

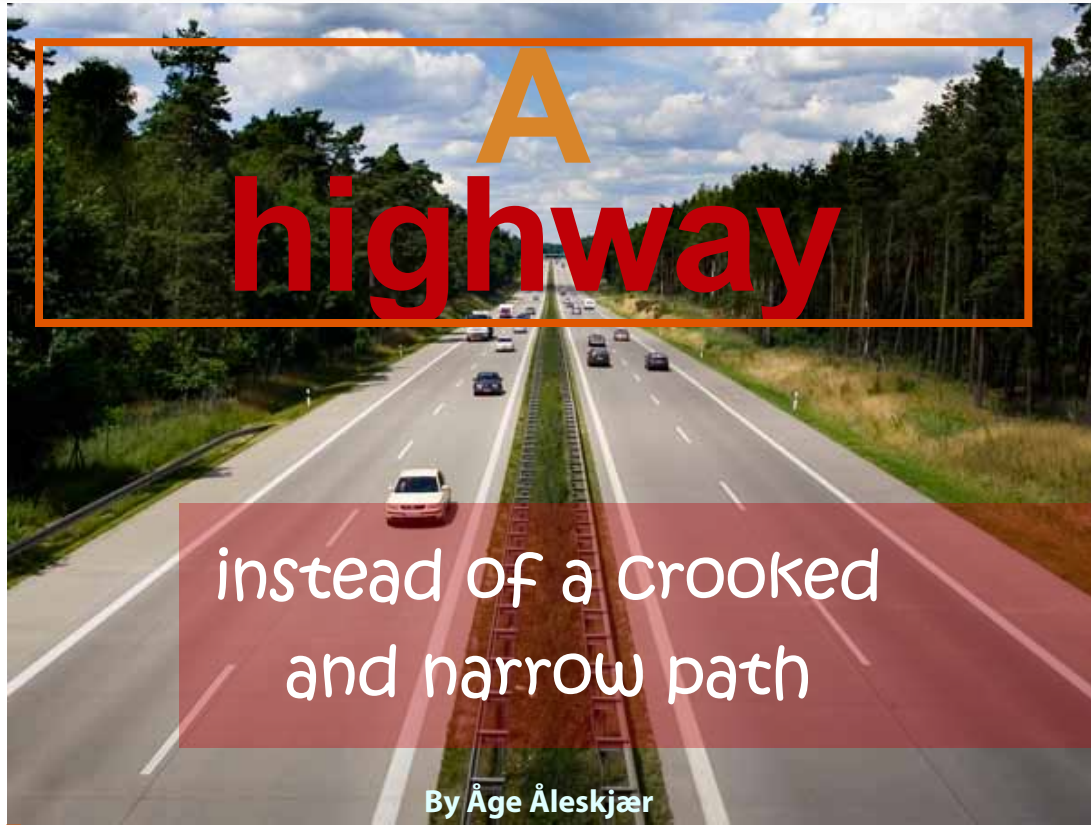
Welcome to this month's Global Grace teaching.

Each article will point us towards Christ. As we make our personal journey from the Old Covenant religion into the New Covenant, we often have a "death experience." The old religious performance-based life must be left behind as we enter life in the Spirit. Interestingly, as the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, we see several powerful spiritual death and resurrection symbols.

The grave of Moses represents death to the Law. Moses could not enter into the Promised Land, just as legalism can never bring God's people into the promises of God. "For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope" (Heb. 7:19). Right at the entrance to the Promised Land we find Moses' grave; legalism can never enter into the inheritance in Christ.

Secondly, there is the grave of Jordan, picturing our identification with Christ, and death to self. As Israel crossed the Jordan, the waters became a symbolic death and burial. This was a very definite moment. At one time Israel was in the wilderness and minutes later they were in the Promised Land. Similarly, there is a moment in our life, when we reckon ourselves truly dead to self and alive to Christ. The crossing of the Jordan required the priest standing in the middle of the river assisting the people. This depicts our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, and without Him we can never enter into our Land of Promise. If we try to crucify ourselves we are always very selective, and we will be sure to let certain areas escape, but "by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Rom. 8:13).

