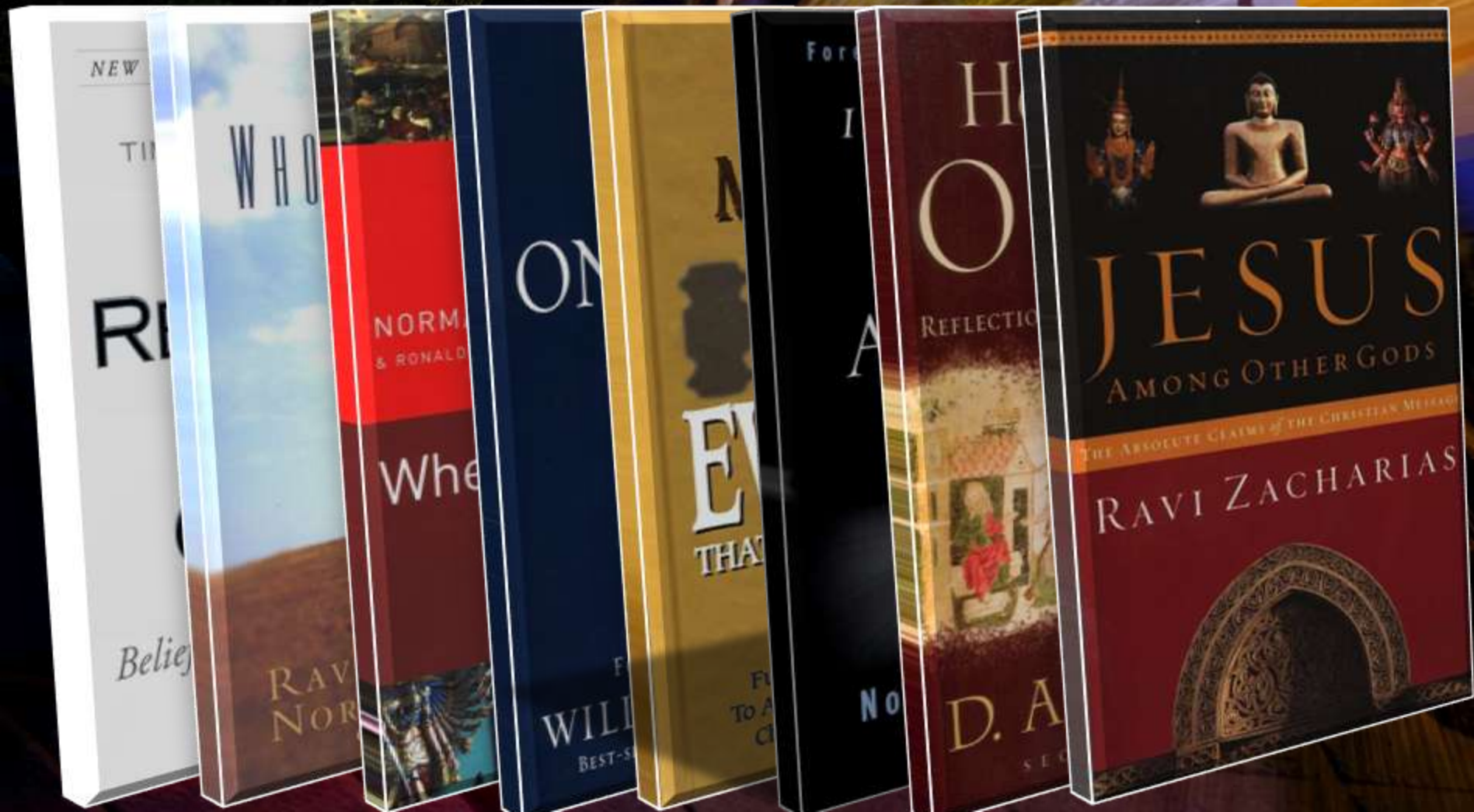


APOLOGETICS 101: **LESSON 10: THE UNIQUENESS OF** **CHRIST/CHRISTIANITY**



The background is an abstract, dynamic composition of blurred, radiating lines in various colors including green, yellow, orange, red, and blue. The lines appear to converge towards a central point on the right side of the image, creating a sense of motion and depth. The overall effect is reminiscent of a starburst or a light flare.

