



P. 1 Do All Roads Lead To God?

P. 2 The Feeble Churches in the U.S.

P.5 He Was Here



P.6 The Ultimate Love

P. 7 God's Infallible Word?

P. 8 Support The BeaconOU.



P.3 Letters To The Editor

P.6 Ministries On Campus.

P. 5 When I Became A Christian.

BeaconOU

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John 12:46 "I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."

Do All Roads Lead to God?

The Christian Attitude Toward Non-Christian Religions

By Rick Rood

The Fact of Non-Christian Religions

Few facts have become more evident in our lifetime than the fact that we live in a pluralistic world and society. With the rapid increase in the transmission of information and the ability to travel on a worldwide scale has also come an increasing awareness that both our world and society contain a multitude of diverse and conflicting viewpoints on many different issues.

Nowhere is this pluralism more evident than in the realm of religion. More than ever before, we are conscious of the existence of the world's many religions—not only the major religions of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, but also a host of smaller yet enduring religious movements.

According to the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, there are approximately 1 billion Muslims, over 650 million Hindus, over 300 million Buddhists, over 200 million followers of Chinese folk religion, in addition to the world's 1.6 billion nominal Christians. What is important for us to understand is that these figures are more than statistics in a book or almanac. They represent real people; people who are born, live, and die every day.

What brings this reality home even more, however, is the fact

that an increasing number of followers of non-Christian religions are living in our cities, in our communities, and in our neighborhoods. Islamic mosques and Buddhist and Hindu worship centers can be found in every metropolitan area of the United States.

As followers of Jesus Christ, what should our attitude be toward non-Christian religions and toward those who embrace them? Among those who are seeking to respond to this ques-



tion, three distinct answers can be heard today. Some are saying that we must acknowledge that all religions are equally (or nearly equally) valid as ways to approach God. Though there may be superficial differences among the world's religions, at heart they are fundamentally the same. Often the analogy is used of people taking different paths up the same mountain, but all arriving at the same summit. This is the viewpoint known as religious pluralism.

Others, more anxious to preserve some sense of uniqueness for the Christian faith, yet

equally desirous of projecting an attitude of tolerance and acceptance, are committed to the viewpoint known as Christian inclusivism. In their opinion, though people of another religious conviction may be ignorant of Christ—or possibly even have rejected Him—yet because of their positive response to what they know about God, or even due to their efforts to follow the dictates of their conscience, they are unknowingly included in the number of those who are recipi-

ents of Christ's salvation. The analogy is sometimes used of a person who receives a gift, but is unaware of who the ultimate giver of the gift may be.

A third viewpoint is known as Christian exclusivism. This is the viewpoint traditionally held by the majority of those who accept the Bible as their authority in spiritual matters. It is the view that though there are indeed truths and values in many other religions, there is only one saving truth, namely the gospel of Jesus Christ. This view is most naturally deduced from Jesus' well known statement: "I am the way, the

truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except by me" (John 14:6).

What should the Christian's attitude be toward non-Christian religions and their followers? This is a question becoming more difficult to ignore. To answer this question accurately and fairly we must look into the way non-Christian religions began.

The Origin of Non-Christian Religions

There are, of course, what we might call "naturalistic" explana-

tions of the origin of all religions. Those committed to a naturalistic worldview that denies the existence of God or of a supernatural realm see all religions as the product of man's imagination in some way. They might say that religion is the expression of man's fear of the overwhelming forces of nature, or of his desire to overcome death. While such naturalistic factors may indeed play a role in the development of some religious sentiments, they are hardly sufficient to account for the origin of all religious belief.

From the perspective of one committed to a supernaturalistic worldview, and particularly from the Christian viewpoint, there are several elements that may have contributed to the origin of non-Christian religion. First, where we find truth in non-Christian religion, we must attribute this to God. He is the source of all truth. We know that, in the beginning, the truth about God was universally known. And it is possible that remnants of this "original revelation" have survived in the memory of peoples around the world. It is also possible that some elements of truth were implanted in some cultures by ancient contact with God's people, Israel, with early Christians, or with portions of the Scriptures. We know, for example, that Islam owes a great deal to the influence of both Judaism and Christianity due to Mohammed's early contact with representatives of both religions.

