



Say What?! Week 2 “The Way”

Main Idea: This week we are continuing in our new series called “Say What?!” In this series, we will tackle the challenging and controversial teachings of Jesus. The message for Week 2 focuses on Jesus statement, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” This radical statement has the potential to make some people very upset as it did in Jesus’ day and it still does today. Let’s discuss it further...

Opening Discussion Question: Talk about a time when someone tried to convince you that there is a different way or many other ways to get to heaven. This could be from a personal experience, an interview you’ve watched, an article you’ve read, or maybe it’s something you are open to believing.

Read: John 14:1-7

1. What was your reaction the first time you heard Jesus’ declaration that He is the only way to be saved?
 - A. It’s hard-hitting!
 - B. So, only those who follow Jesus get into heaven?
 - C. That seems to be very exclusive!
 - D. My friend is a (Muslim, Buddhist, or other faith), so is he/she going to hell?
 - E. How can any person make such a bold claim?
 - F. How can “good people” be left out because they haven’t accepted Christ?
 - G. How can Christianity claim to be superior to all other faiths?
 - H. Aren’t believers from other faiths sincere in worshiping and following their one true “God?”
2. Who was Jesus speaking to in this setting, and why is the context important to help us understand this passage?
 - A. Jesus had told his disciples what was going to transpire, and he was now trying to comfort them.
 - B. Jesus had just told them that one of them (Judas) would betray him (John 13).
 - C. Jesus had just told them that one of them (Peter) would deny him (John 13).

- D. His words were not only intended for his disciples, but for everyone and for all time.
 - E. Jesus is who he said he was: the Son of God, God in the flesh, the Messiah.
 - F. Jesus did what he told his disciples he would do. He died for our sins and was raised to life on the third day. There were hundreds of eyewitnesses to these events.
3. With so many people following many other faiths (maybe even your close friend, a family member, or co-worker), what can you say or do to affirm Jesus' declaration that there actually is only one way, and that Jesus is that way?
- A. Jesus' claim is the most exclusively "inclusive" claim of all. At first, it sounds like Jesus is leaving a lot of people out, but he is actually inviting the whole world in.
 - B. Every other founder of every other religion says, "Go do this or that and maybe you will find God." Jesus says "I am the way..." He is the answer.
 - C. Jesus is saying "I didn't come to show you how to strive, I did the striving. I didn't come to show you a mountain of righteousness to climb, I climbed it. I didn't come to show you how to live the perfect life and die. No, I lived the perfect life and died the death you should have died. I am 'The Way,' I don't point to 'the way,' I am 'the Way.'"
 - D. Jesus is saying that you can have an intimate relationship with your heavenly Father through him. You can get to know God, the Creator of the universe, through him and only through him.
4. What can you do or say to demonstrate the uniqueness of Christianity to doubters and others who are firmly entrenched in opposing Jesus' statement?
- A. Christianity differs from every other major religion. Whether you're a buddhist, a muslim, or a follower of any other faith, they are all based on works. You're trying to earn your own righteousness. It's all about you, and it's all on you. You have to earn it. You have to do enough, then, hopefully, you'll get to heaven.
 - B. But with Christianity, it's not about a religion. It's about a relationship with the living God, Jesus.
 - C. It's not about what you do, it's about what he has already done for you.
 - D. It's not about earning your way, it's about accepting his free gift.
 - E. In other faiths, you have to be a "good person." But what's the cut-off? Where is the point when you go from being bad to good and who decides that? Someone has to set the standards in a merit-based system. There has to be a cut-off. But with God, his standard is perfect holiness so we can never be "good" enough.
 - F. When you spend time getting to know Jesus, you can then have a relationship with him. If you want to spend eternity with God in heaven, it comes from living your life in a relationship with Jesus.
5. John 8:31-32 says, *"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* How should this change how you think and live?
- A. Jesus is THE TRUTH, and that truth can set you free.

- B. The Bible says you were enslaved to sin, to your short-comings and that your rebellion separates you from God. Yet no matter how good you are, your good deeds can't overcome or take away the sin.
- C. God is Crazy about You! Instead of you having to depend on your good deeds (which would never be enough), God had a better plan for us.
- D. It's an open invitation to everyone to accept God's free gift.
- E. He sent his Son to earth to be THE WAY so we can have a relationship with God.
- F. Jesus took our sin upon himself and the punishment (God's wrath) on our behalf. He was obedient to death on a cross and in return we were given freedom and righteousness in God's eyes. We are justified: it's just as if we had never sinned.
- G. Christianity isn't about earning our way, it's about accepting the gift of God.
- H. Jesus fulfilled over 200 prophecies in the Old Testament.
- I. He said he would be put to death and would be raised on the third day, and it happened!
- J. The eyewitnesses of these events faced incredible persecution, and some went to their death preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News of eternal life.
- K. Following Jesus gives you a more fulfilling life here on earth.
- L. He created us, and he's trying to lead us into living life as he designed it to be.

Next Steps: Say What?! Week 2 "The Way" Here are some great ideas for next steps that you can take to become a more effective ambassador for Christ:

- Invite others - "Come sit with me" at Real Life!
- Get to know God better - Continue to read his word daily.
- Join a group and begin to build relationships with other believers.
- Know why you believe what you believe! Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have, but do this with gentleness and respect! (1 Peter 3:15)
- Ask God to place people in your life who need to hear the Good News.

Reading Plan:

Sunday - John 14:1-14

Monday - John 1:1-5; John 1:12-14

Tuesday - Luke 3:21-22; Acts 2:22-39; Acts 10:34-48

Wednesday - 1 Peter 2:21-25; Colossians 2: 13-14; Ephesians 1:3-14

Thursday - Romans 1:1-6; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 2:8-10

Friday - John 8:31-32; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Saturday - John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:5-6; Hebrews 13:2; Matthew 28:16-20