

Are There Multiple Paths To God?

Edoardo Labanchi was an Italian Jesuit priest. He was our language teacher in Rome. Confronted by the differences between his limited success and the success of evangelicals at evangelizing Sri Lankans, he began to ask "Why?" In his research he met an evangelical pastor who asked Edoardo to read Acts 4 verse 12 and John 14:6.

Recalled to Italy, Edoardo was sent to the highest institution in the Vatican to be a specialist in Biblical Studies. Edoardo wrestled with the claim Jesus made, that he is the only way to heaven. It seemed outrageous. He said to me that it was Acts 4:12 "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" that did it. That slew me. I acknowledged that the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ was the only basis of eternal salvation. I asked Jesus to forgive me. So, here I am."

Why is the claim by Jesus to be the only way to God so controversial? Strobel suggests "one reason is that it strikes at the core of three great myths about religion: 1) All religions are basically the same; 2) Christianity is simply one philosophy among many; and 3) Evangelical Christians are arrogant to think Jesus is the only way to heaven."

Strobel believes "this claim rankles people like nothing else. It's been called bigoted. It's been called snobbish. Some of you are seekers and chafe at the idea that Jesus is the only way to God, for you are living in a world where there seem to be endless options in every area of life. For some of you this is a stumbling block to faith."

Reflections

"Do you believe Jesus is telling the truth when he says: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"? John 14:6

Ask yourself "Do I accept Jesus' claim to be the only way to God"? Why or why not? Why do some find this claim harder to accept than some of Jesus' other claims? If you reject this claim of Jesus, how does it affect your view of his other claims?

Who do you think Jesus Christ is??