

The Way to Jesus

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Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. - John 14:23

Years ago, my life got radically changed by a very brief exchange with a man in a low-income apartment complex in downtown Augusta, Georgia. We were there to host a worship service and meal among residents. We hadn't expected much of a crowd but that night more than 100 people showed up. After sharing food, conversation, and worship together, there was a sense that God was ready to do a new thing in that room. The atmosphere was thick with expectation, so I gave an invitation for anyone who was ready, to come to Jesus. Many renewed their faith, and six or eight people stood up for Jesus that night.

Afterwards, an older man came to me and said, "I stood up tonight because I thought I knew Jesus, but I was wrong. I realized that I know *a* Jesus, but I don't know *the* Jesus. And now I have to rethink everything."

I was profoundly moved by this man's response to the Lord's presence, and by his personal revelation. The fact is, a lot of people who call themselves Christians probably know *a* Jesus but not *the* Jesus. I remember back in my seminary days conducting a survey of college students, asking them all about their religious upbringing. I discovered that if you grew up in certain denominations your overwhelming feeling when it comes to God is guilt.

Is that *the* Jesus they were being taught? Or *a* Jesus?

I know someone whose life has been dramatically altered by the childhood experience of being molested by someone on a church staff. She told me with sadness one day that more and more she's realizing just how many of her life decisions have been shaped by that one encounter.

Surely the person who wounded this woman's soul was not following *the* Jesus?

In an increasingly pluralistic culture, how do we know which Jesus we are following? It is not all mystery. Jesus himself tells us that obedience to his teachings will lead us toward him. We know that Jesus will never lead us away from the Word of God but toward truth. And we know that the way *to* Jesus is always love. We also know that Jesus — *the* Jesus — wants to be found by us. As we contend for the historic Christian faith, this is our ultimate hope. It is that anyone walking into a Global Methodist Church might encounter not just any version of Jesus that feels comfortable and accessible, but the radical, Spirit-giving, heart-dwelling, life-changing Jesus who leads us into the heart of God.

A Suggested Pattern of Prayer

As you pray through the following prayer points, invite the presence of the Lord into your time of prayer. Each day's prompt has a Scripture reference for you to pray through. As you pray allow time to also listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you. When you have prayed through the Scripture and prayer point, you may be led to add your own prayers. Pray and consider what action steps might you take in response to the Lord's leading. Repeat this prayer pattern weekly for the month.

Prayer points:

Sunday: Pray that every pastor who serves the Global Methodist Church would have a life-altering encounter with *the* Jesus. (Romans 1:9)

Monday: Pray for God's mercy and intervention over pastors who are preaching a form of Christianity but not the power of it. (2 Timothy 3:5)

Tuesday: Pray for those who are shaping the doctrines and disciplines that will be followed by all who join the GMC, that they will be led by the Holy Spirit into all truth. (Ephesians 4:14-15)

Wednesday: Pray that every person walking through the doors of a GMC church would not only hear a fair account of the gospel but discover the way to Jesus. (John 14:6)

Thursday: Pray that our churches might become healing centers and towers of intercession, walking many into the heart of God. (Luke 11:9-10)

Friday: Pray against relativistic and pluralistic theologies that water down the gospel of Jesus Christ and prevent people from knowing *the* Jesus. (John 21:18-19)

Saturday: Pray for those who are shaping our discipleship models and ministries, that they would be faithful to the call to help others get to the feet of Jesus. (John 14:23)