



## **Is There Glory in a Narrow Gospel? John 14**

Psalm 148 says to:

*Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. He set them in place forever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away. Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens. He has raised up for his people a horn, the praise of all his saints, of Israel, the people close to his heart. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds. May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord (Ps. 148-150).*

Do you have breath this morning? You were created for one purpose. Have you ever thought of what it would be like if that last phrase in the book of Psalms was switched around? Instead of saying let everything that has breath praise the Lord, what if it said, "Let everything that praises the Lord have breath?" How many of you would be alive right now? If your every single breath was dependent on it being lifted and praised to your God, I want to submit to you this morning that the God who is worshipped in this room deserves nothing less than every single breath.

You heard mentioned earlier, we're starting a series called *Think Like Jesus*. What does it mean to think to let every thought, every action, everything we do revolve around one glorious, infinitely wonderful purpose, making His praise known? That's what I want us to dive into in Scripture. If we're going to think like Jesus, I think there's no better passage to start with than in John 14. I want to invite you to turn with me there. If you have a Bible and I hope you do, I want to invite you to turn with me to John 14.

And what I want us to do is I want us to dive in to what I believe is one of the most important teachings from Christ, really about the uniqueness and the glory of Christianity as a whole, but particularly in our culture today, the words that we're about to read and we're going to think about, are being debated, they're being discussed in many different forums all over our country, all over the world. Is Jesus really the only way to God, and I'm surprised that this is something that's even being debated in a lot of Christian churches and a lot of Christian conversations. Is Jesus really the only way to God? And the question I want us to ask is: is there glory in a narrow gospel? And what I want us to do is I want us to dive into John 14, and I want us to unpack the meaning of what Christ is saying right here.

Now, before we start reading, just to give you a little bit of the context, this is Jesus talking to His disciples days before He's about to go to the cross and He's giving them some comfort because He's about to leave them. But just remember that days after this Jesus is headed to the cross. So with that in mind, let's start together in verse 1.

*'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.'* Thomas said to him, *'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'* Jesus answered, *'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'* (John 14:1-6).

Now, is that what Jesus really meant, "No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6)? Well, let's start at the beginning of this passage. What did Jesus start by telling us? "*To trust in God; trust also in me*" (John 14:1). In other words, Jesus is equating Himself with God, something He does throughout the book of John. John 10:30, "*I and the Father are one.*" John 8:58, He calls Himself the I am, which is the name of God from the Old Testament. John 20:28, Thomas bows down and says, "*My Lord and my God!*" - in front of Jesus. That would have been Jesus' perfect opportunity to say, "Thomas, you missed the boat, I'm not really God, I'm just Jesus." No.

Throughout this book we're seeing that this is not just another religious teacher on the landscape of human history, this is God in the flesh. And then, as He comforts His disciples He says, "*In my Father's house are many rooms*" (John 14:2). Now, I realize that in some of your translations you might have the word "mansions" there. King James translation, I think, says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." And as a result, it has become pretty common for us to talk about heaven and talk about the mansion that we've got waiting for us on a hill one day in heaven. And we talk about how great our house is going to be and who's going to have the nice house, who's going to have the best house in this mansion and all of these things we're going to have.

Well, I don't mean to burst your bubble, but that's really not what Jesus is saying right here. You see this word He uses, "rooms," translated sometimes mansions, is actually used

only two times like this in the entire New Testament, and the literal meaning of it is its dwelling place. It's usually used as a verb, if I'm going to go live somewhere or dwell somewhere, that's the word that would be used, but two times it's used like a noun right here because it's a dwelling place. Now that means a couple of things.

Number one, when we think about heaven, maybe the best way to think about heaven would not be to picture mansions or nice houses with all the things this world may have to offer.

It's kind of funny, when I first began traveling and preaching in different places, it seemed like every time I went to a cool place or a place that was really nice I was by myself, but when I went to a place that was not so nice and they really weren't putting me up too nice, Heather, my wife, just happened to be with me. If we were at the gas station motel and we drive up and the pastor says, "Here's the keys to your room." And we walk in and there's about one square foot around the bed all the way around and the shower has got water leaking out into the bedroom. And she opens the door and she sees a bunch of truckers out there who give her a nice little wave, and she closes it and she says, "Is this what ministry is all about?" That's when she would be with me.