Once we have reckoned ourselves dead to our own ability there is no going back, just like there was no



For years we have preached about the "small gate" and the "narrow path" that leads to heaven. However, this is not the message of the Gospel!

The narrow path is exchanged for a new and living road! For years we have preached of "the narrow path" and "the small gate" and that "few will find it" from the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 7:12-14 and Luke 13:23-40.

If we read a little closer, we will see that this describes the Law's way to salvation. This way was not only difficult but actually completely impossible. But the message is still: "The person who does these things shall live by them."

The way of the Law was actually narrow and salvation by works was such a small gate that few were able to get through. There were so few that there were actually NONE!

Luke 13:24 says: "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to." Why not? Because

going back into the wilderness for Israel.

Thirdly, there is a grave of Gilgal – a practical death. The generation that had been born during the wilderness needed to be circumcised. This depicts the practical working out of the new life in Christ. After this mass circumcision, every male would have a clear mark in his body that the old wilderness life was left behind. All of us have had “Gilgal-experiences” where the Spirit of God deals with us in such a way that it becomes evident that the old life with its goals, pursuits and desires is behind us. We now belong to another - Jesus Christ Himself.

Finally, at the entrance to the Promised Land you find Joshua’s symbolic grave, representing death to our own ability. As Joshua stood before the city of Jericho, he experienced a symbolic death, “...a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand” (Joshua 5:13-15). That drawn sword over Joshua’s neck is a picture of death. Joshua, who was a captain of the Lord’s people, discovered that there is a Greater Captain, most likely an appearance of Jesus Himself. Joshua’s strength could never bring the victory; true victory is through someone immensely greater. It reminds us of these words “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place” (2 Cor. 2:14). Just as Joshua laid his sword at the feet of a greater Captain, so we lay our abilities at the feet of Jesus.

The purpose of this teaching letter is to help pastors and leaders – yes, all believers - to let go of “wilderness religion” based on our own merits, and instead experience the new life and a “promised land” that is ours by the grace of Jesus Christ.

God bless you!



PETER YOUNGREN
Founding Pastor of
Celebration Church,
Canada
Founder of
World Impact Ministries
Member of
GGN Board of Directors
www.peteryoungren.org

they met the stumbling block, Jesus Christ. HE is an open door and a new and living way, so by going through Him the way would have been easy. But because the Jews didn’t want to bend down under the justice of God, they sought to build their own justice. You see, it was the Jews that Jesus was talking to in these messages! (See Matt. 15:24)

If you take a closer look at Luke 13, you will find in this chapter that He speaks of the hardened hearts of the Jews and the salvation of the Gentiles. The way of works was so difficult that those who tried to achieve salvation by it were not able to.

“For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the Law.” (Gal. 3:20)

Salvation by works was completely impossible. It was a small gate and narrow path, full of statutes and laws containing both great and minor details. Not one detail could be forgotten! Therefore, Jesus had to open a NEW AND LIVING WAY when He died on the cross! By the blood of Jesus we have received a The way of the Law was crooked and impassable. completely new way to enter into the presence of God. (Heb.10:19-20).

Jesus said: “I am the way and the truth and the life.” (John 14:6)

Paul said: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Rom.10:13) This is not a difficult path or a small gate.

“ The way of the Law was crooked and impassable. “

The Crooked Path is Now Straightened Out!

Jesus came to straighten out the crooked paths that were so difficult to walk on.

Luke 3:5-6 says: “Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.”

Under the Law “no flesh could be justified,” while now, “all flesh will see the Lord’s salvation.” Talk about a big difference! “ The way of the Law was crooked and impassable. “

Jesus has now, through His salvation, made the crooked places straight and the uneven roads smooth. Now all flesh can see the salvation of God!

