

When I come from the west on ~~I~~ I-90 heading for my home in Avon, I am always confronted with a dilemma, which exit to take. There are three, Detroit Rd., Rt. 611, and Rt. 83. Which Rt. is best? I can't decide. If I get behind a slow car on Detroit then the trip through Avon seems to take forever. If I ~~hit the highway~~ take 611 I must drive further, but face less risk of being slowed by traffic. If I take 83 the route home is longer still but most of the driving is on the interstate. Three routes, which shall I take? You say it doesn't matter, I'll get home just the same, no matter which route I take? I guess you are right.

Pastor, it really doesn't matter whether we are Christians, ~~or Jews~~ or Moslems or Buddhists or Hindus. We all worship the same God, we all strive to please him. These religions are just different roads, all arriving at the same destination. So it has been spoken to me so many times. And those who speak these words expect me to nod my head, yes, but I never do.

Being good. That is what they understand the Christian life to be about. Being good. Being honest, helping those in need, seeking not to hurt anyone. When the judgement day comes God will take the ones who have been good, the cream of the crop and keep them. And those who have been bad, who have failed to measure up to his standards he will discard.

What is important about Jesus for them? He is a teacher, one who taught us how to be good. Like Mohammed, like Buddha, like Moses.

And if all the teachings are basically the same, then religion is only a matter of personal taste, not of truth. Live and let live, let the Moslem be a Moslem, a Buddhist a buddhist, ^{and let the Jew be a Jew}, don't try to change them or interfere with with they believe, all the roads lead to one place.

In fact, if your neighbor is happy and basically ~~good~~ a good person, why speak to him about Christ? Why risk offending him, hurting your relationship with him if all the roads lead to ^{a nearby} home?

* In the gospel according to St. Matthew we read that after Easter this is what happened: Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to

which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.

~~xxxxxxdisciplesxxxxofxxxxnationsxx~~

Go, make disciples of all nations. These are the marching orders of the people of God. Your marching orders and mine. Not live and let live. Not all roads lead to the same destination so it does not matter what you believe, but Go, make disciples of Jesus Christ.

^{have} Have you obeyed this command? ^{Some living breathing proof. Here, in your world, living, breathing, you would see them at our table, but from Jesus, the only Son of God.} ~~This command is not from Moses, but from~~ ^{but what of these calls?} Have you sought to make disciples for him? ^{allow you} ~~there~~ there are people you know, and talk to and care about. Do they live with Jesus Christ as their Lord? Do they know of the depth of His love for ~~him~~ them, a love that endured suffering and pain and God-forsakenness and death for them? ^{believe} Do they ~~know~~ know that Christ forgives them and daily gives them a clean slate, a fresh start with nothing held against them? Do they know that in this world of death, that Christ will free them ^{from} this enemy, ^{death} that wants to ~~hold~~ hold them through fear? Do they know that God has a gift all wrapped up and waiting for them, absolutely free of charge, the gift of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ? Do they know who it is that will be waiting for them ~~inxxxxxtxxxxxx~~ on the other side of the grave, waiting with arms that he stretched out for them, now ready ^{grab} ~~wrap around~~ wrap around them and hold them forever? Do they know?

The world is saying it doesn't matter. The world wants us to believe it doesn't matter, that not offending, not making waves, not believing enough to care what anyone else believes is best.

But God is not whatever we want him to be. God is not a piece of clay that we can mold and shape into whatever we need at the moment. God is. I am what I am he said was his name. Yahweh, I am what I am, or AI will be what

I will be. ^{what} ~~and all~~ that name tells us is that God is just that, God, the one in charge, free to do as he wills.

But in a moment of time, the God free to be what he will be revealed to all the world who he is, the one who suffers for his own, the one who gives his life for his own, the one who will let nothing defeat his love for his own. Jesus Christ is not a revelation of God, one way God might act or be, Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, God himself living and acting and giving in our world.

What is the difference between Jesus and all the rest of the world's religious teachings? In every way he is the opposite. For religions teach us how to become more and more godlike, how to climb the ladder of goodness higher and higher until we make ourselves worthy of God. God sits above his world and waits for us to find our way to him. Exxxi

But in Jesus Christ, God shows himself to be one who ^{comes} ~~comes~~ down, to meet us where we are, here, in being born and being hungry and loving and giving and dying. In Christ God has revealed it is not our doing and striving and goodness that matter, but the love of God. In religion the center is always me, what I must do. In Christ, the center is ~~upon~~ God, what he has done in creating, and redeeming and what he is still doing through ^{with a constant, living, as before, why it was} sanctifying us. This is the faith in God the Father, creator, God the Son, Redeemer, God the Holy Spirit, sanctifier.

The world needs to know God. The whole world needs to be adopted as sons and daughters of the one true God through baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The world needs to know that the God who has created all, every person of every race and nation, the God who has died for all, blacks and Indians, whites and Orientals, males and females, that this God now through the Holy Spirit intends ~~at~~ to make believers ~~all~~ of all and to hold them fast in faith.

Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, to the close

of the age.

What holds us back? Fear that we will not know the right words, say them in the right way. Fear that our neighbors will think us presumptuous.

Do not be afraid. Jesus will be with you in making disciples in teaching.