

Many Roads to Hell  
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One of the plainest truths in the New Testament is that there is only one way to heaven. Jesus stated it clearly in Matthew 7:13-14 ("Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it") as well as John 14:6 (*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me"*). Jesus repeatedly taught there is one way; His way to heaven is the One Way. By this He clarified repeatedly that it means following His commandments. One Way to Heaven is one of the Basic Principles of Christ.

But what is remarkable about this clear, obvious teaching is that most people DO NOT AGREE with this! They say things like "many paths to God", "one should not preach there is one path" or "God accepts the church of your choice". Indeed, what is remarkable is that for such people, the greatest sin is exclusivity or being "dogmatic" about salvation. The only people they see as lost are those who aspire to be pleasing to God!

So to be clear, we should all understand that Scriptures say MOST people will perish (Luke 13:23). But unlike the road to salvation, Scriptures suggest that not all will be lost for the same reasons. In other words, there are many paths to Hell.

First, there is the path of good people with good intentions. We even have a saying: "*the road to hell is paved with good intentions*". Jesus said that on the last day many people would stand before Him and declare all their good works; Jesus would reject them for not obeying Him (Matthew 7:22-23). The bible is clear that Lots of people do good things; an excellent example of this is Cornelius, who is called "a devout man" (Acts 10:2) who feared God. Yet even so he still needed to be saved (Acts 11:14). Good people who do good things don't go to heaven; only righteous people do. Many are on the path of being a good person, and that path leads to hell. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter" (Matthew 7:21).

Another path to hell is the path of Procrastination. In Acts 26:28-29 Agrippa was almost persuaded to become a Christian; but "almost" is lost. Many people know what they need to do to be saved, and intend to do it. But there is always something in the way. In the end, this is a scheme of the devil, who desires to take away the seed from the heart (Luke 8:12). Many are those who are always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; such people are lost (2 Timothy 3:7). They intend to obey God, but are looking for the right time or waiting for just a little more understanding. Many are on the path of just a few more steps, and that path leads to hell.

A third path is the path of false religion. A constant warning in the New Testament is that of the apostasy, a falling away to false doctrine (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, 2 Timothy 4:3). They are following blind and evil leaders down the wrong path, they are trusting people who ought not be trusted with something as precious as their destiny. Others are following their own hearts by finding doctrines that satisfy their desires. Many are on the path of false faith, and that path leads to hell.

Fourth, we might consider worldliness a path. It is the path of those who have no interest in spiritual things, and may not believe in spiritual things. They live for the here and now, and worship their own satisfaction. Scriptures repeatedly tell us that those who walk by the flesh will not inherit eternal life (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:5). They may believe in a greater good, but are too

self-absorbed or self-deceived to seek it. Some have even found the truth, but love the world more. Many are on the path of the flesh, and that path leads to hell.

Finally, let us consider the path of apathy. Most often this path is described for those who are believers who are straying (Hebrews 2:1-3, Revelation 3:15-16). They simply do not have enough love of God to stay faithful, and leave when either tribulation, temptation or the cares of the world flood their lives. Apathy best describes their path, because they really have no focus on their destination, and are moving forward without purpose. Scriptures teach that judgment begins with us; many of us will depart the path.

There are two eternal destinations. No one arrives at heaven accidentally; to get to heaven we must be intentional, and we must do the things that bring us there. But it is also true that no one will arrive at hell against their will; meaning, anyone who is on the path to hell has made choices that put them on that path. We need to consider that God has done all He can to prevent it. If we are lost, we are lost due to our choice of a path.