



Questions We Ask

Why so many religions?

People of Athens, I see that you are very religious. As I was going through your city and looking at the things you worship, I found an altar with the words, "To an Unknown God." You worship this God, but you don't really know him. So I want to tell you about him.

Acts 17:22-23

The question is often asked, "Why so many religions?" The truth is that we live in a world with many cultures and many religions.

Every religious faith should be treated with respect because we are all created in the image of God. And we should exercise tolerance, but that does not mean we agree with everyone who puts forth a religious conviction.

Every religious faith has similarities and each one has differences. We need to find which one is true.

For instance, everyone has an opinion about Jesus. The Jews say He was a good teacher or prophet, but not the Messiah. The Hindus say He is not god, but one of the many "avatars" [saviors] of Vishnu. Buddhists say He was a good teacher, but lower than Buddha. Muslims say He was a prophet, but lower than Mohammed. In contrast, Christianity recognizes Jesus as the Son of the living God.

Our job is to find out which religion does the best job at explaining humanity's ultimate reality.

"During a British conference on comparative religions, experts from around the world debated what, if any, belief was unique to the Christian faith. They began eliminating possibilities. Incarnation? Other religions had different versions of gods appearing in human form. Resurrection? Again, other religions had accounts of return from death."

"The debate went on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. 'What's the rumpus about?' he asked, and heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity's unique contribution among world religions. Lewis responded, 'Oh, that's easy. It's grace.'"

"The notion of God's love coming to us free of charge, no strings attached, seems to go against every instinct of humanity. The Buddhist eightfold path, the Hindu doctrine of Karma, the Jewish covenant, and the Muslim code of law - each offers a way to earn approval. Only Christianity dares to make God's love unconditional." [Philip Yancey, [What's So Amazing about Grace?](#), Zondervan, 1997]

Why have you chosen to follow Jesus?

What is the difference between the condemnation of other religions and affirming Jesus?

What does Acts 17 and Romans 12:18 tell us about how we relate to people of other religions?

Notice that Paul did not condemn the people of Athens, instead he compliments them on how religious they are. He built bridges. He saw them as people who were searching for the God he had found and he was ready to lead them to the truth about God in Jesus.



"Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life...."

John 14:6

March 1, 2015