But then there were those other times – I remember one time in Kansas City, I was staying with this particular family, they gave me the basement to their house, which, this was not your normal basement. It was nicer than any other house I will ever live in, the basement, itself. And I walked in and walked down there and there are rooms everywhere, nice big kitchen. But the best part was this huge living room, great room, and there was this massive big-screen TV right in front. And right in front of the TV was a nice whirlpool hot tub, okay. Now, this is what ministry's all about, right. And it was during the college football season, which is a big plus. Get in the hot tub, turn on some college football, call up Heather, "Heather, wish you were here, this is great, all right."

I remember another time I was preaching outside of Nashville and this one home, I was staying at this particular family's house, and it was a mansion, there's no other way to describe it. I don't know, I'm guessing there are probably some country music fans in here this morning. I'm not that huge of a country music fan, but just to give you an idea of the neighborhood where I was staying in, right next door was Tim McGraw and Faith Hill. And so, I go into the house, this mansion. They take me back to my bedroom suite, it's this canopy bed, marble bathroom, and they've got just acres and acres of land, all these barns and stables. The barns and stables are nicer than any house I'll ever live in. And they've just got all these cattle out back and horses. I remember we sat down that night at the dining room, this big, long dining room table, had one of the cows from outside set before us, and I thought this, this is what it's all about.

Now, here's the deal. We have a tendency when we think about heaven to think like that. It's going to be this nice place with all the finest amenities this world has to offer. What I want to say to you this morning is when you think about heaven, I want to urge you to stop thinking about a place where all the finest amenities of this world will be there. Our God is not trying to compete with our economic prosperity in the West. Don't think about a place where we'll have all the amenities this world has to offer, think about a place where all the amenities this world has to offer pale in comparison with the fact that we are dwelling with Almighty God, and we will be with Him and there won't be more crying and there won't be more pain and there won't be more cancer and we'll be with Him forever. In my Father's house there's a place for you to dwell.

And He goes on. He says, *"I am going there to prepare a place for you"* (John 14:2). Now, again, I think many times we can get a misconception here. I know sometimes when I have studied this passage, I picture Jesus, almost like He's in the construction business. He's up there getting my room together or my place together. He's fixing the linens and He's getting everything tidy so that when I get there it'll be ready. He's going to prepare a place for me, but don't forget the context of this verse.

Where is Jesus about to go to? He's about to go to the cross and when He says I'm going there to prepare a place for you, what He is saying is the only way for you to get to the place where you will dwell with God is if I give my life on the cross. When He says I'm making some preparations, He's talking about His death.

And I want you to notice that, before we even get to verse 6 and we start talking about how Jesus says, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6), I want you to see that this is not just a religious teacher who is going to point us to do certain things in order to get to heaven. At no point in this passage do you see Jesus tell His disciples, "Here is what you've got to do to get there." What He is saying is, "I am going to make the preparations done for you."

And so after that Thomas says, "Well, how can we know where you're going?" And Jesus says, "You're looking at Him." *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). Now, what does He really mean there? Notice, please notice, this is one of the things that sets Jesus apart from every religious teacher in human history. He does not point us to the way.

Every great religious leader has pointed people to the way that they think brings life. Buddha points to rules and regulations that you follow to get life. Mohammad points to the Koran, you obey the Koran and do these things, and then you will find life eternally. Hinduism, if you do certain things – I was in India, a year ago today, I was in India and talking to people who were trying to do all kinds of things in order to find peace with the world around them, doing certain things. And Jesus doesn't say, "Here is what you do," He says, "You come to me." It's through a relationship.

You see, here's the deal, we don't need a recipe for salvation. We don't need a recipe for here's what you do, put these things together and then you get to heaven. We need a relationship with the God of the universe and that's what Jesus is talking about here. He says, "I am the way."

Now, we know that we live in a culture today where it's pretty common, almost accepted that there are many different ways to God, right, many different paths. Sure, we found a path in here through Jesus, but other people find other paths in different ways. I mean look around the world at all the religions, everybody's got a different path and in the end, we're going to end up in the same place.

I have lived in New Orleans, temporarily relocated from New Orleans, but during my time there had spent a lot of time in the French Quarter of New Orleans. And I don't know if you've been to New Orleans before or to the French Quarter. There's a little place called Bourbon Street there—not a good place to hang out. But then the rest of the area is just the center of our city, and talking with guys, building relationships with guys who live and work, live on the streets down there.

