



REASONING FOR HOPE: How Do We Know Jesus and Christianity are the Only Way to God?

May 4, 2025 | Pastor Kirk Walters

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 1 Peter 3:15 NLT

Why is Jesus so important?

Why is the world so resistant to Jesus?

Why does persecution seem to be so violently opposed to Jesus?

Because Jesus literally split time in two!

The Gregorian calendar, which is used in most of the world today establishing dates as being:

BC - Before Christ

AD - Latin phrase "Anno Domini" - "In the Year of our Lord (Jesus Christ)" - Dionysius

Jesus is the "Alpha and Omega" (Beginning and the End)

Alpha - "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God...All things came into being through him"

John 1:1, 3

Omega - "For in Christ all the fullness of God dwells in bodily form."

Colossian 2:9

Garden of Eden - God walked with mankind

Sin disrupted that

Jesus - God walks with mankind again (HS)

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

John 14:6 NLT

1. Jesus Claimed to Be God

- **Who did Jesus think he was?**

"The Father and I are one."

John 10:30 NLT

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

John 14:6 NLT

- **Jesus forgave sins & accepted worship**

⁵ Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "My child, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves, ⁷ "What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!"

Mark 2:5-7 NLT

Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Matthew 14:33 NLT

- **Jesus performed Miracles, Signs, and Wonders**

Jesus' miracles weren't magic tricks.

He healed the sick, raised the dead, and calmed the storm.

Jesus said in John 10:37-38 that they were signs pointing to His divine nature.

No other religious leader has made these kind of claims.

Certainly, no other religious leader has ever done these things.

2. Old Testament Prophecies Predicted It

- Over 300 Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Jesus.

Examples:

Birth - *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf.* **Micah 5:2 NLT**

Life - *The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me, for the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. ²He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the LORD's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. ³To all who mourn in Israel, he will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the LORD has planted for his own glory.* **Isaiah 61:1-3 NLT**

Death - *He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. ⁴Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! ⁵But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. ⁶All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.* **Isaiah 53:3-6 NLT**

Resurrection - *For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.* **Psalms 16:10 NLT**

- Prophecies written centuries before His birth show us **divine planning**.

3. The Resurrection Proves It

The Resurrection of Jesus is central to Christianity.

And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.

1 Corinthians 15:14 NLT

Empty Tomb and Eyewitnesses – *I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. ⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. ⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.* **1 Corinthians 15:3-8 NLT**

Transformation of the Disciples

- Mark 15:40 – the Disciples desert and abandon Jesus
- Luke 24 and John 20 – the Disciples are cowering in a locked room for fear of the Jewish leaders when Jesus appears to them and what does He show them?
- Acts 2 – the Disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit and Simon Peter (the one who denied that he even knew Jesus 3 times the day Jesus was crucified) preached the overflowing streets of Jerusalem that Jesus was crucified and raised from the dead and is Lord of all, and 3000 people were saved that day!
- All of the Disciples, except John, were martyred for their faith in Jesus.
- What could have possibly happened to change these men from cowards to preachers of the Gospel?
- Only a Resurrected Lord and Savior.
- Because if Jesus rose from the dead, then Jesus is Lord over death, hell, and the grave.
- Because of the Resurrection, I don't have to live in fear and dread because *"God had not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind."*

Conversion of Skeptics like Paul and James

- Paul was a man who was rising in leadership of the Jewish leaders and personally charged with arresting and persecuting Christians.
- Paul suddenly changed into a man who spent his life preaching Jesus, raised from the dead, as Lord of all and wrote at least half of the New Testament.
- What would cause this change? Paul said he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus and the Risen Christ changed everything.
- James was the half-brother of Jesus, raised in the same home, who doubted Jesus.
- In Mark 3, James and his brothers come to Jesus to take Him away because they believe He is "out of his mind."
- In John 7, James and his brothers accuse Jesus of doing miracles to gain attention and verse 5 clearly states that they did not believe in Jesus.
- But Acts 1 tells us that Jesus' mother and brothers were in the upper room waiting for Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- Acts 15 he is leading the church meeting, Galatians 1 calls him an Apostle, Galatians 2 calls him a "pillar" of the church
- James writes a letter to the churches and greets them saying, *"This letter is from James, a slave (meaning a bondservant—one who has willingly chosen to give up their life to serve someone else) of God and the Lord Jesus Christ."*
- What changed? James encountered Jesus after the Resurrection and it changed his life.
- 1 Corinthians 15 tells us that James received a special revelation from Jesus

You see, the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead changes everything!

4. The Truth of Christianity Is Exclusive, but the Invitation Is Universal

Do all roads lead to Heaven? NO!

Most religions teach people to *earn* their way to God. Christianity teaches that God came to us in grace. Romans 5:8 says, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

The Truth of Christianity is Exclusive

Exclusive because Jesus said He is the only way.

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." **John 14:6 NLT**

Truth is by Nature Exclusive

Just like 2+2 cannot equal both 4 and 5, not all religious claims can be simultaneously true. Jesus' resurrection sets Him apart.

God's Love and Invitation are Inclusive and Universal

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 NLT

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

2 Peter 3:9 NLT

"There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:12 NLT

Even though the Way is Narrow, the Invitation is Wide

Conclusion:

Jesus is the way. Not a way. The way.

The only one who bridges heaven and earth. The only one who defeated death.
The only one who can offer eternal life.

Truth isn't unkind. In fact, truth is love.

And today, the truth is: there is one way to God—and His name is Jesus.

Behold, I stand at the door [of the church] and continually knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him (restore him), and he with Me.

Revelation 3:20 AMP