It’s not difficult anymore. Now there is no one seeking to enter in without being able to. Salvation is finished and whoever wants to receive it will receive it for free. Whoever receives Him will be born again. “He justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” (Rom 3:26) The real tragedy in many Christian settings is that God’s Word has not been studied in this most important

“Jesus himself cleared the way, straightened out what was crooked and made the roads smooth.”

area. Therefore, the message of a narrow path and a small gate is still being preached. This makes the Christian walk difficult even though Jesus has said it's easy!

Jesus said: “For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11:30)

The Apostolic gathering in Jerusalem passed a resolution to not make it difficult for the Gentiles who turned to God! (Acts: 15:19)

Still there are those who want to make it difficult, so that it only becomes a message for those especially interested. But the Word said that ALL FLESH will see the salvation of God. The angel in the fields of Bethlehem said: “I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

A Highway, Not a Small and Crooked Path

“A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all

mankind will see God's salvation.' ” (Luke 3:4-6) This is a prophecy referring to John the Baptist, but even deeper down, it's a prophecy referring to Jesus.

Look at this picture being drawn: The road was impassable and had to be cleared. The paths were crooked and had to be straightened. The roads were uneven and had to be smoothed out. A bulldozer had to fill in every valley and lower every high point for the roads to be smooth.

Now the job is finished,

Jesus himself cleared the way, straightened out what was crooked and made the roads smooth.

The result is a tidy, easy, passable, and smooth way.

The Way

Therefore, it was natural that the first Christians were called 'The Way'. For the way was now cleared and all flesh could see the salvation of God. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God.”

The message is: “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved.” It is about Him and not about a lot of religious acts. The Prophet Isaiah prophesied of this way: “And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and

the ransomed of the LORD will return.

They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads.

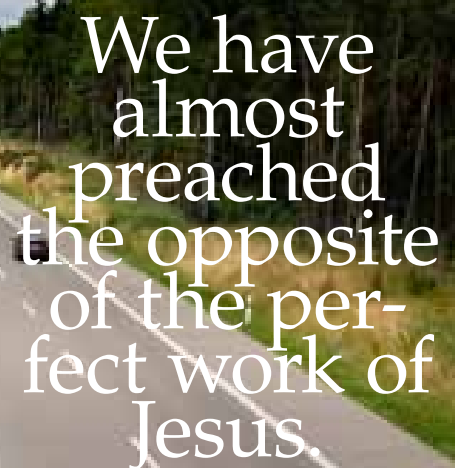
Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.” (Is. 35:8-10) This road applies now!

This is a highway, a main road, not a narrow and crooked path.

A Highway For the People of God

I grew up in the countryside and knew everything about narrow paths, those used by both men and animals in the forest and the fields. It was easy to get lost if you weren't familiar with the surroundings. Many have surely missed some of the posts out in the woods during an orienteering run. If it's foggy or dark, you're pretty much lost.

But there are also roads for cars that run through the woods, like the ones used by the rally drivers during a rally-cross.



We have almost preached the opposite of the perfect work of Jesus.

A main road runs from my

hometown to the city. During the spring, that road could be both uneven and partly difficult to drive, so it feels liberating to get onto the E-6, a genuine highway. But a few Swedes will probably debate that the E-6 in Norway is not a real highway and the Germans will most likely just smile at what we call a highway.

Therefore, it's a joy to present what the Word calls "A Highway for the Lord!" The highway the Lord has opened is straight with no turns, corners or defects!

No travelers will get lost, and the way has already taken us all the way into the Holy of Holies. (Heb.10:19-20)

By the blood on His cross, He has now joined what's on Earth and what's in Heaven. And in His body by death, He has presented us holy and irreproachable and perfect to Himself. This message is totally different from the traditional message. We have almost preached the opposite of the perfect work of Jesus.

We've preached of a narrow way and a small gate, crooked paths and uneven roads. We've obviously forgotten that now the way is cleared, the valleys filled, the peaks lowered, and the crooked places straightened out. Now we have a smooth main road - A HIGHWAY FOR THE LORD'S PEOPLE. It's easy to find and it's easy to travel on. Even the fool will not get lost.