*Is Jesus the
Only Savior?*

Is Jesus the Only Savior?

- Is Christ the only way? Our traditional faith, after all, also knew a Creator God. Does Islam not also contain moments of truth? My lecturer says that these three religions are only different paths up the same mountain – at the top of the mountain (eternal life) they all converge. What do you say? Is the Christian faith unique? How could I be sure about this? - *A student in Religious Studies, Ghana*

Is Jesus the only Savior?

**Aren't all
religions
basically the
same?**

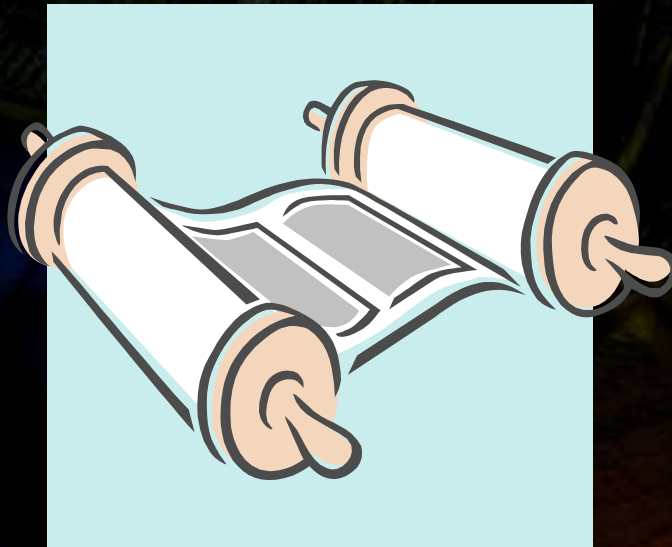


Is Jesus the Only Savior?



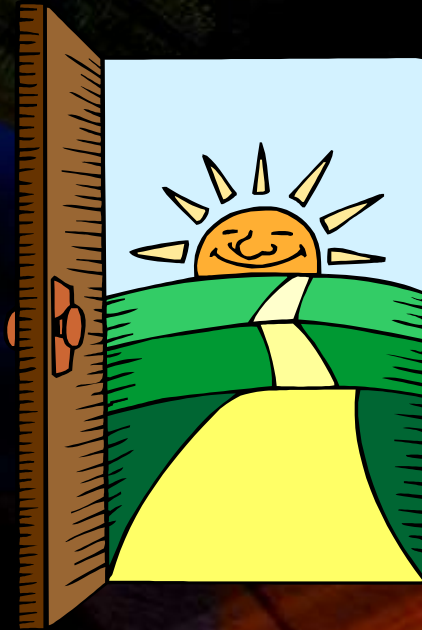
**Aren't there many
ways to God?**

Is Jesus the Only Savior?



**Don't the teaching of
all religious writings
teach the same
thing?**

Is Jesus the Only Savior?