Some of them turned me on to this one particular writer; the guy's name is Neale Donald Walsch. And as soon as I heard his name, I remembered, this is a book that a Christian

man had one time recommended to me and said, "This guy knows what he's talking about." And I want you to hear, this guy's books have been translated into different languages, sold multimillion copies all around the world. Here's one of his books, it's called *Communion with God* and here's the main point. He says, "God's greatest truth is that there is not one way only but many ways home. There are a thousand paths that lead to God and every one will get you there. Indeed, all paths lead to God. This is because there is no other place to go." We're all going to end up in the same place.

I remember in Indonesia just a couple of months ago, I was talking with a man, a Hindu leader and a Muslim leader and I were sitting around, we were having a dialogue together, and they were talking on and on and on about how, "We have different paths that lead us to spiritual fulfillment, that lead us to God." And they said, "We respect your path, you respect our path and we all go different ways and together we are one and we'll end up in the same place." And they talked on and on and on.

And so I looked at them and I said, "Well, let me see if I understand right. It's almost like you picture God at the top of a mountain and we're all at the bottom of a mountain. And I may take this path up and you may take this path up, but in the end, we're going to end up at the same place." They both got a huge smile on their face, exactly. You finally got it. That's exactly what we're saying. That's the way it is. And I looked at them and I said, "Well, if that's the way it is, let me ask you one simple question, what if the God at the top of the mountain decided He was going to make His way down the mountain to us, and He came to bring us up the mountain Himself?" And they said, "Well, that would be wonderful." And I said, "That's exactly what the God of the Bible did. Let me tell you about who Jesus really is." It's not about us trying to find our way. Jesus says, "I am the way."

I came across a transcript from this TV show. I don't watch this show believe me, I don't watch this show, but I want you to see – I was really interested because they were discussing John 14:6. And then you had the speaker there and then you had a Jewish Rabbi, a professor from a supposedly Christian seminary up in the northeast. I want you to hear their conversation.

The Jewish Rabbi spoke up. He said, "Look at the literal interpretation of this verse. It says Jesus is the way. Do you think He's some sort of asphalt road? Do you think it says I-95 on top of Him or something? I mean why do you take everything so literally?" And the professor from the Christian seminary spoke up and he said, "As for me, I am passionately Christian. I am a Christian. I believe in Jesus as the one who showed me the way. But I would be the last person to be so arrogant as to assert that my God has so little imagination that she or he could not reach out to other people in other cultures in other ways, and I am happy about that." The speaker chimes in, "You speak for me. It's not about having the right way. You can worship a pet rock; really, it's one of our freedoms to be sure. Really, I'm saying, you don't have the knowledge and you ought to be humble enough to know that." Now, I know this is not just on this TV show; this is in our everyday lives, isn't it? Even in our Christian lives?

I am passionately Christian. I am a Christian, Jesus showed me the way, but I'm not going to be so arrogant as to say that my God has so little imagination that she or he could not reach out to other people in other cultures in other ways. And you know, I think ultimately it comes down to a question of truth. "I am the way;" the "truth." Are all of these ways true? Just because we believe in a way does that make it true?

I mentioned that I have spent some time down in the French Quarter of New Orleans. There's a place called Jackson Square in the middle of the French Quarter and what happens

is there's all kinds of fortune tellers and tarot card readers that set up tables all around that area and people come and have their fortune told and the Voodoo Queen of New Orleans is there.

Me and some buddies of mine decided we wanted to get in on a little bit of the action one day and so we decided we were going to set up a table of our own. And so we went, spotted out the Voodoo Queen and said we're going to set up next to her. And so we went next to the Voodoo Queen, pulled out a table, put a tablecloth over it, put some cool looking candles up, put some chairs in front and behind, and then we put up a sign, and our sign said, "We'll Tell Your Future for Free."

So people would come and they would sit down at the table and say, "You're going to tell me my future for free?" We said, "Yes." Said, "Okay, go for it." So what we would do is we would ask them a couple of questions and they would establish the fact that they have sin in their lives. And then we would look at them and say, "Well, your future doesn't look very good." And we would use that as a bridge to begin to tell them about Christ. As we did, almost inevitably people would stop and say, "Oh, no, no, no, no, you're one of those Christians, think you've got the truth." And almost inevitably they would say, "There is no truth. What's true for me may not be true for you, vice versa. There is no absolute truth." That's what they would say.

