

## Foundations of Faith (A Catechism for Today)

### Lesson 31 – July 30

#### The Church and Religion

##### **Question 86: Is Jesus Christ the only way to salvation?**

Yes. Jesus Christ, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life through whom we come to God. When we witness to others we point not to a religion or an institution but to a person, Jesus Christ. Decisively and uniquely, God has spoken his word in him and we are compelled to share this good news.

Jn 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Acts 4:11-12 This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

##### **Question 87: Should we proclaim the gospel to people of other religions?**

Yes. The good news of God’s love in Jesus Christ is for all people, including those who practice other religions. Yet we also hold that God’s Spirit is at work in people of all religions producing truth and inspiring goodness. When we approach them with the gospel we address them not in a spirit of arrogance but in humility, “like beggars telling others where food is to be found.”

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright and godly.

1 Tim 2:3 God our Saviour...desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.  
Rom 15:7 In a word, accept one another as Christ accepted us to the glory of God (New English Bible).

Rom 11:32, 13:10

32 For God has imprisoned everyone in disobedience so he could have mercy on everyone.

10 Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.

Ps 103:8 The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.

Jn 3:19 And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.

Lk 6:37 “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.

Mt 5:44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!

##### **Question 88: What then is the eternal destiny of those who have not believed in Christ?**

It is not for us to say how God will deal with people of other beliefs or of no belief. Three things are clear: first, God loves universally; secondly, the God who loves in freedom grants us the freedom to respond to the offer of salvation; thirdly, the destiny of all people is in the hands of God, whose love, mercy and justice we trust.

Ps 103:8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

Rom 9:32 For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Deut 30:15-20 “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. 16 For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy. 17 “But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, 18 then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. 19 “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! 20 You can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the LORD, you will live long in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Ezek 18:32, 33:11

32 I don't want you to die, says the Sovereign LORD . Turn back and live!

11 As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness, O people of Israel! Why should you die?

Jn 3:17-20 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. 18 “There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. 19 And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. 20 All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.