Second, we must recognize that where there is falsehood or even a twisted perspective on the truth, this is the result of man's sinful nature in repressing the truth about God. Romans 1 states that man's nature is to suppress the truth about God that is evident to him, and to substitute for it what Paul calls "futile speculations" (Rom. 1:21).

■ Please see...Do All Roads Lead to God on p4

EVEN



ODD

By Rick Thomas

The word church can have two different meanings. When I refer to Church, I am referring to the Body of Christ - those who trust in Christ, obey the Word of God, and should have a 24/7 relationship with Him. When I refer to churches, I am speaking of institutions or denominations that claim to be Christian congregations. It is possible for one to be a member of or even a leader of such an institution or denomination and not be a follower of Christ.



The statistics from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook>, has recorded that 56 % of U.S. citizens are Protestant and 28% are Roman Catholic. That means that 84% of U.S. citizens claim to know about Christ or at least identify with an institution that claims to have a Christian congregation. Yet, if they were true “followers of Christ”, then it certainly would not take very long for neighboring citizens to meet one of these followers and hear the Gospel message. Yet, they have not heard. So the question is, have churches failed in preaching the Gospel or have individuals, which make up the Body of Christ, failed in living the Gospel?

There has recently been a popular series of TV commercials about fruit juice, I believe, which states, “What if 10% was good enough for everything in life?”. You then see a father pushing his son in a soapbox car down a hill. The car falls apart piece by piece and leaves the son on the ground holding the steering wheel in his hands. For another version of this commercial asking the same question, you see a father reading a bedtime story to his daughter. He reads, “Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess. The End” The daughter with a confused expression looks up at

him. What if 10% was good enough for churches? I believe that a commercial about churches at 10% would look very much like the reality we see today. We would see 10% of the Word of God being taught with a bunch of false doctrine that would manipulate people and make them feel good at the same time. Perhaps, we might see 10% of the Word of God being taught and twisted to agree with the current of societal whims of change- if it feels right or gives pleasure, then do it even when “it” is contrary to the Scripture. —God has changed His mind about detestable sins. —God’s love overrides His holiness. I speak as a fool and yet I have heard phrases with the same meaning as these come from sincere lips.

I recently spoke with a friend of mine about such issues and he sent me this e-mail.

“I wanted to take some lines to respond to something you mentioned in your last email to me. I believe there is an interesting undercurrent occurring in the Church in the US and other western nations right now, something that might just be the Spirit of God preparing a new kind of reform movement. A LOT of people our age are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the absurd, selfish, shortsighted behavior of their churches. We who are the Church should be the catalysts of change and hope. Instead, we have become the icons of orthodoxy- the Church is perceived as one more western institution that is helping to advance a consumer oriented, exploitative economic structure and a reactionary, jingoistic western nationalism. And, sadly, frustratingly, this perception is too often correct.

Amy and I have been making it a real point to learn how to support ministries that really make a difference in a genuinely Christ-like way.... Why doesn’t _____ ever get a revelation about how to reach out to corporate CEO’s, like the guys at N_____, and a revelation about how to usher in a move of God’s Spirit that will end the exploita-

tion of 14 year old Indonesian girls working in the N_____sweatshops? May Truth increase!!”

I give him a hearty amen. When you turn on the TV you see churches and leaders so wrapped up in themselves that there is no room for God. In other churches that have conformed to this world rather than the Word of God, there is no room for God. That rings a familiar tone doesn’t it? It is quite possible that the return of Jesus could be sooner than we think. When He was born in this world, there was no room for Him then either. We should be aware that satan has not changed his tactics. He is still using men and women to twist the Scripture and cause the weak to fall. **2 Peter 2:1** “BUT ALSO [in those days] there arose false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among yourselves, who will subtly and stealthily introduce heretical doctrines (destructive heresies), even denying and disowning the Master Who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. **2** And many will follow their immoral ways and lascivious doings; because of them the true Way will be maligned and defamed. **3** And in their covetousness (lust, greed) they will exploit you with false

(cunning) arguments. From of old the sentence [of condemnation] for them has not been idle; their destruction (eternal misery) has not been asleep.... **17** These are springs without water and mists driven along before a tempest, for whom is reserved forever the gloom of darkness. **18** For uttering loud boasts of folly, they beguile and lure with lustful desires of the flesh those who are barely escaping from them who are wrongdoers. **19** They promise them liberty, when they themselves are the slaves of depravity and defilement—for by whatever anyone is made inferior or worse or is overcome, to that [person or thing] he is enslaved.”