Whenever I hear somebody say that I can't help but think the same thing every time. "There is no absolute truth." I just want to say back to them, "Does that include the statement that you just made?" If you say there is no absolute truth, then you have made a truth statement and therefore you deny your own statement with your own statement. It doesn't really add up.

Maybe there is truth. Then they'll say, "Well, there is no God." You know that? Yes, I know, there is no God. Well, let's think about that statement for a second. If you say there is no God, you say that something is not there, that means you have to have searched out all possibilities that it might be there. Since you say there is no God, God is not there, then that means you have to search all knowledge to see if God is there, and if you have searched all knowledge then that means you have all knowledge, and by definition, that makes you God, and therefore, you deny your own divinity with your own statement that there is no God.

There is a God. He is true and He has revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the exact representation of God, that's why He could say I am the truth. And I believe this is a fundamental issue. I mean think about it with me. Let's compare just this idea that all religions, some people say, are fundamentally the same, they're just superficially different. Well, let's think about two, Islam and Christianity.

Think about the crucifixion of Jesus. In Islam, there are two major sects of Islam that have teachings on the crucifixion of Jesus. One major sect of Islam says that Jesus didn't really go to the cross, somebody who looked a lot like Him did, an imposter went to the cross. And so when that person died on the cross it really wasn't Jesus, so Jesus didn't die on the cross.

The other major sect of Islam says that Jesus did go to the cross but He didn't die there, He just got hurt really, really, really, really, really, really, really bad, and He didn't die there. They took Him down and He wasn't dead yet and they put Him in some grave clothes, wasn't dead yet, put Him behind His tomb, wasn't dead yet, so He just kind hopped – rolled

over, hopped out, pushed the stone out of the way and that's how He got out. He never really died. Those are the two major sects of Islam.

Now, obviously, Christianity teaches that Jesus died on the cross, right? Now, I am not asking you to say which one of these is true and which one is not. But we've got to realize either He didn't die on the cross or He did, and it's a matter of truth, and I think it's a matter of truth worth seeking out, because if He didn't die on the cross, then I've got news for us, we're wasting our time here. Our faith is meaningless. Paul says exactly that in 1 Corinthians 15. However, if Jesus did die on the cross then that has huge ramifications for every single one of our lives.

*"I am the way and the truth and the life"* (John 14:6). Please don't miss this. I wish we had time to go through the whole book of John and look at how he uses this word "life," places like John 10:10, where Jesus says, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* Satisfaction! "Fullness" is the meaning there, and I want you to see this is not just truth on a page; it's not just some cold, narrow thing that we read about. And Jesus stands up and says, "I am the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through me." No, this is a life satisfaction that Jesus came to give. And it's a life that's not just on a page; it's a life that plays out in His person as well as in His Church today.

You know, we might go through this study of thinking like Jesus how we know God exists or how we know that Jesus is the only way to God, and we might be able to share things like that verbally, but I believe with all my heart that the best way we can show the culture we live in today the truth of Christ is to show it with our lives. I am convinced of that.

Studied early Christian history, the first three centuries of the church, that's the time when defenders of the faith, they were called apologists, defenders of the faith, they were most prevalent during those first three centuries. They were always going to kings and other places defending Christianity. And you know what their greatest defense for the faith was? It wasn't some intellectual argument for the existence of God, it wasn't some convincing proof that Jesus is the only way to God.

What they would do is when they were defending Christianity, they would say, "King, I want you to look at the church. I want you to see how they love each other. I want you to see how they care for their orphans and their widows. I want you to see how they reach out in their communities, see that Christ is real in His church." And I am convinced today that if we're going to be effective at sharing the gospel in our culture, it's going to happen because people see Christ in the church and this truth come to life.

But then we get to that part, let's be honest, a lot of us, if not all of us, kind of struggle with. I know I have in my own life. This has been a point of much wrestling for me in my faith. *"No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6), because that excludes a lot of people. A lot of people in different faiths, a lot of people around the world—"No one comes to God except through me." And when we hear that our first thought is, "That is extremely narrow and close-minded and arrogant, that can't be from a loving God." That's our first thought.

But what we've got to realize is that when we come to John 14 and we read those words, we're coming in on a conversation that began way back here. You ever been in a situation like that, you talk with somebody for a few hours, you go through some deep issues, then somebody else comes in, starts to join in the conversation and you want to say who invited you into this conversation? That's exactly what's going on here in John 14. We're coming in right here on a story that began way back here.

