

QUESTION: Is Jesus the only way?

Each religion believes it to be "the one true religion." How can they all be right? And if they were not, why would God allow so many to be dedicated to the "wrong" one?

Let me begin by being clear of my position on whether there are other true religions besides Christianity. As I have researched and discovered the evidence for Christianity I have found that it is both truthful and credible. I have become certain of its reliability in all that the Bible claims. Christians believe Jesus is the Son of God and that He died for the sins of the world. Other religions do not believe this to be true. Christianity teaches that salvation is by grace and through faith in Jesus Christ. Other religions such as Mormonism, Islam, and Christian Science teach salvation as a matter of works. It is observable then that different religious ideas are not compatible with one another. Since I have found Christianity to be true I cannot accept other religions as equally true. To believe otherwise would be to go against the law of non-contradiction. Two conflicting views cannot both be right.

So how then does God allow so many to be dedicated to the "wrong" one(s)? A researcher by the name of Alister McGrath mentions the dilemma that exists as a result of religion often being determined by the conditions of one's upbringing (an Indian is likely to be a Hindu; an Arab is likely to be a Muslim). A communicator, Michael Green, notes that those who have become Christians from Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism appreciate what they have learned in those cultures, but are all the more grateful to have realized and responded to a God who has met them in their present condition. Through Jesus Christ they have been set free from guilt and alienation, this is salvation. I share this to help illustrate what I believe to be true about the witness of God in the created world. We, humans, are created to have fellowship with God, but that fellowship has been severed by our "built in" propensity toward all that is not right, or otherwise stated, our not being like we were originally designed to be. This creates a void within each and every one of us. The various religions of the world are humanity's way to fill this void. The problem is that this void-filler is not the truth, but a lie. Yet, there still exist the witness of God throughout the created world and the Bible. If a person seeks after truth they will find God. They only need to pursue the truth with all their heart.

The reality is that God wants everyone to have fellowship with Him. Our fellowship is conditional upon our response to the question of who we believe Jesus Christ to be. If we believe Him to be the Son of God then we need to respond the way He has called us to respond in the Bible. We must accept His death on the cross as payment for our predicament. God has provided a way for us to be saved from our situation and have fellowship with Him. God does love us and wants us to respond to His love. But God has created us to have freedom to accept or reject His love. If we were created without this choice could we say that we were acting in love by accepting His plan for our lives? If we were created without this choice could we say that what God offers us is love or as Alister McGrath has suggested, "something that seems dangerously close to rape?" God respects our freedom. God does offer us salvation and desires us to accept it. However, the choice is ours.

McDowell, Josh and Stewart, Don. (1980). *Answers to Tough Questions*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers. (p. 107).

McGrath, Alister. (1993). *Intellectuals Don't Need God and Other Modern Myths*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. (p. 111).

Ibid. (pp. 115-116).

Ibid. (p. 143).

Ibid. (pp. 142-143).