As individual Christians, which make up the Church, that should shake us and awake us to what is going on around us. As disciples of Christ, it is our responsibility to examine and compare with Scripture what is being taught in the churches- institutions or denominations in which we attend. **Acts 17:11** “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” **2 Corinthians 13:5** “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.

Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?” **Matthew 7:12** “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. **13** ‘Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. **14** But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.’ Is the road that you are on the broad common road that everyone else is on or have you truly given your life Christ? Last year, I gave the following survey to my youth group. I already knew where they were at spiritually. The survey was for them to evaluate themselves and hopefully it would reveal things to them that they had forgotten. Read it and examine yourself. One cannot be forced to have a desire to minister to others. This desire must and does come as an overflow of our relationship with God. I hope and pray that the Church of today will wake up and return to its first love 100%. **Isaiah 26:8** LORD, we love to obey your laws; our heart’s desire is to glorify your Name.

www.biblegateway.com

Survey

When was the first time that you remember God being a part of your life?

Have you asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior? If so, when?

When was the last time you were aware of the Holy Spirit’s help and comfort in your life?

How would you rate your relationship with Jesus? __Excellent __Good __Average __Needs Help

How often do you pray?

How would you rate your time spent in prayer? __Excellent __Good __Average __Needs Help

How often do you read the Bible?

How well do you understand what you read in the Bible? __Excellent __Good __Average __Needs Help

Do you have a desire to learn more and grow in your relationship with Jesus? Why?

What year was your relationship with Jesus the best?

What made that year the best?



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Growing Spiritually

Do you have a desire to know more about God, grow in your relationship with Christ, or learn more about what Christians believe? The Bible is the primary source to turn to. Here are some favorite internet links of mine that may help in your personal studies. I may not agree with the full content of the web-sites, but they had some awesome free resources that I believe would benefit everyone. I know that you will be amazed by the content of www.christiananswers.com which has more resources than I could ever list and they include a lot of videos on-line.

www.icr.org, www.ou.edu/css, and www.dr.dino.com include a lot of evolution and creation research.

www.biblegateway.com is a searchable Bible on-line with a concordance and many translations available.

www.crossministry.org is a ministry that reaches out to those struggling with temptations of homosexuality.

www.cbn.com is a Christian news web-site.

www.ag.org is the Assemblies of God web-site which includes articles on current issues in society and the church.

www.livingwaters.com includes Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort, ministry stuff, videos, and audio links.

www.higherpraise.com has early church writings for free on-line. You can get a free CD with church reformers writings at this ministry's website: www.FreeBibleSoftware.com or by calling 1-866-66-BIBLE. www.ou.edu/beaconou has all of the past editions of the BeaconOU on-line, information about future events, and web links to other campus ministries. May Truth Increase!!!

Info about the Witness Lee group known as "Christians on Campus" <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/n01.html>
<http://www.contendingforthefait.com/>

Letters to the Editor



Our web-site is looking awesome. You can find us at www.ou.edu/beaconou. All of the past issues of the BeaconOU are there plus some information about some future events we plan to have on campus. The letters to the Editor is my favorite section of every newspaper that I read. We love to hear from our readers. Remember, all letters to the Editor may be reprinted in a latter editon of the BeaconOU unless specific request is made by the sender not to publish their letter. You may notice in this issue we have started a section called "God's infallible Word" If you think that there are contradictions in the Bible or have questions about it, send them to us.

Let your opinion be heard. We are currently looking for people to help with funding, distribution, and advertising. Send your letters to beaconou@ou.edu Rick Thomas, Editor.