**How can you say
that Jesus is the
only way?**

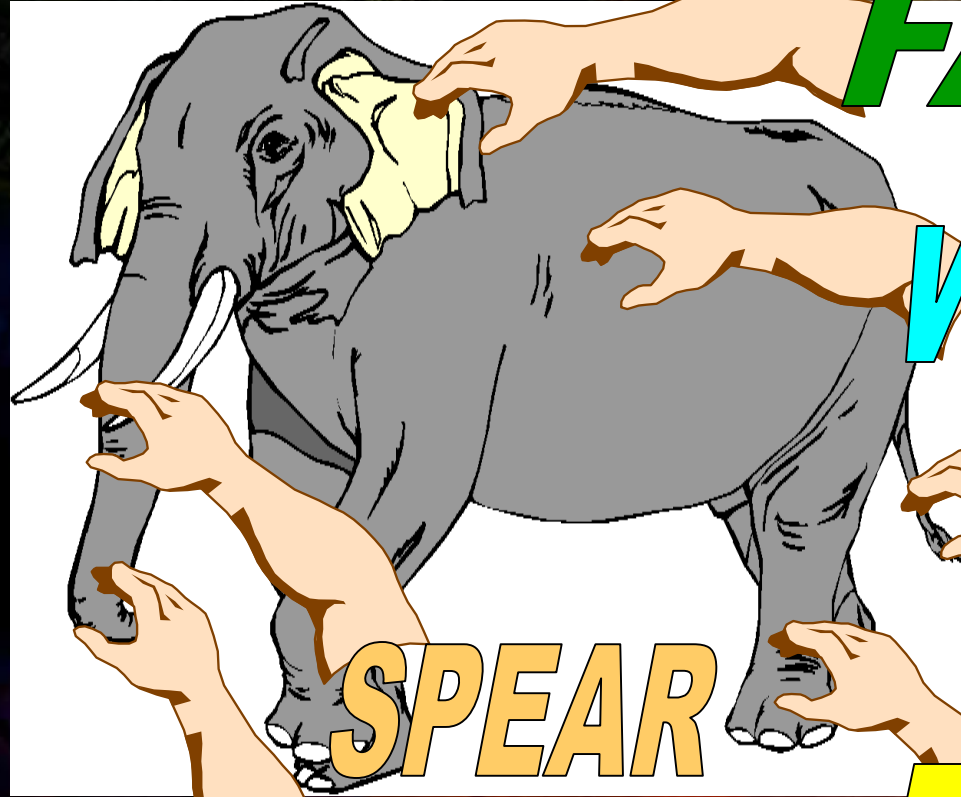
The background is an abstract composition of blurred, overlapping lines and shapes in various colors including green, yellow, orange, red, and blue. The lines appear to radiate from a central point, creating a sense of motion and depth. The overall effect is a vibrant, multi-colored web of light and shadow.

*Understanding
Religious Pluralism*

Religious Pluralism

- Religious Pluralism is the view that all religions are equally **valid** as ways to God. Pluralists often refer to the fact that just as there are many paths up Mt. Fuji, so there are many paths to God. Differences among the religions are superficial.

Six Blind Hindus



FAN

WALL

ROPE

SPEAR

TREE

SNAKE

RELIGIONS



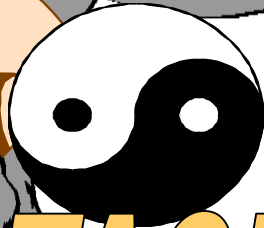
JUDAISM



HINDUISM



ISLAM



TAOISM



BUDDHISM

CHRISTIANITY

The background is an abstract, colorful composition of blurred lines and patterns. It features a mix of dark and light tones, including greens, yellows, oranges, and purples, creating a sense of motion and depth. The text is centered over this background.

**The pluralist
believes everyone
is blind but him!**

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- The differences in teaching among the religions are fundamental in nature and mutually **contradictory**.
- The teachings of the major religions about God or “Ultimate Reality” are contradictory. Hindus are pantheists or polytheists. Buddhists are atheists or pantheists. Muslims are theists and unitarian. Christians are theists but trinitarian. These views cannot all be true.

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- The teachings of the major religions about man and **salvation** are contradictory.
- Hindus see man as fundamentally divine, but trapped in this world due to ignorance and bad karma. Deliverance comes from changing our beliefs about reality and our true identity.
- Buddhists see man as trapped in this world of suffering due to selfish desire. Deliverance from this world comes from extinguishing desire, or seeking the aid of supernatural beings in doing so.

