

“HOW CAN THERE BE ONLY ONE TRUE RELIGION?”

We all have questions...hard questions! Over the coming weeks, I will address the hard questions people have—believers and skeptics alike—with Christianity. Because my time is limited, I encourage you to go our blog, www.gotgodquestions.org, to keep conversation going. Also, there are question/comment cards in your bulletin. Feel free to ask any question or make any comment and put it in the box in the foyer.

Today, I will begin with a very emotional question. “How can you possibly claim that Christianity is the only true religion?” There are many criticisms surrounding such a premise.

THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY “CHRISTIAN!”

“Jesus didn't teach this ... at least the Jesus I know about!”

“What did the disciples teach?”

“Just because Jesus said it doesn't make it so!”

THAT DOES NOT RESPECT OTHER BELIEFS!

“After all, the differences between religions are insignificant”

“What matters most isn't what you believe but that what you believe you believe sincerely!”

“Christianity is too narrow-minded.”

RELIGIOUS EXCLUSIVITY CAUSES TOO MUCH HATRED!

This is true but why does this cause so much hatred and division?

CAN CHRISTIANITY BE *THE* VOICE OF HOPE AND REASON?

Belief Systems	Christianity	Judaism	Islam	Mormonism	Jehovah's Witnesses	Hinduism	Bhuddism	New Age/ misc. 'spirituality'
Primary Founder:	Jesus Christ	Abraham	Mohammed	Joseph Smith	Charles Russell	No One Founder	Siddhartha Gauta ma	1960's Culture
Teachings on: God	One, eternal, Triune, righteous, wise, loving, merciful	One, eternal, just	Allah, one, eternal	Once a man, who later became a god	Jehovah, but not at all like the God of the Bible	Thirty-three main gods	No God, only "divine consciousness"	Pantheism (God is the universe)
Man	Sinful, but valuable to God	Basically good with "flaws", learns through suffering	Basically good	People will become gods who will be worshiped	Basically good, spiritual needs can be earned	Part of god (Brahman, the main god)	Good, part of god, though god doesn't really exist	Good, even divine, part of God
Scripture	The Bible (Inspired and infallible)	The Torah (the Old Testament)	The Koran	Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price	Jehovah's Witnesses' version of the Bible only and certain other publications	The Vedas	Four noble truths and the eight-fold path	No one authoritative book
Jesus Christ	Fully God, fully man, deity	Ignored, distorted or "respectfully rejected"	A prophet, a man, not the Son of God	An "elder brother" who became a god	Just a man, denied, distorted	Ignored or distorted	An avatar, shaman, mystic	Didn't exist, or if he did, was only a man
Life's Purpose	To know God through a relationship with Jesus Christ	To love God (Deut. 6:5) and to try to do good	To submit to Allah	To be a part of the "one true Church" (the LDS church)	To win others to the Jehovah's Witnesses faith and thereby earn heaven	To work out bad karma through knowledge, devotion or good deeds	There is no real "truth", but you <i>should</i> empty yourself	To gain power, self-realization, godhood
Heaven	Place of eternal joy for those who have received God's gift of salvation in Jesus	If there is one, we'll all be there	For those chosen by Allah	Planet Kolob; celestial kingdom; terrestrial kingdom; telestial kingdom	For 144,000 faithful Jehovah's Witnesses	Nirvana, where you are mukti: free from all desires	Emptiness, The end of consciousness, thought ceases	None; in the mind; here on Earth
Hell	Place of eternal torment for those who have rejected God's love	For evil people	For those rejected by Allah	No real hell, just lower levels of heaven	For non-Jehovah's Witnesses	Here on Earth, being trapped in reincarnations	No such thing as sin, so no need for punishment	None; or ignorance; or for evil people