You say, "What do you mean, David." Well, imagine this with me, even if you were sitting here and you didn't believe there was a God, and you weren't convinced of this Christianity thing at all, even if that was you, you'd at least have to be willing to admit that there's a possibility that God exists, so let's start there.

Let's imagine that there is a perfect Creator, God, who is completely good, infinitely good, completely loving, infinitely loving. And this Creator, who had all the power, decided to form a creation, and so He created the majesty that we see around us in the mountains and the seas and the skies and the animals and the plants. And suppose after all of that He said, I'm going to make a prized creation, and He breathed life into a man and a woman.

And suppose this Creator said to this man and woman, I love you, you are my prized creation, you alone bear my image, and I want you to reflect my love to the rest of creation, and I want you to live forever. Just walk with me and join me, be satisfied in me and follow me and you will live forever. Now, if you don't follow me, if you disobey me, then you'll experience death, but I don't want you to experience death.

And suppose that man and woman said, "Yes, yes, we will follow you, we will enjoy you." But then one day, for no just reason, they go off and do things on their own and decide their Creator really doesn't know what He's talking about and they disobey Him. And suppose this Creator comes to them and says, "I told you that if you did this you would experience death." But suppose instead of striking them down right there, He set in motion a plan that would allow for those people, that creation to still experience life. Suppose that plan involved a people that He would call out, a country that would be His own and He would say, "I'm going to pour out my grace, my blessing, my love and my mercy on you and you're going to share it with the rest of creation, and you're going to follow me and together we're going to show the world that I am good and that I love the creation I have made."

And suppose they said, "Yes, we'll do it." And they enter into a covenant with Him, but suppose the next day they turn around and they craft idols and they start bowing down to those idols that they make with their own hands. Suppose the next day, these people have completely turned against their Creator. And suppose after all that the Creator doesn't stop and He decides He's going to send spokesmen to His people, called prophets in the Old Testament, representatives of His. And these people come to the creation and they say there is good news, if you will turn from your sin and your disobedience, God is gracious, the Creator is merciful, He will forgive you and you can experience life. And suppose the creation, with the good news that those spokesmen brought, suppose that creation took those men and assassinated them, sawed them in half, cut them in two and left them alone in destitute, completely ignored what they said.

Now, just suppose after all of that, this Creator committed the ultimate act of condescension and took on a robe of human flesh Himself, and He came to that creation, after all that, and He loved them and He healed their diseases and He gave to those that were needy, and He brought peace and life to those who didn't have it before. Raising people from the dead. And suppose after all that the creation took the Creator, Himself, in the flesh and mocked Him and beat Him and scourged Him and spit upon Him and hung Him on a cross in the most cruel form of assassination known to creation at that time.

And suppose after that whole story, this Creator were to say to all people in all history, including every single one of us, "If you will simply believe in what I did on that cross and the love I showed for you there, if you'll simply trust in my love then you can experience life."

Now, in light of all that, how could anyone of us be so bold or so arrogant as to stand before that Creator and say, "Why is there only one way? Where is your imagination, God? Couldn't you show a little creativity in this thing?"

The question is not why is there only one way, the question is why is there any way at all. "Why only one way?" I'm convinced that if there were a thousand ways, we would want 1,001. The issue is not how many ways, the issue is our autonomy, our pride that says we need to make our way to God, and the good news of the Bible is that He has come down the mountain to you and to me. He has made the way to us and He has said, "I will take you to be with me. I do the work, just trust in the love that I show you."

Notice that God did not design salvation so that love or works or good deeds would be the way that we would come to Christ. No, it was based completely on what He did for us. And this is the truth that amidst all of the talk in our culture about narrow-minded and closed-minded and arrogant, we've got to realize at the core of this truth is grace that we simply don't deserve.

I remember when I was in college at the University of Georgia, I was in a speech class on this 30,000-member campus, most of whom were atheist or agnostic, wanting nothing to do with Christ or with His church. And in this speech class it was my day to give the speech, and I stood before them and I had decided I was going to give my speech on Christianity and so I did. I gave my speech on the Christian faith and in that shared the gospel.

At the end of the speech the class got to raise their hands and ask questions, about 30 of them in there. Immediately, a girl in the back raises her hand. Her name was Jane. Her hand went up immediately and she said, "I've got a question." Jane was a leader in Student Government, smart, wise by all the standards that campus had set up. She said, "I have a question." I said, "Okay." She said, "Are you telling me that if I don't believe in the Jesus that you're talking about that I will spend eternity in hell when I die?"

