



Christianity and the Religions of the World

John 4:19-26

QUESTION OF THE DAY

Why do Christians think they have it "right" and other religions have got it "wrong"?

Introduction:

All religions lead to the same God and all religions deserve the same respect.

--Paulo Coelho

All religions are true. God can be reached by different religions. Many rivers flow by many ways but they all fall into the sea. They are all one.

--Neem Karoli Baba

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through Me. --**Jesus (John 14:6)**

There is no other name given under heaven among humans by which we must be saved --**Peter (Acts 4:12)**

On the Subjective View of Religion

This exclusive claim of Jesus and Peter is often seen as offensive

The view that all religions lead to God belies a worldview concerning religion:

"Religion deals in a subjective sphere, not an objective sphere"

An analogy of pharmaceutical execs and the placebo hoax

Religious claims are seen in the same light as placebos

As Karl Marx famously said, "*Religion is the opiate of the masses*"

The same people who say religions are the same don't say this about airplanes

The analogy of the pharma execs and airplane mechanics
Christians and all serious religious adherents believe in objective realities
Christianity sees itself as having the one vaccine that fits the disease of the world

In its view its exclusive claim is good news (there is a cure!) and we found it!

So this is the first question a person must answer:

Are religious propositions more like vaccines that address real viruses, or are they placebo pills that only address subjective matters?

Comparing Religions

If we believe religious propositions deal in objective truths

Then we need to compare what they say and try to see what makes sense

To say all religions say the same thing is inaccurate

Although they have some shared values, they are fundamentally different

Five questions to ask of the five main religions:

How did things get started, what is God like, why are we here, what went wrong/solution, and where are we headed

More Thoughts On Christian Exclusivity

Christians don't say they have all truth, but Jesus is where all truths lead

Christians realize there are truths everywhere in all cultures and religions

Christians unique truth is Jesus is God and the only way to God

First, notice this claim is BOTH exclusive and inclusive:

Inclusive: ALL are welcome to come FREELY

Exclusive: But you need to come in by the door of Jesus

Jesus in **John 4:19-26** models both exclusivity and inclusivity

Second, be careful, Christian, not to equate your view of how with what

Jesus is the only way, but He gets decide who comes through Him

Jesus **the person** is the way (not a system, method, ritual, etc.)

How Should Christians Treat Other Religious Traditions

We embody respect, humility

We are willing to name places of common ground

We are willing to work together for shared values

We assume all religions to hold their convictions as exclusively true

We politely and carefully give reason for our convictions: **1 Peter 3:15**

