

Teen Winter Retreat—Message 5—Jesus Among Other God's: Is There Really Only One Way to God?

Introduction

- John 14:6—Jesus claims to be the only path to salvation.
- I Timothy 2:5—Paul says that Jesus Christ is the only way to get to God.
- The current culture that we live in accuse Christians being too exclusive and close minded. Surely there must be routs or paths to God.
- They say things like all paths and roads lead to God. Is this true? Are all the worlds' religious just different paths up the same mountain?
- Four Terms you need to know:
 1. *Pluralism*: is the belief that every religion is true, that each provides a genuine encounter with the Ultimate. One may be better than the others, but all are adequate.
 2. *Relativism*: is similar to pluralism, claiming each religion is true to the individual who holds it. Relativists believe that since there is no objective truth in religion, there are not criteria by which one can tell which religion is true or which religions are false.
 3. *Inclusivism*: claims that one religion is explicitly true, and all others are implicitly true.
 4. *Exclusivism*: is the belief that only one religion is true and all others opposed to it are false.
- Because Christianity is an exclusive religion it is at odds with our modern culture.

Do All Religions Teach the Same Thing?

- The notion that all religions teach basically the same thing—that we ought to love one another—demonstrates a serious misunderstanding of the world's religions.
- While most religions have some similar code because God has implanted right and wrong on our consciences, they disagree on virtually every major issue, including the nature of God, man, sin, salvation, heaven, hell, and creation.
- Jews, Christians, and Muslims believe in different versions of a theistic God, while most Hindus and New Agers believe that everything that exists is part of an impersonal, pantheistic force they call God.

- Many Hindus believe that evil is a complete illusion, while Christians, Muslims, and Jews believe that evil is real.
- Christians believe that people are saved by grace while other religions, if they believe in salvation at all, teach some kind of salvation by good works.

Truth vs. Tolerance

- While most religions have some beliefs that are true, not all religious beliefs can be true because they are mutually exclusive—they teach opposites.
- In other words, some religious beliefs must be wrong. But we are not supposed to say that in America today. We are supposed to be tolerant of all religious beliefs.
- Tolerance no longer means to put up with something you believe to be false. Tolerance now means that you're supposed to accept every belief as true.
- Religiously speaking this is an impossible notion, since mutually exclusive religious beliefs cannot be true. It makes no sense to pretend that they are.
- Pluralists accuses Christians of being intolerant but pluralists think all non-pluralist beliefs are wrong. So pluralists are just as dogmatic and closed-minded as anyone else making truth claims in the public square.
- Ironically, pluralist—advocates of the new tolerance—are not really tolerant at all. They only tolerate those who already agree with them, which by anyone's definition is not tolerance.
- There is a big difference between being open minded and empty minded. The only reason for being open minded is so that we can recognize truth when we see it.

Why Don't More People Believe?

- There is a difference between proving a proposition and accepting a proposition. We might be able to prove Christianity is true beyond reasonable doubt, but only you can choose to accept it.
- If someone could provide reasonable answers to the most significant questions and objections you have about Christianity—reasonable to the point that Christianity seems true beyond a reasonable doubt—would you then become a Christian?
- If your honest answer is no, then your resistance to Christianity is emotional or volitional, not merely intellectual.

- Read passage from page 31 of *I Don't Have Enough Faith*

Conclusion

- Absolute truth does exist.
 1. Skeptics are not skeptical about their skepticism
 2. Agnostics are not agonistic about their agnoscitesm
- Either God exists or he doesn't
 1. Cause and Effect
 2. Design
 3. Morality—all prove God existence
- The Bible is the Word of God.
 1. Archeology
 2. Fulfilled Prophecy
 3. Manuscript Evidence
- Jesus was God and Rose from the Dead.
 1. Lord, Liar, or Lunatic
 2. Empty Tomb—Supernatural explanation only one that makes sense
- Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation
 1. Bible says so
 2. World's religions are mutually exclusive and teach opposites
 3. Pluralists are not tolerance at all
- The only response that a truly open mind will accept is to reach out in faith as trust Christ as the only total and complete payment for sin.