world, the Bible declares there is only one Way to heaven. Let's examine those scriptures.

3. Opening the Word (15 min.)

A. Divide into three groups. Ask each group to work with one of the following:

Group 1:

- Read the chapter section titled **Jesus Called Himself the Way**. Summarize the writer's points.
- Read John 14:6 and Matthew 7:13-20, and relate them to your study.
- What convinces you that Jesus is the Way, as opposed to any other way?
- Share your personal testimonies with each other.

Group 2:

- Read the chapter section titled **Jesus Commissioned Us to Teach That He Is the Way**. Summarize the writer's points.
- Read Matthew 28:18-20 and relate it to your study.
- What experiences have you had in witnessing that resulted in someone else accepting Jesus as the Way?
- Share with the group how that affected your own faith and joy.

Group 3:

- Read the chapter section titled **The Early Church Understood That Jesus Is the Only Way**. Summarize the writer's points.
- Read Acts 4:8-12 and 17:16-34, and relate them to your study.
- If, as the writer asserts, there are people within the Church today who believe that belief in Jesus is not necessarily the only Way for all peoples around the world, what would you say to them?

B. Ask the participants to take this true-false quiz. Follow up with discussion of any questions that arise from it.

1. T F There will be people in heaven who cannot be called "Christian" in a personal sense. (True)
2. T F The term "Christian" can refer to something other than religious identifications. (True)
3. T F Around the world, there are many different interpretations of the word "Christian." (True)
4. T F Entrance into heaven is based on whether or not we deserve it. (False)
5. T F Jesus is the only Way because only Jesus is God. (True)

Transition: For Christians, at the top of the religious mountain is heaven. How can we share our knowledge of the correct path up the mountain that leads to heaven?

4. Wrapping Up (10 min.)

A. Provide card stock and craft materials for your adults. Invite each of them to make a bookmark for their Bibles of Ephesians 2:8-9.

B. (Alternative to A) Ask your adults to spend a few moments memorizing Ephesians 2:8-9. You might want to offer a fun prize to the first one who can say the verse from memory.

C. (Option) Invite the group to develop a series of statements or questions that could be used in a conversation with someone who asserts that "all religions are equally good." These should be designed to lovingly start turning the person toward the truth found only in Jesus Christ.

D. Close by singing or reading the words of "Make Me a Blessing" (*Sing to the Lord*, No. 533).

For Next Time

Remind your adults to read chapter 5.