

[Cindy-Lynn Harper](#)  
[Member](#)

[Exclusivity \(The One True Way\)](#)

I am a worker, and I started in the work in 2020 knowing that I held beliefs that most of my older coworkers and friends would not agree with. Namely, that “professing” and going to meeting does not make you a follower of Jesus, and that there are many people who follow Jesus but aren’t part of this fellowship. As a special mentor said to me once: “There will be a lot of people surprised by who is and who isn’t in heaven”. I’ll share a little of my story here.

When I was in university (2006-2011), I was in an area where there were very few young people going to meetings. There was one other young man there who I carpooled with to meeting, and we became quite good friends. My last year of uni he came back after a summer working at a camp which was a Christian organization, but not a bible camp. Muskoka Woods is a “Youth Resort for Kids”. He was different: more spiritual, excited about talking to other Christians, excited about talking about the bible. He encouraged me to apply for the same camp the next summer, so I did, and my life changed.

I distinctly remember the day God revealed my own self-righteousness to me. The camp did an evening that they called “Soulhouse” where the band plays worship music for a couple hours. I remember having tears running down my face because I could feel God’s Spirit there. I felt like my whole world was crumbling because one of my core beliefs was being ripped away from under my feet. All my life I had just understood implicitly that “The Truth” (this fellowship) was the “One True Way”, and all other church groups were “false” and empty. God showed me I was wrong. One of the friends I had made there had helped my uni friend through that same transition, and she sat with me and prayed with me.

Throughout the next 2 and a bit years working at that camp, I had wonderful fellowship with many Christians, and I came out understanding that it was not my place to judge another’s relationship with God, regardless of what fellowship group they belonged to. I did attend other churches during the year or two following, while also attending and taking part in meetings. Eventually I came to the place where I felt that God wanted me in meetings, and perhaps He wants me to “be the change”, from the inside.

I will never again discount other Christians because they don't go to meeting. I utilize many resources from other Christian writers and organizations as I do my own personal mediations and study.

When I had a conversation with my uni friend after starting in the work (he no longer goes to meeting, but finds fellowship wherever he is, with whoever wants to have fellowship), he asked me how I was going to deal with the exclusivity in the fellowship. This is what I told him (not verbatim): I feel without a doubt that God called me to this specific ministry at this specific time, I have no idea why. When people start church bashing, or comparing our fellowship to other groups, I will speak up. My job is to point to Jesus, and that's what I intend to do.

I've had some really encouraging conversations over the past few years, and been pleasantly surprised with how many people are actually on this same page. But I have also learned to be very careful in approaching this particular issue so that I can encourage thought and discussion rather than having people get their defences up and be closed to even thinking about it. It's hard to challenge core beliefs, and needs to be approached with compassion.