Well, I'd never had it put to me quite that way, in front of quite that many people, and I began to sweat profusely, shake, nervous, what in the world do I say? And I'll be honest with you, there was a large part of me that wanted to say, "Maybe, I don't know, let's just talk after class." But I knew that wasn't an option.

And so I looked back at Jane and the other 30 faces that were staring at me in silence, and I said with as much compassion as was in me, I said, "Jane, we're all sinners. We have disobeyed God and have been separated from Him, and the only way we can be forgiven is someone who paid the price for our sins, and that's what Jesus did because He loves you and He loves every single one of us in the classroom. So in answer to your question, yes, apart from faith in Jesus Christ, you will spend eternity in hell when you die."

Well, needless to say, I wasn't the most popular guy in class that particular day. Sighs went up across the room as the narrow-minded, arrogant Christian stood in front of them. I remember Jane came up to me right after class. She said, "I just want you to know that that is the most conceited thing I've ever heard anybody say. For you to tell all of us in this class that if we don't believe like you believe that we're going to spend eternity in damnation, who do you think you are?"

I remember after that day, Jane and I had many, many different conversations. I can remember one day sitting in a coffee shop, and she asked me every question in the book, "How do you know God exists? Why is Jesus the only way to God? What about other religions? What about people who never hear about Jesus?" And I did the best I could based

on God's Word to answer her questions, but it seemed like my every word was bouncing off a brick wall, have you ever felt like that?

And I remember walking away from that conversation extremely frustrated that day, and I came to one of those crisis of faith moments in our relationship with Christ, where you start to wonder, "Is this really true." I don't know if you've been there before, but I remember where I was sitting on campus that day thinking, "God is this thing really true, because I stake my life on it, but I share it with some people and they don't seem to be accepting it, and I'm looked at as arrogant and narrow-minded and I know you don't want me to be a conceited person. I don't want to go around telling people they need to look like me. That's not the goal. God is this thing really true or have I just missed it somewhere?" And I began to struggle with that and wrestle with this truth in a way that I never had before.

Over the next few months, we left school at the end of that semester, broke for the summer and came back at the beginning of the fall. I remember I walked into class on the first day and there was Jane sitting in the front of the classroom. She turned around and saw me and said, "I need to talk to you after class." I said, "Okay." I waited outside in the hall for her after class, and to make a long conversation very short, Jane looked at me on that day and she said, "I just want you to know, this summer I found out that Jesus is the only way to God, and I have trusted Him to save me and now I know that when I die, I am going to heaven."

I share that story with you based on this passage from God's Word for two reasons. Number one, I know that there are many, young and old alike, you're sitting in here and you have never trusted in Jesus to save you, and you've never let down your pride, and for whatever reason this truth has seemed cold and hard and you've kept yourself distant from it, and for whatever reason, you've said I don't want to buy into it. I want you to see that there is a God who came down a mountain to you and He gave His life on a cross for you, and if you'll just let your pride down like Jane did on that day, you will experience eternal life.

And the second reason I share that story with you is that I know that sitting before me right now is a lot of believers, brothers and sisters, who are in a culture and you're facing wall after wall after wall when you try to share the gospel, whether it's people at your work, at school, at home. It doesn't seem like it's going anywhere. What I want to tell you is that I believe with all my heart, no matter how tall, no matter how wide, no matter how thick the walls are that our culture sets up, I believe they come crashing down when we proclaim the light and the truth of Jesus Christ.

The question is are we going to be faithful to do it? Are we going to take Him at His Word and are we going to share this glorious gospel, narrow, glorious gospel that is full of grace and mercy with those around us? Will you bow your heads with me? Every head bowed and every eye closed.

I know, just as I mentioned before, that in a room this size there are many of you who have come in here and you don't know Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. And for whatever reason you have been resistant to that truth, you have been resistant not just to a truth on paper, you've been resistant to Him, and I want you to see the picture of His grace, and I want to urge you and I want to invite you, if you are ready to experience this grace, this truth, this life, this way in your life, then cry out where you are, to the Lord to forgive you of your sins. Repent of your prideful rebellion against Him, and trust in the person and finished work of Jesus on the cross to atone for you sins, and you will be saved!

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