



THIS IS THE WAY



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- **A Movement: Distinct and Separate**
- **Distinct** - "Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God" - 1 Cor. 10:32
 - The church is as distinguishable and different as Jews were from Gentiles
 - Jews knew it. Gentiles knew it. Christians knew it.
 - Jews and Gentiles persecuted. The church persevered.
- **Separate** - "Go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord..." - 2 Cor. 6:17
- **There is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, just as certainly as there is one God** - Eph. 4:4-6

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- **Conflict with religious establishment**

- **Acts 9:2** - "and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to **the Way**, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem"
- **Acts 22: 4** - "I persecuted **this Way** to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women"
 - **Don't be surprised when other religious people persecute us**
- **Acts 19:9** - "But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of **the Way** before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus"
 - **We should expect other religious people to oppose us and even speak evil of us**

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- **Conflict with religious establishment**

"They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God"

- **John 16:2**

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- **Conflict with the world**
 - **Acts 19:23** - "About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning **the Way**"
 - **The truth of God is a threat to the gods which men have made - Acts 19:26**
- **The changes in your life illuminate their need to change**
 - **1 Pet. 3:16** - "keeping a clear conscience, so that those who slander you may be put to shame by your good behavior in Christ"
 - **1 Pet. 4:4** - "they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you"
- **This realization is part of counting the cost**
 - **2 Tim. 3:12** - "all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted"

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- Conflict with the world

""If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you"

- John 15:18

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- **Conflict with the government**
 - **Acts 24:22** - "But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of **the Way**, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case"
- **Paul's prosecution begins the legal separation of the Way from Judaism**
 - Shatters the view that the church was just another sect of Jews
 - Sets up Roman persecution
- **Growing Roman persecution provides the backdrop for the Revelation**
 - **Rev. 13:11-12** – "Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast..."

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- **Conflict with the government**

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her immorality,
and has avenged on her the blood of his servants"

- **Revelation 19:1-2**

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- **Having a hope in God**

- **Acts 24:14** - "But this I confess to you, that according to **the Way**, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets"
- **Acts 24:15** - "having a **hope** in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust"

- **All spiritual blessings are in Christ Jesus – Eph. 1:3ff**

- **Eph. 1:4** – God chose those "in Christ" to be "holy and blameless before Him"
- **Eph. 5:27** – "so that he might present **the church** to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish"

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- Having a hope in God

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father
except through me"

- John 14:6



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