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- Muslims believe man is weak but **not** sinful in nature, and under God's judgment for his disobedience to His laws. Salvation comes through submitting to the laws of God.
- Christians believe that man is alienated from God and under His judgment due to his sinful rebellion against Him. But salvation can only come as a result of trusting in what He has graciously done by providing His Son Jesus as an atoning sacrifice for our sin, and by His Spirit changing us from within.

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- **The contention that what matters is not objective teaching but moral and spiritual transformation, is untenable.**
- **Again, how do we really **know** this is the case? On what authority do we believe this is so?**

Weakness of Religious Pluralism

- It is impossible to believe that all religions are true without radically altering our definition of “truth.”

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

The fact that there may appear to be similarities in some of the effects in the lives of followers of various religions is no proof that they are identical. Jesus drew a strong distinction between external morality and piety, and true internal spirituality (Matt. 5–7). The belief that all **religions** are true in the sense that they all bring us to God requires that we believe they are all false in what they objectively teach!

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- It seems improbable that that which is false could be the means of helping us experience that which is “true”!

False

But

True?

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- Religious Pluralism is untenable for the orthodox Christian, because it demands that he deny the most important teachings of Scripture.
- Religious Pluralism requires that we **abandon** belief in the uniqueness of Christ. His claims to deity, and the biblical teaching about His atoning death and resurrection cannot be true, if Religious Pluralism is true.

Weaknesses of Religious Pluralism

- **But if these teachings of Scripture are false, then Religious Pluralism must provide a better explanation for the wealth of evidence, which has led so many to conclude that they are true. The **evidence** cannot be simply swept away!**
- **However, if the evidence is convincing that these teachings are true, then Religious Pluralism must be false!**

A Final Thought

Speaking of mountain paths ...

“The unproved assumption of this very common mountain analogy is that the roads go up, not down; that man makes the roads, not God; that religion is man's search for God, not God's search for man. C. S. Lewis says this sounds like 'the mouse's search for the cat'.

“ Christianity is not a system of man's search for God but a story of God's search for man. True religion is not like a cloud of incense wafting up from special spirits into the nostrils of a waiting God, but like a Father's hand thrust downward to rescue the fallen. Throughout the Bible, man-made religion fails. There is no human way up the mountain, only a divine way down. "No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known." – Peter Kreeft



*The Uniqueness
of Christianity*

The Uniqueness of Christianity

- “Christianity (including its Old Testament foundation) is **based upon historical acts and facts**. Other religions are centered in the ethical and religious teachings of their founders, but Christianity is built on the great events of creation and redemption.”
- (Henry Morris, *Many Infallible Proofs*, Creation Life Publishers, 1974, p. 10)

The Uniqueness of Christianity

- Christianity, however, is founded, not on what Jesus taught but on *who Jesus is and on what Jesus accomplished.* Of course, as Christians, we stand firmly on His teachings. No one ever spoke and taught like Jesus, but ultimately, the value of **what He said** is dependent upon **who He was** and **what He did** and the abundant historical evidence that authenticated His life and words.

The Uniqueness of Christianity

- The uniqueness of Christianity, however, ultimately depends on the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. Some try to place Christ among the great religious leaders of history, as one among many, but this is grotesque and absurd. Either He was who He said He was (**Lord**) and who history demonstrates Him to be, or, He is a **Liar** or a **Lunatic**, but he is certainly not a **Legend**.

The Uniqueness of Christianity

Summary -

- Christianity is based on historical fact and evidence.
- Christianity is unique as a ‘grace based’ rather than a ‘works based’ religion. A ‘God reaching down as opposed to man climbing up...’
- Christianity is centered around the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The Uniqueness of Christianity

- Christianity is not based on merely ethical teaching but offers salvation through restored relationship with God.
- Christianity offers a unique way of salvation. This is done by an individual's trusting in the finished work of Christ on the cross on their behalf.
- Christianity offers a risen Savior.



