

Be Bold 20 Week 11

Is Jesus Really the Only Way to Heaven?

Bold Bible Truth: God is in charge.

(Psalm 46:10)

Tip for Children's Ministry Director:

If you're sending this lesson to families, send it as is! If you're recording a video, either pause for the discussion questions or tell families to pause the video while they share.

Bold text is spoken text.

Supplies

Bible, paper, scissors, markers

Question of the Week

Say: Today we're talking about how we get to heaven. Our question of the week is "Is Jesus really the only way to heaven?" There are certainly people who think Jesus might just be *one* way to heaven. I'm curious what other ways you've heard people think there are to get to heaven.

One thing I've heard is...

Briefly share a way people think they can get to heaven.

Say: Now it's your turn. What have you heard about different ways to get to heaven?

Allow everyone to share their thoughts.

Say: Thanks for sharing what you've heard. We're going to explore what Jesus himself says about this today.

The Three Arguments

Read the “Three Arguments” below to everyone. After each argument, discuss these questions.

- **Explain your thoughts about this argument. Have you heard people say something like this? How did you respond?**
- **What would you say to someone making this argument?**

Argument 1: “Good people should go to heaven. People who’ve lived good lives and done good things should be able to go to heaven.”

Argument 2: “All religions are basically the same. They all lead to heaven.”

Argument 3: “It’s wrong to tell people Jesus is the only way to heaven because that leaves out a whole bunch of people who don’t follow Jesus.”

Say: **People may challenge the idea that Jesus really is the only way to heaven, which is a core belief of our Christian faith. The three arguments you just read are some of the most common ways people reason that Jesus must not be the only way to heaven.**

Now let’s take a closer look at what Jesus himself said about this. We can have faith that Jesus chose his words with care, knowing we’d be reading and studying them thousands of years later, long after his earthly life was over. His words have a lot of meaning and power. He’s God’s Son, after all. And it’s important to note in the four verses we’re looking at, Jesus is talking about himself a lot.

Take turns reading the following verses.

John 14:6: “Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.’”

Matthew 7:13-14: “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.”

1 John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too.”

John 6:35-40: “Jesus replied, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But you

haven't believed in me even though you have seen me. However, those the Father has given me will come to me, and I will never reject them. For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will. And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day. For it is my Father's will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day.' ”

Ask these questions.

- **Explain what you think Jesus is saying about himself in these verses.**
- **What do you think Jesus means about the “narrow gate”? How about “the bread of life”?**

Say: Maybe Christianity is exclusive, meaning it leaves out people, sort of like a private club only a few people can get access to. But let's think about it a different way.

Imagine if a brilliant doctor came up with the cure for cancer in a pill that was available to everyone in the world. He told everyone about it. All you had to do was choose to take the pill, and you'd never get cancer. That'd be pretty amazing.

- **Explain whether you'd choose to take that pill.**
- **Why would or wouldn't you tell other people about the pill?**

Say: God is like the brilliant doctor, and Jesus is like the pill. He's the cure for death and separation from God. The pill is out there for everyone, anyone can access it. But we have to choose to take the pill. No one is going to force-feed it to us.

- **Explain whether you think following Jesus is like being part of an exclusive club.**
- **Let's think about the three arguments again. Based on what Jesus said, how would you argue for or against any of them? Repeat the arguments if needed.**
- **What do you think Jesus' response to these arguments might be?**

Say: Here's the thing about Jesus: He invites everyone, everywhere into his family. God sent him to earth to pay the ultimate sacrifice for our sins so we—all of humanity—could be with God in heaven. Jesus wants more than anything to be our friend—and not just a small club, but every single person! Still, even though God is in charge, he doesn't want to make anyone love and follow him.

- **If you could tell a friend who doesn't know Jesus about heaven, what would you say?**

- Why does it matter that Jesus chose to die for us so we could be forgiven for our sins?
- How would you explain this verse to a friend: “Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.’ ” (John 14:6)?

