

# One Road

“Will you NOW ask for directions?” his wife hissed through gritted teeth, “we’ve been lost for half an hour now!”. He gave in and brought the car to a stop by three locals. They scratched their heads sagely and one fiddled with his pipe.

“It’s a little way,” suggested the first. “Just take this lane for a mile, turn left at the bridge and follow that little road until you reach a fork. Go right then the road follows the course of the river until you get to the village you want.”

“No!” countered the pipe smoker, “That will take much too long. Turn round and take the motorway for two junctions, then follow the signs to the village, it’s easy.”

The third man grunted. “You won’t find it. There’s roadworks on the motorway and they have taken down the signs. Turn at this roundabout and take the main road.”

## Life Directions

The story sounds like part of a film or convoluted joke, but it really does reflect the messages we get from religious people in today’s world. Different opinions, different viewpoints, whether they are talking about ‘coming to God’ or reaching His kingdom. You may hear it said that “there are many ways to God”, or as one broadcaster put it, “we are all climbing the same mountain from different sides”.

This is not only confusing, it is dangerous. Reading between the lines, what they mean is ‘I will come to God on my own terms, how I want to’. Can this be right?

God has put a lot of effort into leading men and women to Him: He

sent men and women to guide and lead; He had His words written down in the Bible; and He sent the Lord Jesus Christ to show us what He is like, to teach us about how He wants us to live and to die for us.

God is very interested in how we approach Him and how we prepare for His kingdom.

## A Single Route

Jesus was very clear in his teaching. He is the way to God:

*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).*

*Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture (John 10:7–9).*

This does not leave room for doubt, and we can be sure that Jesus was deliberate in this. If we want to be part of the Creator’s family, then we do so through the work of His Son. In fact, Jesus had strong words for those who twisted God’s ways and suggested that they ‘knew better’:



Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in (Matthew 23:13).

Jesus' followers, who preached and wrote after his ascension to heaven, described Jesus as the one way to God. Consider these words from Paul:

*Therefore, as through one man's [Adam's] offence judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's [Jesus's] righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous (Romans 5:18–19).*

## **Taking That Path**

Having established this, how do we actually go about putting it into practice? What are the steps along the single path to a relationship with God, and the promise of a place in His kingdom?

First, we need to put in effort, to take time to read the Bible and develop our faith in God. This means belief that He will fulfil His plan and promises, and a personal trust in His provision and care for us as individuals.

*Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).*

Having made the right start, we need to be baptised, immersed in water, to show our allegiance to God and to sym-

bolically wash away our sins, starting a life of new hope and new priorities.

*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16).*

*Therefore we were buried with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).*

None of these Bible passages suggest that the steps are optional or negotiable, and Jesus had this to say about the humble attitude with which we must do all of this:

*Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it (Luke 18:17).*



The Bible has plenty of direction about how we go on to live as part of God's family, following Jesus' example and living a life of love to God and our fellow human beings. Let's not be distracted by man-made philosophy, but spend our time reading God's word and preparing for the kingdom with which He will soon fill the earth.

**Editor**