A highway that's cleared, straight and even, that's the salvation for all flesh.

Not a Few, But Many

This is not just for a few chosen anymore. Now it's for all flesh. The starting point is that He has reconciled the world with Himself and removed all the world's sins. The sin problem was solved by Him atoning for our sins, not just for ours but for the whole world's sins. Jesus didn't come to judge the world, but for the world to be saved by Him. People must hear about this reconciliation; therefore, we have the gift of reconciliation.

Because of the reconciliation, people can now receive and make use of His favor and benevolence and be restored to have His benevolence and grace.

But God has given man a free will; therefore the message is: The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Whoever hears it say, "Come! Whoever is willing can come and have the water of life for free!"

This is our great mission - this is our missionary command in the light of the revelation of Paul.

Therefore, no longer will few find the way and the gate; the Gentiles will arrive "in full number." (Rom. 11:25)

God has a number He's work-

ing towards and we know He wants all men to be saved. Therefore, Jesus has not yet returned. God wants the door of salvation still to stay open. (2.Pet. 3:9 and 15)

HIS house will be FULL of guests. (Luke.22:10)

There will be a great multitude that no one can count, from every nation, tribe, people and language... (Revelations 7:9)

All generations, families, languages and dialects will be represented. God wants all men to be saved....

THANK JESUS THAT HE GAVE HIS LIFE TO OPEN A HIGHWAY. A NEW AND LIVING WAY HAS TAKEN OVER THE NARROW PATH THAT WAS BOTH CROOKED AND UNEVEN....

THIS WILL END IN A GLOBAL HARVEST FOR HEAVEN!



ÅGE ÅLESKJÆR

Senior Pastor of

Oslo Kristne Senter, Norway

Member of

GGN Board of Directors

That age-old Question!



by David Sterling

Answer to the age-old question describing the dilemma of all religions on the face of the earth.

There is a question in the Bible which describes the dilemma of all religions on the face of the earth - it is this: "How then can man be just with God? Or how can he who is born of a woman be clean?" (Job 25:4). In other words, how could it be possible for a natural typical man, bound by his own sinfulness and born into a sinful world, to stand before a Holy God accepted and clean?

...it's a road with a dead end - and there's no way out!

How can an ordinary sinful person ever approach a holy and just God?

To get very basic and to the point, we can say that all religions in general have one particular thing in common:

they are based on what you must do to become acceptable in the eyes of God. Religion is, in a general sense, about what man must do in order to receive blessings, forgiveness, acceptance, help and answers to prayer from God. No matter whether the religion is a strange mixture of eastern mystical ideas or if it is a polluted and distorted version of the Christian "religion," man's performance is the central determining factor to being qualified.

Religion states: If you meet up to the standards you will receive some compensation, some reward, and some blessings. That's how it usually goes. You do your part and God may do His part! You do your best to satisfy the requirements and God may

show favour and bless you! What a hopeless dilemma - what a stressful way to live! Religion creates high stress and puts all the pressure on you and your achievements. The most stressed out people are usually the most ardent followers of some "religious system." In fact, it seems as though only "super-humans" could even come near to the requirements expected by some religions. Hopeless, futile, and pointless - it's a road with a dead end - and there's no way out!

BEWARE - RELIGION IS DANGEROUS!

Man's own efforts, performance and ability to keep all the rules are the underlying basis of all religions. In order to qualify for blessings and favour, man must comply to specific outward standards and then fulfil the various requirements. This is what in the end determines man's future. So it is with the main religious trends

throughout all mankind. We can see from this that in reality religion is very dangerous - it centres on what man *must* do, what man *must* achieve, and what man *must* perform! All religion basically revolves around a system of works and performances – that’s why it is so deadly!