Dear Editor,

I was very surprised that you were dabbling in politics. I think you definitely could've done better on finding a Republican writer. The Democrat writer's argument was interesting. In short, she says that she would rather be a part of a political party that murders unborn children than one which taxes grown adults. We are talking about money or lives. Some priorities are definitely out of line. She states taxes twice for her support of being a christian, "The Democrat Party platform represents my positions as a Christian on issues like taxes, proper handling of the economy, environmentalism, taxes, and social issues like healthcare and equality. Mark 12:41-44 is not within the context of giving taxes to the government. The widow was giving to God. We don't live in a Theocracy. I don't know why she thought that scripture applied to government tax. The progressive tax code is a great idea though and I am in support of it.

The next scripture that she chose could actually be used against the Democrats in their stance against having anything about God, even His people involved in government. Isaiah 3:14-15, "[Y]our houses are full of what you have taken from the poor. You have no right to crush my people and take advantage of the poor." Just visit the ACLU's web-site and you will see exactly what I am talking about. I agree with her on environmental issues and we should be searching for alternative energy sources.

An increasing minimum wage makes no sense. The lower income class can never rise or be rewarded for being a good worker with an increasing minimum wage. For example, Joe got a job in 1990 when the minimum wage was \$3.35 an hour. After working for a year, he was rewarded with a 50 cent raise. Minnum wage is raised to \$4.00 an hour and now Joe again is getting paid the same as anyone entering the workforce. Since employers are governmentally required to raise the minimum wage, they make up for the lose

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Beacon OU is an official student organization on the campus of OU. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the University of Oklahoma or its student body. Our main purpose is to share the genuine love of God to the campus while providing news from a Christian perspective. Our personal relationship with Jesus compels us to share this treasure and the "Truth" with the world. Our source of funding is God, "Jehovah Jireh". His Holy Spirit moves on His people's hearts to give financially in order to support printing. If you would like to sponsor an issue of the BeaconOU or a part of an issue, send an e-mail to beaconou@ou.edu with your intentions. If you have an upcoming event that you think we might be interested in, send us some details. If you have any questions, suggestions, letters to the editor, or opinions about any of the articles, you can contact us at beaconou@ou.edu. Visit our web-site at www.ou.edu/beaconou. It includes information about our organization, upcoming plans to show spiritually educational films, and all of the past issues online. Praise God!! We have the right to print or not to print any article submitted. President: Rick Thomas. Vice-President: Chase Parsons. Secretary: Ashley Gibson. Treasurer: Ketiesha Brown. All articles and content Copyright 2003 held by individual authors or otherwise the BeaconOU.



Third, we cannot deny the influence of Satan and his demons in inspiring “counterfeit” religious expressions and experiences. For example, Psalm 106:36-37 states that those who serve idols offer sacrifices to demons. The apostle Paul says the same thing in 1 Corinthians 10:20. And in his first letter to Timothy he attributed false religious teachings to “deceitful spirits” (1 Tim. 4:1). In his second letter to the Corinthians, he stated that Satan “disguises himself as an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14) and that he disguises many of his agents as “servants of righteousness” (2 Cor. 11:15). Satan often promotes what is evil. But he can just as easily promote a high level of morality or religion so long as it discourages people from recognizing their need for the unmerited grace of God, expressed through the death of Jesus Christ.

In summary, non-Christian religions can (1) represent man’s response to the truth about God that he knows. It can also (2) represent man’s attempt to suppress the truth and substitute his own speculations. Finally, it can (3) represent the deception of Satan, who replaces the truth with a lie.

Are There Many Ways to God?

Now we must turn our attention to a related issue concerning non-Christian religions, the idea or attitude called religious pluralism. Religious pluralism suggests that there are only superficial differences among the religions and that these differences are greatly overshadowed by their similarities. Thus, to this school of thought all religions share a fundamental unity that renders them equally valid as approaches to God.

Of course, the most immediate difficulty posed by religious pluralism for the Christian is that it compels him to deny any claims to the uniqueness of Christ or of Christianity.

The claims of the New Testament that Jesus Christ is the unique Son of God and Savior of the world must be recast as mere exaggerations of the early Christians. It is impossible to embrace religious plural-

ism and hold to the authority of the New Testament when it speaks of the uniqueness of Christ and of the salvation He has provided.