Say: **We know the Bible is God’s Word and God tells us the truth. We know Jesus is God’s Son and he loves us. And we know that no matter what, God is in charge. Jesus himself said many times to his followers that he’s really the way to heaven. We can trust that and have faith in what he says. We know God loves us all and he is a fair and just God. We also know that God’s invitation is to everyone—there’s not a single person who’s left out of this invitation.**

- What would you say to someone who was on the wrong path, like in the three arguments, but thought he or she was on the right path?
- What do you think our most important responsibility is to people who don’t believe Jesus really is the only way to heaven?

Bold Action

Say: **God is in charge. There’s nothing he doesn’t know or hasn’t thought of. We can trust Jesus and know that what he says is true. Sometimes it’s hard for us to think about people going to hell or not going to heaven, so it’s tempting to make arguments like the three we read. But the truth is the truth, even if it makes us uncomfortable. What we can do is share the truth that Jesus is the cure! So let’s make reminders to do that.**



1. Fold a piece of paper or construction paper in half vertically.
2. Cut along the fold line.
3. Cut a slit on the side near the top, and then cut a circle out that can fit around a doorknob.
4. Write “You’re invited! –Jesus” on the bottom.
5. Decorate it however you want. Include names of people who need to know Jesus.
6. Hang it on a doorknob, and pray for people to know Jesus whenever you see your door hanger this week.

Once everyone has finished their door hangers, ask everyone to tell about a friend they could invite to know about Jesus. Encourage everyone to pray together for their friends while they place their hands on their door hangers.

Say: **God is in charge. Put your door hanger on your bedroom door as a reminder to invite others into Jesus’ family. Just like I welcomed you into our class today, you can remember to welcome others onto the path Jesus gives us.**

Mystery Mission Reports

Say: **We're going to leave here today and do top-secret Mystery Missions. But before you get your new mission, I'd love to hear how it went when you did your last Mystery Mission.** Invite everyone to share what happened with their last Mystery Mission—no matter how long ago it was.

Say: **I love hearing about your Mystery Missions because they are ways you shine for Jesus. Great efforts, everyone. My last Mystery Mission was...**

Once everyone has shared, tell briefly how you followed through with your bold mission.

Say: **Thanks for sharing your stories.**

I want to encourage you to actually do those Mystery Missions, and here's why: These missions have a special purpose. They let us go out into the world and make a difference with help from Jesus. That's definitely the case with this week's mission, as you'll see when you open it.

Mystery Mission

Say: **We discovered today that God is in charge.**

We learned that Jesus really is the only way to heaven based on his own words. God tells us the truth, and we can have faith in what he says. This week, think about friends you'd like to welcome into Jesus' family.

Read everyone the Mystery Mission below, and challenge them to live out their faith this week by doing this mission. (Children's Ministry Director, if you're leading this over video and you have the card, fold and seal it in advance and open it on the video to create the sense of mystery! Then send out the mission via email.)

Here's your mission for the week: Everywhere you go this week, look for one-way or wrong-way signs on the street. Whenever you spot one of these signs, thank Jesus for giving you the pathway to heaven.

We'll talk about what happened the next time we get together.

Pray

Say: **We discovered today that God is in charge and that Jesus really is the only**

way to heaven. We can trust what Jesus says about himself. And we can be inclusive by inviting others to follow Jesus' one true path.

Pray: **Dear God,**

Thank you for our time together today, and thank you for giving us your true Word. Thank you for sending your only Son to show us the one true path. Please help us to be inclusive and welcoming to others in all parts of our lives. Please guide us to remember Jesus really is the only way to heaven.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Send-Off Cheer

Say: **We can be bold and put our trust in Jesus' words. We can be bold and share Jesus with others.**

Have everyone stand in a circle with their hands in the center, like a sports team. Tell them that when you finish the Bold Blessing, they'll raise their hands and shout "Let's be bold!" (Doing this over video chat? Put your hands in toward the camera!)

Say this Bold Blessing: **Receive this Bold Blessing and carry it out with you: May God bless you with the words to invite people into his family.**

Let's be bold!