



Doug rote: It is not evangelism for global ethics that offends me. It is evangelism for intolerant, judgmental, authoritarian, often patriarchal dogmatism.

T: I agree. But don't jump on any authoritative statement & hang that string of names on it. Compared to God, we are as children. I have heard youngsters hang those epithets on their parents, announcing with their supreme arrogance that their parents were intolerant, judgmental, authoritarian & dogmatic, when they were merely giving them much-needed advice. God has a lot of that kind of trouble with his children.

D: I hope I attack no-one but I warn against evangelism that preaches for example that forgiveness for inherited sin can only be bought at the cost of

believing that a sinless all-powerful all-loving all-wise human... intercedes with his heavenly alter ego for sinners because he is the only way to paradise.

T: You don't like it that Jesus said "I am the way, the truth & the life. No man comes to the Father but by me." I don't know whether the Aramaic language had the phrase "the embodiment of" but if you insert those words the sentence becomes easier to understand: "I am the embodiment of the way, the truth & the life." Remember Jesus was talking to simple men who had little grasp of abstractions. Today's evangelists have the same problem. Even the priests were often only half-aware of spiritual issues. They demanded that everything be expressed in very tangible terms.

Jesus had traveled & studied in the far East, in a civilization which had had written language, & philosophical teachings, for at least 4000 years. In Jerusalem he had to talk down to his audience, which was on a much lower level of understanding than he was.

But there is more here than mere abstraction. You find it offensive that Jesus said he is the only way to paradise. You are thinking of the many unbelievers who don't accept Christ but nonetheless they are good, & loving, & they benefit the world. You say, surely God will accept them into heaven; they don't need Christ.

In statements such as "He who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus was telling his listeners that he is not what we call today a sub-personality of God. God has 3 sides to him, of which 2 are himself and Christ. You called God an alter ego to Christ, & that's a pretty good description. Christ is the side that tolerates man's evil-doing. God is not quite so tolerant.

God interacts with Christ somewhat in the way a man can argue with himself. He is sterner than Christ, more likely to get disgusted with man's evil-doing & his continual defiance of the behaviors that foster life. Then he talks with Christ, the kinder part of himself. And Christ intercedes for man.

It's true as you say that a man may individually deserve to survive, because for one reason or another he obeys the rules of ethics, he is unselfish, honest, caring, responsible, even though he doesn't know Jesus. But without Christ's intervention before the throne of God - coupled with the intervention of Sophia, the so-called holy ghost, the twin sister of Christ - God's anger at man's bad behavior might provoke him to destroy the earth & its contents, with a "back to the drawing board"

attitude. ..with a feeling on his part that he has failed & needs to trash wot he has done & start over. Cryst actually has to periodically persuade God not to do that.

When Jesus said that he is the *way*, he is talking about how his teachings & his life, his example, form a reliable guide assuring that a man arriving in the next world will not be knocked on the head & stashed in a bin somewhere with the rejects. This can happen to a man in whom the Beast is uppermost. The Beast doesn't make it as a human. Jesus can help a man to overcome the beast in him, such that he will be able in the next world to join the human masters of the universe. Neutralists, skeptics, ho-hum types & elitists are also in danger of offending God. Cryst intercedes also for them, warns them, & shows them the way to go.

Jesus also said he is the *truth*. He ritely saw himself as having a well-filled brain which was at home with the mind & character of God & with the background of the earth's whole history, & its likely future. The men around him were like youngsters by comparison, alternately dreaming far-out dreams & totally preoccupied with practical matters of survival & acquisition. Jesus had already acquired knowledge, he was still acquiring more, & he had a hot line to the mind of God. This being so, along with his willingness to share his knowledge - unusual in those days - he was the key to understanding & knowledge for others. He could make them wise if they would listen. "I am the truth" is an abbreviated way of saying this.

"I am the *life*," Jesus also said. As the Bible warns, the good would be killed with the bad if God were to destroy us all. So a man doesn't need to know who or what Cryst is in order to be dependent on him for his life. Cryst intercedes, everybody man gets a reprieve.

Jesus was not just another teacher. The simple souls who believe what Christ said of himself are

wise. He is what he said....the way, the truth & the life.

