

## The Only Way

What are we living for? What is the purpose of life? Oftentimes we are too busy and preoccupied with many cares to stop and reflect on this crucial question.

Or perhaps we are afraid to think deeply about the meaning of life because the prospect of death makes everything seem vain and futile.

We naturally rebel against such a thought. There is a spark of eternity in our soul. We are attracted to beauty, goodness, love and joy, and we continue to yearn for more and more of them.

But how can we know for certain? Maybe we are letting ourselves be deluded by our psychological needs; perhaps we're just inventing sweet religious tales to satisfy our desires.

For those of us who believe in the Lord Jesus, the answer is right at hand. Jesus points to himself as the answer, "I am the way," he declared. That is his mission, to take us to the goal for which we were made.

He told us plainly what the purpose is. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). To go to the Father - that is our purpose - to know God, to taste his sweet love and enjoy his beauty forever.

The human heart cannot find rest in anything else. "As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God" (Salm 42:1). His gifts are precious – think of your family, friends, good food, health and the wonderful creation around us – yet even more precious is God himself above everything else. "Who have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you" (Salm 73:25).

Jesus claims that he is the way, and indeed he insists that no-one comes to the Father except through him. He is the only way. That exclusive statment is offensive to many people in our day. The nineteenth century mystic, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, expresses the sentiment of our modern culture. He says that there are various ways to God, just as "a man can reach the roof of a house by stone stairs or a ladder or a rope-ladder or a rope or even by a bamboo pole."

Ramakrishna may indeed reach the roof with his rope or pole. There he will meet other religious people with the same philosophical outlook, but will he meet God? God does not dwell on a roof, but in the highest heavens, "who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see" (1 Timothy 6:16).

There is but one bridge that reaches the infinite distance between the glorious God and his sinful creatures. That mediator is Christ alone.

Jesus is the way because he is the perfect revelation of the Father, the image of the invisible God. Jesus is the way because he gave himself on the cross, the just for the unjust, to cleanse his people and to make them fit for heaven.

Friend, know the purpose for which you were created and do not exchange it for anything else. You were made for God; in him alone will you find fullness of life. Listen to Christ's invitation. Come to God through him. He will cleanse your heart from sin, reconcile you to God, and you experience the inexpressible joy in an intimate love relationship with the Father.