Beyond this, however, religious pluralism significantly underestimates the differences between the teachings of the various religions. This can be seen, for example, in the differences between Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, with regard to their teaching concerning salvation. In classical Buddhism, the problem facing humanity is the suffering caused by desire. Since whatever man desires is impermanent, and ultimately leads to frustration and sorrow, the way to

peace of mind and ultimate “salvation” is through the elimination of all desire—even the desire to live! In classical Hinduism, the problem facing humanity is our being trapped in this illusory, material world over the course of many lifetimes primarily due to our ignorance of our true identity as fundamentally divine beings!

The solution to our dilemma is our recognition of our true divine nature. In Islam, man’s problem is his failure to live by the law of God which has been revealed through His prophets. The solution is to commit ourselves to obeying God’s laws, in hope that our good deeds will outweigh the bad. In Christianity, the problem is similar—our rebellion against the will of God. But the solution is much different. It is through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins, provided by God’s unmerited grace. From these examples alone, it is evident that though there may be superficial similarities among the

world’s religions the differences are fundamental in nature!

Not surprisingly, most pluralists are unfazed by these differences in belief. They emphasize that in spite of these differences, if the various religions foster a common “religious experience” or result in the moral and ethical improvement of man, this is enough to show that they are valid ways to God. The problem is that with regard to “religious experience.” Even here there are significant differences. And with regard to the moral and ethical effect of the various religions, this is something impossible for us to measure. For, as Jesus so strongly emphasized,



morality is as much a matter of the heart as it is of action. And this is something only God can know!

We must conclude, then, that due to its denial of the uniqueness of Christ, and to its failure to take seriously the vast differences among the world’s religions, religious pluralism does not represent a valid point of view for the Christian.

Are the Followers of Other Religions Recipients of Christ’s Salvation?

A more subtle and attractive theory of reaching out to non-Christians is the concept called Christian inclusivism. Inclusivists

hold that, though Christ is the unique Savior, nonetheless there are many people included in His salvation who are ignorant of this fact—even followers of other religions.

Inclusivists generally hold that Christ’s salvation is available to those who positively respond to the truth they have—whether it be through creation, conscience, another religion, or some other means. Such individuals are sometimes termed anonymous Christians.

There is no question that this is a very attractive approach to the problem of world religions. Inclusivism seeks to widen the

extent of God’s grace while still preserving a commitment to the uniqueness of Christ. It must be acknowledged also, that God could have arranged things in this way if He had so chosen. The question is not, however, whether inclusivism is an attractive position, or a logically possible one, but whether the evidence is convincing that it is true. And

for the Christian, this means the evidence of Scripture.

Inclusivists generally recognize this and seek to find support for their view in Scripture. We will briefly look at one biblical example that is often used to support the idea of inclusivism—the case of Cornelius the centurion recorded in Acts 10.

In this chapter Cornelius is referred to as “a devout man, . . . who feared God,” even before he heard the gospel. This is often pointed to as evidence that he was an anonymous Christian before believing in Christ. It

must be remembered, however, that in the next chapter (specifically in Acts 11:14), it is clearly stated that though Cornelius was favorably disposed to God he did not receive salvation until he heard and believed in the gospel.

Other examples could be discussed. But in each case we would see that a good deal must be read into (or out of) the text to arrive at the conclusion that salvation can come to those who do not know Christ.

Furthermore, there are clear statements that it is necessary to hear and believe in the gospel to receive salvation. Perhaps the clearest is Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of (or about) Christ.” Hebrews 9:27 also strongly suggests that this faith in Christ must be expressed before we die: “It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

What then of people, like Cornelius, who do respond to the truth they know about God, but do not yet know of Christ? Is there no hope for them? Actually, the case of Cornelius provides a good illustration of what seems to be the biblical solution to this problem. Because he had responded to what he knew about God, God saw that he eventually received the gospel—in his case through Peter. But it was only then that he experienced Christ’s salvation and the forgiveness of sins. This principle was also well summarized in Jesus’ statement: “To him who has, shall more be given” (Mark 4:25).

Based on our confidence in the faithfulness of God, we can be assured that the gospel will come to all those whom God knows would be prepared, like Cornelius, to receive it. And He has commissioned us to carry the message to them!

