

Christ and Christianity, Unique in the World.

PROTESTANT REFORMATION PUBLICATIONS

"No, wait! I'll do it right. Give me a second chance, please. I thought it would be alright if I did it my way."

This poor fellow was denied entry for not fulfilling the proper requirements for joining a particular social club. He should have known better, as those essentials were spelled out for all to see. The founder of the club was not unfair in disallowing the applicant. After all, it was *his* club.

This simple example from our everyday world is not unusual, yet the average man expects things will be different concerning entry into heaven. Most believe there are many ways to heaven and that they can attain it by whatever means they see fit. God, as the founder, says differently and tells us so in His word. Sadly, there are those who do not even care about their eternal soul and where they will spend eternity. I hope you are not one of those unfortunate people. The wise person will then ask, *"Lord, what must I do to be saved?"*

Since God has certain requirements to enter His heaven, one would expect them to be unique. Christianity is unique in its teachings. Here are four ways.

Christ Unique

1. God comes in the flesh

Jesus Christ set aside His godly attributes, was born of a woman and dwelt among us in the flesh. Other religions teach how we can become gods or become godlike. It's easy to see how Christianity differs from all other religions in this respect.

Jesus said, **"I have proceeded forth from the Father,"** (John 8:42). **"If you have seen me, you have seen the Father,"** (John 14:8-9). **"I and the Father are one,"** (John 10:30). Even the religious Jews of His day knew this was His claim. They said in John 10:33, **"you make yourself out to be God."** In Christianity, God becomes man. Man does not become God.

2. Christ fulfills prophecy

Only Jesus has fulfilled the more than three hundred Bible prophecies concerning the person and work of the coming Messiah. Obviously, the vast majority of these prophecies could not have been fulfilled because of pre-planning. No one can schedule the time and place of his birth, as well as arrange the time and cause of his death.

These prophecies were written in the Old Testament hundreds of years before they came to pass. The Septuagint version of the Old Testament dispels the possibility of anyone changing the OT Hebrew scriptures, after A. D. 30, to deliberately coincide with the facts of Jesus Christ's life and death. This Greek translation of the Old Testament was written two hundred years before Christ was born. Thus, the Septuagint remains an implacable witness to the truth. Only the one true God could have caused all the events in Christ's life to take place precisely as they did.

3. His teachings

Those in Jesus' day heard His unique teaching and declared that this man taught with authority, not as the others. Jesus declares the way to heaven as narrow, not broad, proving it does matter what we believe. In Matthew 7:13-14, He says, "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."

Additionally Jesus says He alone is the way to eternal life. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father, [i.e., enters heaven], except through me," (John 14:6). Notice it is not 'a' way, as if to imply one of many ways, but rather 'the' way. Jesus states unequivocally that He is the only way.

Christianity Unique

Christianity deals with our sin problem

The Bible says Jesus came into the world to save sinners and that all people have sinned, (1 Timothy 1:15; Romans 3:23).

Since God declares we are all sinners who fall short of entering heaven based on our own merits, how then can we enter? Every other major religion fails to address this issue - a judicial one - the most crucial of all issues. Our just God states we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ to give an account of our acts, both good and bad, (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15). The good deeds we've done do not outweigh even one sin. Besides, we are all born with a sinful nature, negating the possibility of one truly holy act originating from ourselves. Therefore, we are all found guilty before His heavenly court. Knowing this, God the Father sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, the innocent Lamb, as our substitute, to make payment for our sin at the cross. Christ's atonement fully satisfied the justice of God, proved by His resurrection from the dead. Death is the just penalty for sin. Had Christ sinned, He would have remained in the grave. Jesus arose from the dead because He alone satisfied the Father. He alone made full payment for our sins. Can you now understand why Jesus can truthfully say that He is the *only* way to heaven? When a person agrees with God in these matters, asking for forgiveness, trusting in Christ alone as Savior, he is saved. God places that person 'in Christ' and he is a new creation forever changed. What changes in their life? They grow in faith and good works follow.

Jesus promises, "the one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out" [i.e., turn away], (John 6:37). Conversely he says, "unless you believe that I am he, you shall die in your sins," (John 6:24.) These are the statements of the God of heaven. He has not neglected to give us the requirements for entrance into heaven. Our prayer is that you will be found in Him.

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