

ONLY ONE WAY: DEFENDING THE EXCLUSIVITY OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPEL
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I. Introduction: The Age of Prescriptive Religious Pluralism has Come

A. The Nature of the Pluralism of our Day

B. Two Questions Faced in Light of Religious Pluralism

1. Is Jesus the only Savior? More fully: Is the sinless life of Christ and his atoning death and resurrection the only means by which the penalty of sin is paid and the power of sin defeated?
2. Is faith in Christ necessary to be saved? More fully: Is conscious knowledge of Christ's death and resurrection for sin and explicit faith in Christ necessary for anyone to become a recipient of the benefits of Christ's atoning work and so be saved?

C. Three Positions (as seen by how each position answers each of these two questions)

1. Pluralism: answers Q1. _____ and Q2. _____ (e.g., John Hick)
2. Inclusivism: answers Q1. _____ and Q2. _____ (e.g., Clark Pinnock)
3. Exclusivism: answers Q1. _____ and Q2. _____ (e.g., Ron Nash, John Piper, Bruce Ware)

II. Biblical and Theological Basis for Believing, Embracing, and Defending that Jesus is the Only Savior

A. Historical Incarnation (John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-3; 2:14-18; Phil 2:5-11; 1 Tim 2:5-6)

B. Sinless Life (2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:23-28; 9:13-14; 1 Pet 2:21-24)

C. Substitutionary Death (Isa 53:4-6; Rom 3:21-26; Gal 3:10-14)

D. Triumphant Resurrection (Acts 2:22-24; Rom 4:25; 1 Cor 15:3-8, 16-23)

E. Dominical and Apostolic Teaching (John 3:16, 18, 36; 14:6; Acts 4:10-12)

III. Biblical and Theological Basis for Believing, Embracing, and Defending that Faith in Christ is Necessary to be Saved

A. Jesus' own teaching shows that the nations need to hear, repent, and believe in Christ to be saved (John 3:16-18; Luke 24:44-49)

B. Paul's teaching that even pious Jews, and everyone else, must hear and believe in Christ to be saved (Romans 1:16-17; 3:9, 19-26; 10:1-4, 13-15)

C. Cornelius's story demonstrates that even pious Gentiles must hear and believe in Christ to be saved (Acts 10:1-2, 38-43; 11:13-18; 15:7-9)

IV. Conclusion and Application