■ Please see...Do All Roads Lead to God on p7

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by raising prices of products. In the end Joe has not only lost his raise for good work, he now has to pay more for goods. The job market would be more competitive, if the minimum wage remained the same. More people would want to get an education or acquire a job skill.

The argument about keeping abortion legal is absurd. Two wrongs don't make a right. Abortion is murder and selfishness on the part of one having it done. She states, "Many thousands of women died each year in "back alley" abortions performed illegally in the United States or by ill-equipped or untrained doctors in Mexico." Was it over 50 million lives lost? No. There should be more counseling about the risk of having pre-marital sex. If you sleep around like a lot of the girls I know, you are probably going to get pregnant. Then she states, "Another reason to be wary of outlawing abortion is the danger of giving such a decision over to the government. If somehow the Supreme Court found a way to claim that the government has a compelling interest in family planning, that expanded governmental role could very easily go in a different direction in the future. If the country in 300 years is grossly overpopulated, the courts could look back on the precedent of

deciding family planning decisions in the past and make abortion mandatory after a couple has their first child." Abortion was illegal. It is impossible for a Christian to separate themselves from Christianity. Other religious people may be able to do this, but it is not right. I do not view Democrats or Republicans as evil. They both support certain things that I don't agree with. I would rather be neither. Even though I do not agree completely with the Republicans, I choose that party, because it does represent a stand in favor of things that represent my Christian views. If I voted neither party, the party that was less in favor of my Christian views could win. I vote not for the lesser evil, but the most good.

Sincerely,
Christian.

Editor's response,
Thank you for taking the time to write. I personally feel that it is important for Christians to take the time to educate themselves in all matters of life, including politics. I did not actually choose the individual writers. I contacted the College Republicans and the Young Democrats and gave them the topic for the articles. They were both very cooperative. Christians should vote.

He Was Here

*God walked the earth, yes He was here
He was with us some time ago
Our Father, the Son, the Man so dear
Seeds of goodness He would sow*

*He came with a purpose and before He was done
Our bond of sin He would sever
To settle a score with the evil one
So his children would be cleansed forever*

*He did this for you and He did it for me
A debt we can never repay
But the Creator's love is there for free
From the beginning and day after day*

*God walked the earth, yes He was here
Amazing grace we were shown
And in knowing Christ Jesus there is nothing to fear
For we know we are never alone*

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When I Became a Christian.

By Rick Thomas

When I became a Christian, it was at a street outreach. I didn't know much of the Bible or about God. They had a rock-n-roll band that played worship music. The pastor had a ponytail and it was a come as you are, very casual, T-shirts type service. I sat there as the pastor started speaking about his testimony. I really don't think that I paid much attention at that time. He was lifting up Jesus though, and Jesus said, "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." I remember sitting there and I started to cry. I didn't know why. Then I started shaking and my heart was racing. I felt tingling. I thought that I was dying though. I had been to the doctor previously before this, because I

had been having blackouts and nosebleeds. I was scared that I had free-based too many chemicals in the past or maybe I had had sex with the wrong girl and now I had some kind of disease. I don't know what it was, really. I know that over ten years later I am still clean and healthy and pure as the night I met Jesus and He cleansed me. I tried to leave the service, once my body started to tremble. I thought, "I have to get out of here". I didn't know why though. I tried to stand and my legs buckled. The next time I went to stand, I noticed that the pastor and everyone had their heads bowed praying. He had given an altar call. I was standing there not able to move. The associate pastor was a

former member of the Power Team. They are big muscle guys who rip phone books in two and blow up hot water bottles. I know it sounds silly, but people come to see them and their feats of strength as they preach the Word of God. Anyway, he puts his arm around me standing there. I thought he was going to escort me out. He looked like a bouncer with big muscles in a tight Black T-shirt. He walked me to a back office while asking me if I had accepted Jesus as my savior. That was the first time I had thought that what was happening with me could be God. I thought that He must be mad at me and He is trying to kill me. It occurred to me though, that He is God, if He wanted me dead, He

wouldn't have to try. Just zap me. I listened to the associate pastor tell me about Jesus and how God loves me. I was still shaking and scared, so I asked him what was going on. He said, "Man, the Holy Spirit is all over you". I looked at the associate pastor and he had a glow that I will never forget. I thought to myself, get him off of me. I was really freaked out. He asked me again if I had accepted Jesus. I said I think so. He said, "Do you want to know for sure?" I said, "yes". We prayed and when we said, "In the name of Jesus, amen", I totally stopped shaking. This was all new to me. I looked at him and said, "When we said amen, I totally stopped shaking". He said "yeah, isn't it cool." I had asked Jesus to be my Savior and

