

5/15/2022

“Why Do Christians Think They Are the Only Ones Who Got It Right?”

I. “Is it ok to question our faith, the church, and the Bible?”

1. Questioning can be healthy if you ask with SINCERITY and a GOOD ATTITUDE; OR questioning can be a smoke screen for ANTAGONISM and SELFISHNESS.

“John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, ‘Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?’”

Matthew 11:2-3 (NLT)

¹⁵ “Then the Pharisees met together to plot how to trap Jesus into saying something for which He could be arrested. ¹⁶ They sent some of their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to meet with Him. ‘Teacher,’ they said, ‘we know how honest you are. You teach the way of God truthfully. You are impartial and don’t play favorites. ¹⁷ Now tell us what you think about this: Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’ ¹⁸ But Jesus knew their evil motives. ‘You hypocrites!’ he said. ‘Why are you trying to trap Me?’ ¹⁹ Here, show Me the coin used for the tax.’ When they handed Him a Roman coin, ²⁰ He asked, ‘Whose picture and title are stamped on it?’ ²¹ ‘Caesar’s,’ they replied. ‘Well, then,’ He said, ‘give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.’ ²² His reply amazed them, and they went away.”

Matthew 22:15-22 (NLT)

2. **Help create a place for honest questions.**

❖ What **doesn't** help...

- being offended or smug
- shutting people down
- dismissing them
- telling them to have more faith

❖ How can we help people come into a relationship with Jesus if we, His followers, act like JERKS?

Noble Correct	Noble Incorrect	<i>“I like your Christ but not your Christianity.” Mahatma Gandhi</i>
Abrasive Correct	Abrasive Incorrect	

*“...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with **gentleness and respect**.”*

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

- ❖ What **does** help...
 - listening and caring
 - sharing your story of faith rather than theological answers
 - reading and research

II. “What about all other world religions... aren’t they basically ‘different paths up the same mountain?’”

❖ Muslims

- Believe in one God.
- Believe Paradise is obtained by practicing the “5 Pillars”.

❖ Hindus

- Believe that god is an impersonal force that resides everywhere and is in everything.
- Believe reaching Nirvana - a state of losing consciousness and being absorbed into the universe - is the ultimate goal and is achieved through reincarnation, roughly 600,000 times.

❖ Buddhists

- Believe that god is beyond understanding and knowing, so assume a “Noble Silence”.
- Believe one reaches Nirvana through “The 4 Noble Truths” and “The Eightfold Path”.

❖ Christians

- Believe there is one God who made everything.
- Believe that this world was broken by sin/disobedience and people are separated from the God who loves them. Salvation and adoption into the family of God is made possible as a gift based on the sacrificial death of God’s Son, Jesus.

(NOTE: Comparison of Religions from The God Questions pg. 67-93)

- ❖ Soooo...major world religions are **VERY DIFFERENT** and **DO NOT CLAIM** to lead to the same place.

III. Back to the first question, what makes Christianity right and others wrong?

1. It’s all about who **JESUS** is and what He accomplished for us by His **DEATH** and **RESURRECTION**.

¹⁶“And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. ¹⁸In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! ¹⁹And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.²⁰ **But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead.** He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.”
1 Corinthians 15:16-20 (NLT)

2. The Bible teaches that the way to God is **NARROW** (one way) but not **NARROW MINDED** (exclusive).

“Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.’”

John 14:6 (NLT)

- ❖ For example...
 - ✓ “Country Club” but open to all
 - ✓ One bridge...over a chasm
 - ✓ Specific address...to a friend's house
 - ✓ Specific phone number...for my spouse
 - ✓ Appendectomy....one thing to save your life

3. Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day He rose from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

4. **BELIEVE strongly; TRUST Wholly; Be BOLD in your faith and relationship with Jesus; AND...be NICE about it.**

- ❖ Be gentle and respectful with people who have questions and that believe differently than you.

“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?”³⁷ Jesus replied, ““You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.”³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ A second is equally important: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”⁴⁰ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:36-40 (NLT)

Keep the Conversation going...

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. If you could pick one question to ask God, what would it be?
2. What is the difference in being spiritual and religious?
3. What do you feel the purpose of religion is?
4. If someone asked you about the faith that you have, how comfortable are you answering?
5. How can I be bold in my faith this week?