*The Uniqueness
of Christ*

The Uniqueness of Christ

The Anticipation of His Coming

- The fact of fulfilled prophecy is a unique feature of Christianity. The coming of Jesus Christ was prophesied in minute detail regarding His lineage, nature, place of birth, where He would be raised, His career, purpose, the specific manner and nature of His death, His resurrection, and many other fulfilled prophecies. And all of these prophecies were made hundreds of years before His birth or first advent.

The Uniqueness of Christ

The Nature of His Birth

- His birth was, of course, the most unique birth in all of human history.
- **Christ's birth stands alone in history.** By the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, and after a 'normal 9-month' pregnancy, Mary gave birth to a son who was also God's Son. He was the God-man Savior—not a God-indwelt man. He was both true and genuine humanity and undiminished deity united in one Person forever.

The Uniqueness of Christ

The Uniqueness of His Person

- The Bible makes the claim that Jesus Christ is both God and Man. As God He created all things (Jn. 1:1; Col. 1:16). As man He was sinless and came as the sinless substitute to die for mankind's sin. But the declaration of Scripture and the evidence of His life affirm that He was not half man and half God, but **totally man** and **totally God** united in one Person. No other religious leader has ever seriously made such a claim.

The Uniqueness of Christ

The Uniqueness of His Life

- His life is unparalleled in beauty, scope, character, and effect. No one ever spoke like Jesus Christ, did the things He did, or made the claims He made.
- In view of Christ's mighty words and works, and the perfect and sinless person men found Him to be, the claims He made cannot be dismissed. People cannot, in all honesty to the historical evidence, dismiss Christ's claims as those of a mad man or reject Him as a fraud.

The Uniqueness of Christ

- **The Uniqueness of His Death**
- First, His death is unique, not because He was crucified, but because it was prophesied in Psalm 22 long before death by crucifixion.
- Second, it is unique because of the manner in which he died, displaying his sinless and holy character.

The Uniqueness of Christ

- **The Uniqueness of His Death**
- Third, because of the miracles surrounding his death—the darkness, the earthquake, and the opening of the graves. After seeing Christ on the cross and the events of that day, the Roman centurion who had seen hundreds die on a cross said, “truly this was the Son of God.”

The Uniqueness of Christ

The Uniqueness of His Resurrection

- It was predicted in the OT (Ps. 2, 16) He predicted his own resurrection (John 2:19-22; Matt. 12:40-42)
- His resurrection was witnessed by more than 500 people over a period of 40 days on at least 12 separate occasions.
- Other religious and philosophical leaders have come and gone, risen and fallen, but none have come back from the dead to carry on their work as did Jesus Christ.

One Solitary Life

- He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn't go to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

One Solitary Life

- He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.
- While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His garments, the only property he had on earth. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race.

