What Did He Say?

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6 (ESV)

There are statements Jesus made that leave little room for misunderstanding. John 14:6 is one of them. The difficulty is not understanding what He said. The difficulty is accepting what He said.

Jesus did not say, "I know the way." He said, "I am the way." He did not say, "I will teach you the truth." He said, "I am the truth." He did not merely promise to show people how to find life. He said, "I am the life."

Then He made the statement even more unmistakable: "No one comes to the Father except through me."

No one.

Those words are increasingly uncomfortable in a culture that insists there must be many roads to God. We are told that one person may find God through Christianity, another through a different religion, and another simply by being sincere, moral, or spiritual. According to that way of thinking, the particular road does not matter very much as long as the traveler is sincere.

But what did Jesus say?

He did not say that He was one way among many. He did not say that all sincere religious paths eventually arrive at the same destination. He did not say that good people will find their own way to the Father. He said, "No one comes to the Father except through me."

There is no way to affirm Jesus while rejecting what Jesus said.

Some attempt to soften His words because they sound too exclusive. Surely, they reason, a loving God would not provide only one way of salvation. But that reasoning approaches the matter backward. The wonder is not that God provided only one way for sinful people to come to Him. The wonder is that He provided a way at all.

God was under no obligation to rescue rebels from the judgment their sin deserved. Yet in immeasurable grace, He sent His Son. Jesus Christ lived the righteousness sinners could never produce, bore the judgment they could never survive, and rose from the dead. The only way to the Father was provided by the Father Himself.

That makes Christ's exclusivity an expression of grace, not cruelty.

The question, then, is not whether the words of Jesus agree with contemporary ideas about religion. Nor is the question whether they make us comfortable. Truth does not become false because it makes us uncomfortable, and it does not become true because it makes us feel better.

The question is much simpler.

What did He say?

He said He is the way.

He said He is the truth.

He said He is the life.

He said no one comes to the Father except through Him.

Christianity therefore cannot honestly present Jesus as merely one possible choice in the marketplace of religious ideas. To do so would require denying the very One Christianity claims to proclaim.

Perhaps the most important question is not whether you believe Christianity is true in some general sense. It is whether you believe Jesus.

You have heard what He said.

Now there is another question only you can answer.

Do you believe Him?

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