



Q. Don't all religions basically teach the same thing?

Josh McDowell Ministry

A. A man once gave this illustration. He said, "Suppose you take ten men and blindfold them and lead them over to an elephant. You now let each of them touch a different part of the elephant — tail, trunk, etc. — without telling them what they are touching. You lead them back inside, take off their blindfolds, and tell them to describe what they touched." The man then asked, "Would their descriptions agree?"

The answer of course is no.

The man then made this observation: Even though these ten men touched the same thing, they did not agree because each touched a different part or, if you please, experienced it from a different angle. He then concluded, "Isn't it the same in the area of religion? Aren't all the different religious groups — Christians, Muslims, Mormons, Buddhists, etc. — experiencing the same God, yet explaining it in different ways? Thus can't they all be true, but with each giving a different emphasis?"

The problem with this illustration is identifying the elephant with God. You are assuming that all these people are experiencing the same God, when in fact this is not true. Christianity and Islam cannot both be true at the same time. Neither can Mormonism and Buddhism both be correct simultaneously, nor can Christian Science and Hinduism.

All religions cannot be true at the same time, because they teach many things completely opposite from one another. They all may be wrong, but certainly they all cannot be right, for the

claims of one will exclude the other. As to matters of salvation and the person of Jesus Christ, only historic Christianity recognizes Him as the eternal God becoming a man who died for the sins of the world and arose again the third day. Salvation is obtained only by putting one's trust in this Jesus.

The Jesus of Islam is not the Son of God who died for the sins of the world; neither is the Jesus of Mormonism or Christian Science the same Jesus as revealed in the Bible. Salvation is not by grace and through faith in these religions, but it is a matter of works. It can then be observed that we are dealing with different religious ideas that are not compatible with one another.

Even though many religions seem to be the same on the surface, the closer one gets to the central teaching the more apparent the differences become. It is totally incorrect to say that all religions are the same. The God of the Christians is not the same God as that of the Mormons, Muslims, or Christian Scientists. If the God of the Bible is the only true God, then the other Gods are non-existent and should not be worshipped.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCED RESOURCES

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