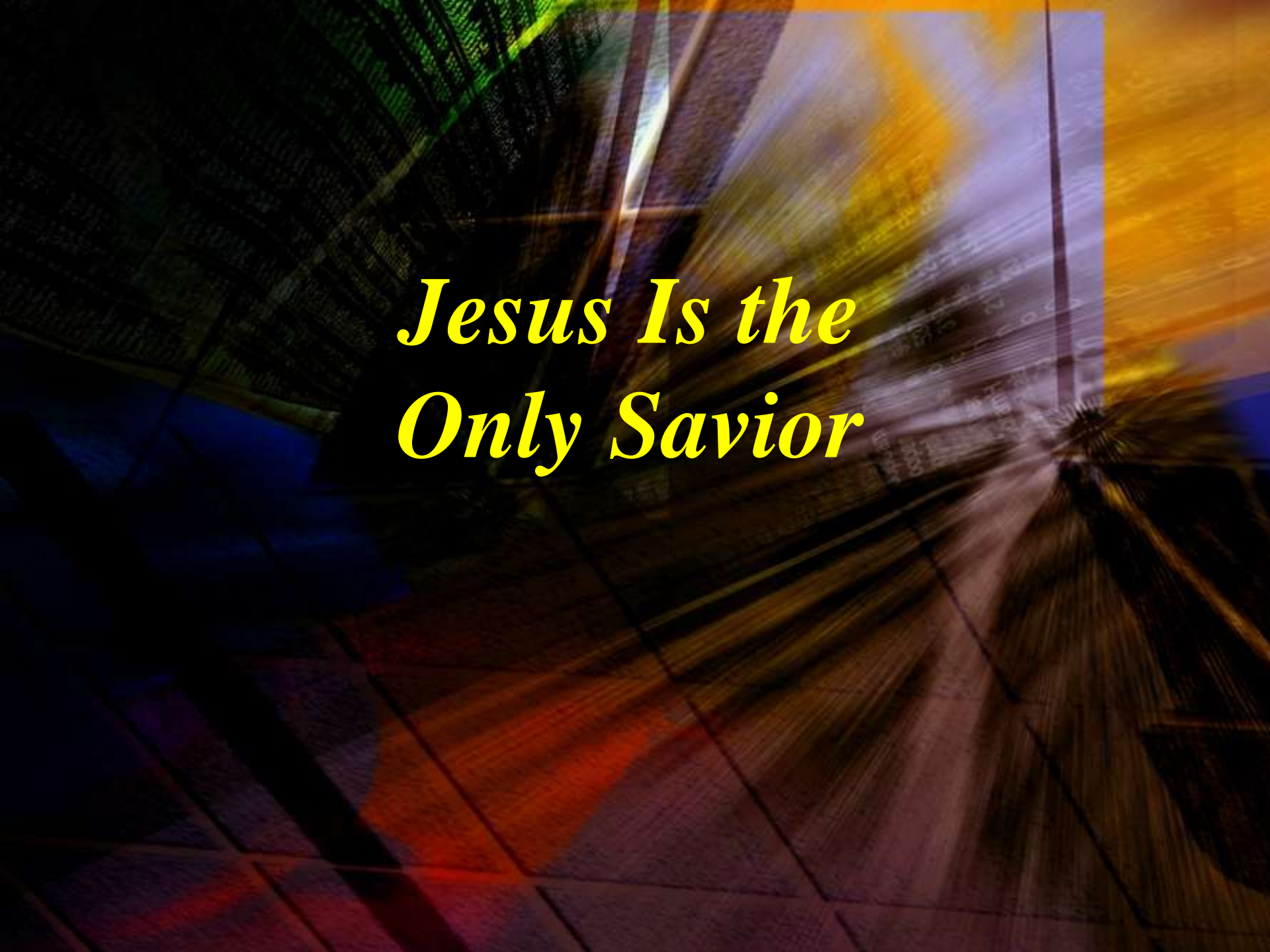
One Solitary Life

- All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary life.

The background is an abstract composition of blurred, colorful lines and a grid pattern. The colors include dark green, yellow, orange, and purple, creating a sense of motion and depth. The lines appear to be part of a larger structure, possibly a dome or a large architectural element, viewed from a low angle looking up.

Jesus Christ is Unique.

He is the most unique person in the entire history of the human race. No other religious leader can compare to Jesus Christ, he stands alone as unique and superior.



*Jesus Is the
Only Savior*

Exclusive Statements of the Bible

- **Everyone who believes in Him [Jesus] receives forgiveness of sins” (Acts 10:43).**
- **“God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent” (Acts 17:30).**
- **“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:5–6).**

Exclusive Statements of the Bible

- **“He who has the son has the life; he who does not have the son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:12).**

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of [or about] Christ” (Rom. 10:17).

We must conclude, then, that the voice of Scripture affirms that for one to come to salvation, he must hear and place his faith in the message about that salvation which God reveals to him.

Conclusion

“I have traveled the world. I have searched high and low. I have found *nothing* that satisfies my mind, my heart, and the deepest longing of my soul like Jesus does. He is not only the way, the truth and the life; he is personal to me. He is *my* way, and *my* truth, and *my* life – just as he can be for anyone who reaches out to him.” (Ravi Zacharias, *The Case for Faith*, p. 166)

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