Unfortunately, even the distorted version of “Christian religion” has fallen into this trap - it has become a performance-centred program in which man tries to please God through his own efforts and works. Sometimes it seems almost impossible to see any difference between other “performance-centred” religions and Christianity!

“DO IT YOURSELF”

The “Christian religion” has been turned into a never-ending series of demands.

In fact, Christianity has many, many variations of the “do it yourself” religion. You may have seen “do it yourself” books on sale in bookshops. Almost every hobby has its own “do it yourself” manual meant to help the person repair, build or operate something. For example there are “do it yourself” manuals for almost every type of motorcar meant to help you fix and service your car without outside help.

“The Christian “religion”, also, has its own “do it yourself” manuals.”

All types of books on how to achieve more success, get more blessings, obtain more victory and more help from God. By praying more, by giving more, by fasting more, by surrendering oneself more, by being more committed, by believing more, by doing more ...the list is endless... more, more, more. But it can never produce what it promises - instead it creates disillusioned and disappointed followers. The Good News of the Gospel is that you don’t have to do it yourself - God has already done something so significant and complete without man’s help - just read on!

RELIEF TO THE WEARY!

The good news to all who are tired with the never-ending treadmill of religion is this: Righteousness is a gift that comes from God to those who accept what Jesus has done for them by faith! Acceptance and forgiveness are available because of what Jesus has already done! Righteousness and eternal life are God’s gift to mankind! These are not dependent on what you must do - it

all rests on what God has already done! A gift cannot be earned and it cannot be bought. If you have to pay some compensation, then it is no longer a gift!

Many people around the world who embrace the “Christian religion” have never really heard the true Gospel.

They have accepted a form of “Christianity” without ever understanding what the real Gospel is all about. They think that “Christianity” is just another religion with a different set of rules than other religions! They have substituted Christian “do’s and don’ts” for those of other religions. They believe that they must earn their way to God and at the same time do their best to obtain and to hold on to the benefits of salvation.

That’s not the true Gospel. That is certainly not Good News!

The “too good to be true news” to those who are frustrated and exhausted with the demands of religious systems is this: acceptance and forgiveness from God are not dependent on your performance! Your performance can never obtain righteousness and acceptance - both forgiveness and righteousness are free gifts from God! You can know beyond any doubt that you are loved, accepted and forgiven because of what Jesus has already done on your behalf!

The free gift of righteousness produces a changed heart that, in turn, changes our actions. Actions cannot change our hearts.

But a changed heart will most certainly also affect our actions! Behaviour modification does not change the motives of one's heart - it only produces "modified actions."

Christianity is not focused on "behaviour modification" but on changing people from the inside out. Religion concentrates on the outward actions, but God focuses on changing men's hearts!

When we discover the finished work of Jesus Christ, which he accomplished on the cross, righteousness then becomes a very posi-

tive word. It is no longer a demand that we are unable to fulfill. We recognize that the only righteousness worth anything is Jesus' own righteousness - and we receive it as a free gift.

An uncomplicated, unreligious definition of righteousness is simply "to be in right standing with God." Another simple but profound definition of righteousness is "The ability to stand in the presence of God the Father without a sense of guilt or inferiority." Not very difficult to understand! Before we were "out of line" and now we are "in line" after having received His gift of righteousness through faith in what Jesus has accomplished. Righteousness is the condition of being in right relationship with the

Lord. This can only happen through total faith and dependence upon Christ. There is no other way, and there is nothing we can add to our faith to obtain right relationship with the Lord.

What a gift! What a blessing! NO religion can offer anything like this! This is why the Gospel of God's Grace is the Power of God to everyone who believes it!

Behaviour modification does not change the motives of one's heart - it only produces "modified actions."




Pastor
David Sterling

Pastor of Tamper-
een Kristillinen
Yhteisö,
Finland Member
of GGN Board
of Directors

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With Jesus Working In Me.

