



"Example has more followers than reason."
—Christian Bovee

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Christ, the Way

During the [Passover](#) service, we always read John 14 in its entirety. It is chock-full of insight and instruction that we, as Christ's disciples, need to live fully as Christians and to prepare for [eternal life](#) in the [Kingdom of God](#). Jesus opens the chapter by saying:

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in [God](#), believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. ([John 14:1-4](#))

He sets the goal before us, eternal life in God's house. He says that He will soon be going to that same goal, where He will be in a better position to prepare us to reach it. Then He says, "You know the way there," which has Thomas scratching his head. "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" (verse 5). In other words, if we do not have a clear idea of the goal, how can we find our way there? It is impossible. A person must have a destination in mind before he can map out the route.

In verse 6, Jesus provides the answer: "I am the way, the [truth](#), and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jesus' emphasis is on "the way," since that is the force of Thomas' question. Some commentators have even gone so far as to say that the real sense of His statement is, "I am the true and living way"—that is, the words

"life" and "truth" modify "way."

He implies that the Father will only accept as His children those who imitate the character and process of [salvation](#) that Christ pioneered. He is called the Captain or Author of our salvation ([Hebrews 2:10](#)). Jesus has blazed the trail before us, showing us the way to go—and the way to go is to follow in His footsteps, to imitate Him ([1 John 2:6](#)). There is only one road that leads to the Kingdom of God, the road that Christ Himself trod. He expands this idea in [John 14:7-11](#):

"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father, so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."

This paragraph adds another level to why God will only accept us through Christ—because Jesus was and is just like the Father. A son, if he is a true son, will show the characteristics of his father, which is exactly what we see in [Jesus Christ](#) and the Father in heaven. Christ thinks like the Father, speaks like the Father, and acts like the Father. Everything the Father would do is what Christ does. Therefore, if we want to be members of this Family, we, as Christ's brothers and sisters, will have to think, say, and do the same sorts of things as the Father and the Son.

This is why we must go through Christ. There is no other way! The children *must* have the same character as the Father and the Son, or there is no admittance. Thus, we must imitate Christ if we desire to enter God's Kingdom. He is the way, the method, or the process by which eternal salvation is secured, and if we should try to achieve it any other way, we will fail.

Jesus' next words tell us what we must do: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father" ([John 14:12](#)). When we first read this verse, most of us think that He is talking about [miracles](#), signs, wonders, and healings, that is, that those of us who really believe in Him will be able to do those great works. However, He may

not be thinking only about such grand acts.

He is probably also suggesting that the great works we will do are the day-to-day works of Christian living—not necessarily the ones that will make the lead story on the evening news. He means things like having good relations with one's spouse and children. He means overcoming a [sin](#) and growing in character. He means helping others in their walk toward the Kingdom of God. In the end, these are far greater works than miracles and spectacular healings.

Consider the twelve apostles. How many people did Jesus convert during His ministry? [Acts 1:15](#) tells us that the number of disciples was only 120. Yet, just a few pages later, we find that the apostles did even greater works, baptizing 3,000 on [Pentecost](#) ([Acts 2:41](#)) and 5,000 on another day ([Acts 4:4](#)). People were saying that the apostles had "turned [the world](#) upside down" ([Acts 17:6](#))! Their greater works were preaching [the gospel](#), [feeding the flock](#), and helping others to overcome and grow toward the Kingdom of God. Sure, they did their share of miracles, but their most lasting, eternal works were their preaching and their Christian sacrifices for the gospel.

Jesus said no one was greater than John the Baptist ([Matthew 11:11](#)), and what did he do? He did not perform one miracle, but he preached [repentance](#) ([Matthew 3:1-2](#)), which is a great work. It makes people realize that they are sinful and that they need a Savior to redeem them and to help them turn their lives around. Many were baptized and later followed Christ.

As we make final preparations for the [Feast of Unleavened Bread](#), we need to apply this personally. What great works are we supposed to do? They may be mundane—overcoming sin, growing in character, producing spiritual fruit, and encouraging others in their walk with God—but they are the day-to-day Christian activities that, in the end, will assure that not only will we be in the Kingdom but those we [love](#) and [fellowship](#) with will be too. Those are truly great works! "Miraculous" works may be flashy and draw a lot of attention, but the greatest works are the ones with eternal consequences, those that help others maintain a firm grasp on salvation.

In [Acts 10:38](#), Peter pares the life of Christ down to just a few insightful phrases: ". . . how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the [Holy Spirit](#) and with power, who went about doing good . . ." That is the gist of His life: He did good with every minute He lived. The apostle Paul gives us similar marching orders in [Galatians 6:10](#): "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of [faith](#)." If we follow this advice, following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, we will one day be where He is.

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Reconciliation Through Christ](#)

by Martin G. Collins

In this Atonement message, Martin Collins explains the process by which a rebellious people are ultimately reconciled to their God. In Leviticus 16, the slain goat represents the innocent Christ, sacrificed for our sins, while the Azazel goat, banished to the uninhabited wilderness, represents the author of all sin, Satan the Devil. The imagery is overwhelmingly rich and abundant in its importance to mankind's salvation, including (1) the bearing of sins by an innocent Christ, making redemption possible; (2) the image of a ransom that is paid in exchange for sinners; (3) the substitute who takes the place of the sinner, suffering in their place the punishment required by God's justice; (4) Christ death, fulfilling the Old Testament sacrifices, satisfies (not simply waives) the offense that mankind has committed against God, appeasing the just anger of God; (5) Atonement meets the law's requirements, enabling repentant sinners to stand acquitted before God the Judge.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Is the Christian Required To Do Works? \(Part Three\)](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

We have been called, not just to believe in Christ, but also to overcome sin, an action that takes a great deal of effort. John Ritenbaugh takes pains to explain God's act of justification and what we are required to do in response.

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