

One Way Streets John 14:6 Easter5A 5-14-17

Comedian Steven Wright once said, "I live at the end of a one way street. I don't ever go anywhere." We will all live at the end of a one way street the day we die. We can't go back if we don't like its location. So we want to make sure we are on the right one way street.

Jesus says He is the right one-way street, the one leading not to a *dead* end, but to eternal life. No one comes to the Father, except through me, he said. In this exclusive claim, he also implies that there are wrong ways. Since every way is one-way, the wrong way is eternally fatal.

A wrong one-way street most often used is trust in human wisdom. Twice Proverbs says: *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.* Psalms tells us not to lean on our own understanding. We do that when we decide truth by feelings and opinions.

Friday night the Texas Rangers won with a walk off home run hit by Joey Gallo. Later, an overmedicated man started proclaiming loudly, "Gallo's the truth, Gallo's the truth." I didn't want to ask him what he meant, because I'm sure he didn't know. It reminded me however, that momentary emotions lead to saying some oddly funny things.

It is more serious when they become the basis for establishing what or who really *is* the truth. The unbelieving world, intoxicated by its inflated sense of knowledge, rejects Christ's exclusive claims.

To many, it is not fair that Jesus is the only way to God. Millions of Muslims, Jews, Hindus, and others can't all be wrong. You know people who are decent people, with a great reputation, whose eulogy will sound like they are worthy of sainthood. It wouldn't be fair if God didn't save them. I even have an old friend who claims Chuck Barry is in heaven, not because he knows what Barry believed about God, but because he made so many people happy with his music.

However, the truth of Scripture, instead of feelings or opinions, is more sobering. Jesus says He is the way because we can't make our own way. Why? Paul wrote to the Roman Christians, "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*" *All* means *all*, as he earlier quoted the Psalms, "*as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹²All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*

We can't get to the Father on our own, because our sin separates us from the holy God. We need help. Jesus is that helper, the mediator and reconciler that closes the gap, the bridge over which we cross. He is the One Way street that ends in life with the Father.

We learn this not from our feelings or opinions but from the Scriptures: Peter: *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.* Acts 4 Paul, to Timothy: "*there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. 2:5. To the Corinthians: *in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them.* 2 Cor. 5:19 John: *if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* 1 Jo 2:1

Jesus told his disciples, "*In my Father's house are many rooms*". He did not say there are many ways to get there. He was reassuring them that when it comes to the afterlife, He has this under control. While there is some mystery as to what this will be like, there is no question that God has a place prepared for those who come to Him through Jesus.

This he promised to men who lived with him for three years; men who knew him well, who had seen him heal, raise the dead, cast out demons, astonish his opponents with disarming answers and his friends with divine teachings. They had no reason to doubt him.

They had even more reason to trust his exclusive claim as the only way when he willingly hung on the cross as punishment for their sins and overcame death by rising from the grave. What other leader of any faith has ever done that?

I recently spoke with a professor who had read the whole Bible many years ago. However, his current beliefs come from his own reason and opinions, a way that seems right to him. Knowing who Jesus is is not the way to life. Salvation is found in believing the truth that He has done for you what you could not do for yourself, reconcile you to God.

Is it really unreasonable to trust Jesus, since He not only has power to lay down his life and take it up again, but also the love to do it for sinners like us? Christ's claims do offend those who lean on their own understanding, but who is more worthy to make such claims? In Him, the home at the end of our one-way

street will not be a dead end, but life never ending. Not only can we never return, but we will never want to, for we will be in the presence of the Father forever. Amen.