

# Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

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## Which Religion Is Correct?

As a young person I asked "Which religion is correct?" I even spent several years of my life searching for the answer to this question. I majored in Comparative Religion in college and then went on to apply to a number of graduate schools in order to learn even more. Having carefully considered the world religions, I was brought by God to put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and embrace the Bible as the true message from God. I can only share with you several things that I learned during this pursuit.

Once read a book where a man stated that "men are incurably religious." I believe this statement, too, is true. There are as many religions as there are civilizations. All men everywhere hold to some

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set of belief structure that gives purpose and meaning to life. Man cannot exist apart from such a system. Now, the sad thing is to realize that most religions are man's religion, the flesh is very active! See the major religions of this world, that is, Hinduism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and many forms of Christianity. See the major political/economic philosophies of this world, i.e. democracy, communism, socialism, autocracy, etc. All of these systems hold to beliefs that men will actually die for, yet none of them will gain one bit of favor with God. All seek to exclude the

true God and believe the lie of the enemy! I was once told that the Latin word for religion means "to bind back." Man's religion is an attempt on his part to restore a relationship with God on his (man's) terms. This, of course, is the flesh operating.

Allow me to say one other thing. When studying the religions of our world, I was fascinated by four in particular: Judaism, Buddhism, Islam (the Sufi sect in particular), and Christianity. However, I came to realize that no religion can save me. My need is greater than the great organizations that have developed from the teachings of certain wise men. I needed the forgiveness of my sins. I needed to be accepted by

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God. I was aware that I was not a good man but an evil man. Many do not believe this. I did and still do. I have corrupted my way since a very young age, and I knew that I was dying because of this fact. Therefore, my search led me to Someone who could help me. That Someone was/is the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone has a message of deliverance for the whole man from sin and its bondage. Some tell us that true deliverance is to escape the body, and salvation to them is for the spirit to be released and set free from the body. This is true of most all the eastern religions. But this is

not a message that delivers the whole man, body/soul/spirit. The message of Christ does – 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.

Now, to the main point we must see. How do these different religions differ? How are they the same? One simple answer is that all but the teachings of Christ are based on the ability of men to work for their own salvation. Christ says that for a man or woman to work for his or her salvation is absolutely impossible and that salvation must come to men as a gift since man is totally incapable of saving himself - Ephesians 2:1-10 and Romans 4:4-5.

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Hebrews 2:9, 1 Peter 2:24-25, etc. This allowed God to remain just (because sin was fully paid for) and at the same time forgive and justify the sinner - Romans 3:21-26. This is the primary truth that makes Christianity the only true religion in the light of man's need for forgiveness. All other religions either compromise the character of God (He no longer remains just when He forgives because sins are not paid for) or simply do

not save the whole man (there is no resurrection but only the release from the body of man's soul) or both.

**N**ow I will summarize the truths taught in the true Christian faith that are found nowhere else. First of all, God the Son (Jesus) died in a human body for all men - John 1:1,14; Hebrews 10:1-18. Secondly, Jesus rose from the dead with a promise to resurrect all men - John 5:28-30; 1Corinthians 15:12-28; Philippians 3:20-21. Further, The blood of Jesus is the basis on which God forgives (takes or bears away) our sins - Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:11-15, 22. Lastly, Jesus is alive - body, soul, and spirit! Luke 24:3-6, 36-43; John 20:24-29 [No other founder of any world religion claims to be alive today!] I hope these thoughts will help you see why Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father. "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME." - JESUS in John 14:6.

**T**he Christian faith is based upon facts that are historic and documented. All depends upon the historic reality of Jesus, His death and resurrection. We are never told to believe in any imaginative

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schemes of men. Rather, we are told to believe in all that God has said and done in history. Sometimes the things which seem to defy human logic are entirely logical from a broader perspective, for example, the fact that the Bible said the earth was spherical when to sight men had determined it to be "flat." We now know the Bible was accurate on this point because we have been able to broaden our perspective - Job 22:14; Isaiah 40:22. Further, sometimes the things which seem to defy human logic do so because they are supernatural in their

origin, that is, the influence of evil spirits on men and elements. All things are not necessarily visible. For that which cannot be "seen" with the human eye, we must depend upon revelation from One Who does see all. Thus, the Bible is declared to be that revelation. What man was present at the beginning of Creation in order to report the events of those days? Obviously, if we are to understand what happened during those early days, we must either suggest theories or hear it from an eye witness other than man. What we need to see is that reality is much more than meets the eye of our flesh. Once into the mind of God as He reveals Himself in His Word, we are given a great deal of insight into how things were made and how things continue to exist - Colossians 1:15-18. Also, in Christ we have the solution to the problem of meaning in life. What alternative do we have that works? I believe that the Christian faith is the only truly defensible faith by reason in this world. It is not a blind leap into a dark chasm but rather a faith founded on reputable, historical facts. So, we need not fear the intellectual foundations for the Christian faith. They will be standing for eternity when the philosophies of man are long gone - Colossians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:24-25; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

**J**ust so there is no confusion, let me say that Christianity as a system is not the Christian faith I have been speaking to you about. Christianity as a system is actually no different than the world that has rejected Christ. Many name the name of Christ yet refuse His authority in their lives. Jesus spoke of such people in Matthew 7:21-23. Their failure is found in the fact that He never knew them. Jesus Christ came to earth to establish a relationship, not a religion. He came to reconcile us to God through His death at Calvary. He Himself told us that eternal life consisted in a relationship with God the Father and Himself which is the result of faith in Him - John 3:14-16; John 17:3. If a person

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has the Son, he or she has the eternal life - 1 John 5:11-12. If not, the wrath of God is resting upon them. Judgment is certain - John 3:36. This is serious business. Jesus Christ, Who is sinless, alone has died for the sins of mankind. Buddha did not die for you; neither did Muhammad. They could not die for you because they, too, were under the sentence of

death for their own sins. However, Jesus was born of Mary and God. He was and is without sin. Therefore, He was not under the sentence of death for His own sin. Therefore, He could take your place in judgment in order to take your sin away. This shows you how much He loves you. He was willing to die for you. Has anyone loved you more?

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