



# Design For Ministry™

## Depth Perception

15 May 2002

by Mark L. Vincent

© 2002 Design For Ministry

### One Way?

Increasingly, believing Jesus is **THE** way to God is a sure way to receive scorn. Those who do are accused of arrogance, elitism, stupidity -- even racism. Nothing could be further from the truth.

To say Jesus is the way means:

\* There is no other criteria to differentiate myself from another. Class, biology, creed, culture, gender, educational status, and language just are not important enough! The only meaningful difference between me and another is that I met the grace of God in Jesus, a grace God wants the whole world to know, and some do not yet.

\* God decides anyone's eternal destination. Christians are excused from this role.

\* God's work in Jesus is not keeping people out of heaven or out of the church here on earth. Rather, it is to bring them in (see number one above).

\* The believer does not tolerate evil. Rather, their chief characteristic is the unmerited love they show -- even while opposing evil -- even while being scorned and misunderstood.

How tragic it is then, how enormous a failure, to read recently of Anglican, Catholic and Adventist pastors who presided over genocidal activity in Rwanda. Some of them bull-dozed their churches with people inside so the grisly work of mass murder could be accomplished. The enormity of this tragedy is made more clear when remembering that each of these Christian traditions are admired as global communions. In Rwanda, Christian leaders set aside the love of God for the sake of ethnic hatred.

We are horrified by this, but we must remember we too are eager to reject people and thereby withhold redeeming love. Maybe their politics are different, or maybe their dietary habits. Perhaps they can't walk or have a perpetually bad attitude. Maybe they work in the media or have a criminal record. Maybe they chose to stop learning or they always have to be in control. We reject these people because they see the world differently than we do and we consider them inferior human beings.

Here then is the foundation of generous living -- knowing the extent of grace received and extending that grace to others -- even though we are not inclined to. Knowing Jesus as **THE** way means nothing gets in the way of God's redeeming love. The only reason one is lost to God is because they chose it -- not God, and not God's representatives here on earth.

-mark

***"their chief characteristic is to be the depth of their love -- even when opposing evil -- even when being scorned and misunderstood."***