By Bjørn Bergmann

I have been preaching the Gospel for more than 40 years, and I have met many wonderful people. I have met a lot of people who want to live their lives for Jesus. I have heard people, especially many young people, who say that they want Jesus to be number one in their lives. And that is great to hear – you may very well say that Jesus is number one in your life. But I would like to take it one step further....

I love you

Many years ago, when I was working in the seamen's church in London, I had a dramatic accident. My body and my brain were seriously damaged. I lived in pain and suffering for several months. But one night in my home, Jesus appeared to me. He filled me and the whole room with His glory. It was like

warm oil moving around in the

room and filling me with His presence. I jumped out of the bed with my hands lifted, and I praised Him in a new language. I didn't understand a word of it, but I just felt that finally I could praise Him the way I wanted. It was so perfect. And I realized that I was completely healed, my body and brain were completely restored! A lot of things happened, and I heard a voice saying to me: "Now, you know you are crucified with Me. It is not you living anymore, because now I live IN you. And the life you now live as a person, you live through My life, through My faith, and through My strength. And it is all because I love you!"

It is all because He loves me! It is all because He loves you!

Jesus in me

Jesus appeared to me that day because He loved me, and He wanted to tell me what He had given me because of His love for me. When He was crucified, I was there on the cross with Him. While He was suffering in pain, I was there with Him. His love for me made Him take me with Him on the cross. While he was suffering in pain and left alone without His father, he thought, "It is worth it because I am doing it for Bjørn." And while He was paying for all my sins, my life was crucified. And when He was raised in victory, I was raised with Him. My own life was gone. But He had a new life for me - His own life. I now live through His life, through His faith and through His strength.

So you see Jesus is more than

number one in my life. He IS my life. He IS your life.



“He lives in me!”

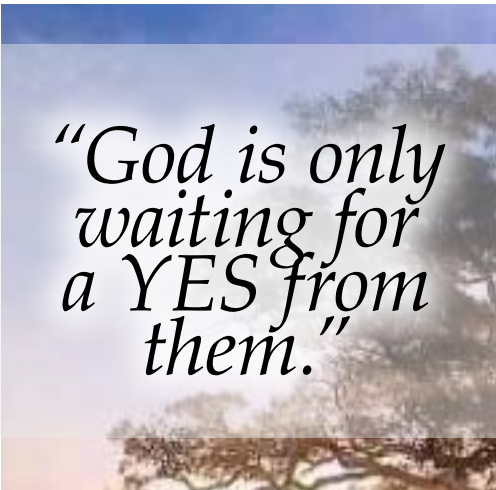
Galatians 2.20 says, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

So when Jesus lives in me, I can always sing and praise Him. “Are you always happy?” you may ask. Yes, I can always rejoice in the Lord. I can, of course, feel sorrow in many situations, but I can stand in the middle of all difficulties and rejoice in Him. I am saved and He lives in me!

God loves every person equally.

God loves you. He has always loved you and will always love you. There is nothing you can do to make him not love you.

He loved you when you were created in your mother’s womb, and he wrote your name in the book of life. And you know what? He loves every person equally! Everyone has his or her name written in the book of life when created in their mother’s womb.



“God is only waiting for a YES from them.”

His love is the same for all of us. As Revelation 3 says, a person can choose to reject Jesus and thereby be blotted out from the book of life. But God in His love is waiting for your response to His love. His love is the same whether you are good or bad according to this world’s standard. He loves everyone just as much as He loves you. The only difference between the sinner and you is Jesus! It

was a revolution to me when I realized this. It changed my attitude toward other people.

When I meet someone - it can be a robber, an alcoholic, or anyone else - I don’t think of them as sinners.

I think of them as someone God loves.

When they were born, their names were written in the book of life. And God is only waiting for a YES from them.

And as God loves every person, we can also love every person. Or more correctly, Jesus, who lives in us, can love all people. Romans 5.5 says, “God has poured out His love into our hearts by the holy spirit, whom He has given us.”

Say YES to Jesus, and let Him live His LIFE through you!

**BJØRN
BERGMANN**

**PREACHER,
NORWAY**

