



## “There Are Many Ways Into God’s Presence”

### Prayer

### Introductory Activity

**Focus:** When it comes to truth, like mathematics, there is only one way to be right but many ways to be wrong. Or to quote G. K. Chesterton (*Orthodoxy*): “There are an infinity of angles at which one falls, only one at which one stands.” The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to heaven, but that viewpoint isn’t popular in today’s society. More and more people (including some Christians) have fallen for the lie “There are many ways into God’s presence.” In this lesson, we will evaluate that claim based on what God tells us in his Word.

### Activity:

- Former night talk show host Jay Leno often went out onto the street and asked people random questions. He called the segment “Jaywalking.” Imagine that you are stepping out onto the streets and asking a cross-section of Americans, “Describe God and who he is to you.” With your group, list at least five things people might say.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Can all of these responses describe the same God? Explain your answer.



## More Than One Way?

### 1. God is holy and unapproachable.

- Read Isaiah 6:1-5. What effect did seeing God in all his holiness have on Isaiah?
- Why did it have this effect?
- Often in the Old Testament, we see a similar reaction to being in the presence of holiness. People were terrified! In the New Testament church today, why are we less likely to react that way?
- What is missing from that picture?

### 2. We are not good enough to approach a holy God.

- Moses wanted to see God's glory. This was God's response: "You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live" (Exodus 33:20). God explained the reason for this: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, emphasis added). What misunderstandings does someone harbor who believes that God will accept him or her for being a good person?
- In Romans 6:23 we read, "The wages of sin is death." How would you explain to someone why even one sin merits death?
- "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). At your table, discuss whether or not even a Christian can do a truly good work. (*See Matthew 25:35-40; 1 John 1:7.*)

3. We need a mediator in order to approach a holy God.

- Genesis 3:15 says, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” Put the wall of enmity where it belongs in the illustration below:

**Pre-sin**

Devil Adam and Eve God

**Post-sin**

Devil Adam and Eve God

- Read Leviticus 16:2. Except for the high priest on the Day of Atonement, no one could come into the Most Holy Place, or he would die. In the space below, label or draw the Holy Place, Most Holy Place, and the ark of the covenant.

- Matthew 27:51—“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” Each group: take one or more of the following passages—Hebrews 7:26; 10:11-14; 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 5:1,2. Read the passage and explain the significance of what happened on Good Friday.

4. Jesus is the only way to a holy God.

- Read Acts 4:12 and John 14:6. Respond to someone who says, “Christianity is too exclusive. *No one can claim to have the truth exclusively*” (emphasis added).

## Group Discussion

- Agree/Disagree: If there are many ways into God's presence, then the God of the Bible is a fool.
  
- The message of liberalism says, "A God without wrath sent the Christ without a cross to a world without sin." If this were true, who is going to heaven and how will they get there?
  
- What are the differences between Christianity and every other world religion?
  
- On the basis of our study, how would you now respond to the statement: "There are many paths into God's presence"?

## Closing Activity

Take two minutes to come up with a bumper sticker slogan illustrating that Jesus is the only way to God.