

International Conversation Cafe

Bible Topic: Do All Roads Lead to God?

There are about 20 major religions in the world today. Each offers a path to God based on their teachings of who God is and what he demands from people. Some think of the image of a mountain with God on the top and people at the bottom working their way up to God by taking various paths, i.e. religions. Why would they not all reach God? Actually, every major religion believes they offer the right path and if you do not go on their path, in their view, you will not reach God. Perhaps the idea that all paths lead to God is like a religion of its own.

The picture of God at the top suggests that he is higher, better, and smarter than people. In a way, he is pictured as aloof, waiting to see who can perform and attain. Is it possible to become acceptable to God based on our own efforts?

Romans 5

⁶ At just the right time Christ died for ungodly people. He died for us when we had no power of our own. ⁷ It is unusual for anyone to die for a godly person. Maybe someone would be willing to die for a good person. ⁸ But here is how God has shown his love for us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1. *How does verse 6 describe people?*
2. *If someone offends you, or does something to hurt you, how does that make you feel? What is a normal response to someone who hurts you?*
3. *God responds in love to those who are against him. How did he do this (verse 9)?*

¹⁰ Once we were God's enemies. But we have been brought back to him because his Son has died for us. Now that God has brought us back, we are even more secure. We know that we will be saved because Christ lives.

4. *According to this Scripture, how does God bring us back to himself? Does it have anything to do with our own efforts?*
5. *How do you think the resurrection of Jesus secures our relationship with God?*

¹¹ And that is not all. We are full of joy in God because of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of him, God has brought us back to himself.

6. *God brings us back to himself through Jesus. How is this different from us trying to bring ourselves to God by our own efforts?*

Instead of us working to be good enough for God, the Bible teaches that God helps us by sending Jesus. God sends Jesus to us to help us up the mountain to God. How is this possible? Consider the following passage.

Romans 4

²⁵ Jesus was handed over to die for our sins. He was raised to life in order to make us right with God. Therefore, having been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. *According to these words, what did the death of Jesus accomplish?*
2. *What does the resurrection of Jesus offer us?*
3. *How does God want us to respond to his offer of forgiveness?*

Some have suggested a maze to describe our search for knowing God.

1. God is in the center. There are many points of entry and many paths that are parallel, but only one path that brings you to God.
2. The maze demands personal responsibility. It is up to each individual to look at the options.
3. The choices will lead you in drastically different directions in terms of your life and end.
4. Some of the paths will be parallel some of the time. For example, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism believe that there is one God- monotheistic. Buddhism and Hinduism believe in reincarnation.
5. Jesus offers us the only way to God. Consider what Jesus said in John 14.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.

Why do you think that Jesus says that he alone is the way to God?

What is your reaction to Jesus' words?