Lord. That night God became real to me. My eyes were opened. I would never see things as I had once seen them. I had a hunger to know who God was, so I would study the New Testament that he had given me as much as I could. The important thing is our personal relationship with Jesus. How can we know Him without knowing His Word? We are not still on this earth just to be with God, but to bring others to him. Stay focused on your Love for Him and His Word and you won't go wrong. **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Upcoming Events For Campus Ministries

Jacob's Ladder Bible Study

"The Gospel according to Moses."

A Messianic Bible Study in the Book of Genesis. Jacob's Ladder Bible Study meets on Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:30. at 1311 Jenkins Ave. on the corner of Lindsey and Jenkins under Padthai.

CRU Tuesday's

Nights at 9:00pm at Common Ground (Main St. & University) Contact: Shawn McGrath at 473-1387. www.oucrucru.com shawn.mcgrath@uscru.org.

LifeStream

Thursdays 9p.m. at Journey Church the old Buy for Less building on 12th and Alameda St. Brad Baker- College Pastor Brad@journeyonline.tv 217-8700

R.U.F. Reformed University Fellowship

Wednesday Nights, 9:15 Dale Hall Tower Lounge, 9th floor Teaching on Song of Solomon: Dating, Sex and Marriage this semester. Doug www.ouruf.org

Wesley Foundation:

Vespers - Tuesday 8:00 p.m. Frosh Fellowship Sundays 6:30 pm www.wesleyou.org wesley@wesleyou.org Rev. Brad Humphrey 321-6266

OU Christian Faculty and Staff

will co-host a speaker's series throughout the school year that is open to the **public**. **LUNCH- For Faculty and Staff only, every other Monday, 12:00 pm**, Alma Wilson Rm., OMU and prayer in the weeks between the discussion meetings. Contact for more information, kstephenson@ou.edu.

Intelligent Design Evolution Awareness I.D.E.A.

Oct 1st Wednesday 7PM The Cambrian Explosion By Dr. Michael Keas ideclub@ou.edu www.ou.edu/css

Sooners For Christ

Thursday at 7PM Worship Service 1001 Elm Ave. (405) 321-4474 www.soonersforchrist.org

Chi Alpha XA

Tuesday night, XAlive 8:00-9:30P.M. at Rome XII above Papa John's in Stubbeman Village Mall. Come check out our new office on the third floor of the Union/ Conoco Leadership Wing Praise God! He has increased our meeting space. We now have the other side of Rome XII and some major renovation has taken place. Come check it out! Greg & Susan Tiffany OU XA Campus Pastors office - OMU / Conoco Leadership Wing Outreach Center - Rome XII / Stubbeman Village Mall phone: (405) 325-1377 e-mail: OUXA@aol.com web: www.ou.edu/student/xa

International Student Fellowship- ISF

Meets on Monday nights at 7:30 PM at Rome XII / Stubbeman Village Mall call Wayne, 413-3713 <http://www.ou.edu/student/isf>

Baptist Student Union

Thursday night Vespers 7PM at 435 W. Boyd (405) 321-2810 mailbox@oubsu.org www.oubsu.org

EVEN



ODD

The Ultimate Love

By S.M.W

Growing up, I had always been intimidated by the whole 'God thing'. An all-powerful being that created everything, that created me. If He wanted He could strike me dead at any moment. What if I made Him mad? What if I did something He didn't like? He could remove me from the earth in a heartbeat. At times He sure showed His power and His anger in the Bible. He is the Creator, the Disciplinarian, and the Master. He must be this immense being who could squash me like an ant. Watch what you say, watch what you do, or He'll get you... Sound pretty silly? Not really, a lot of people in the world really envision God in this way. But nothing could be further from the truth.

If you have children, do you love them? How much do you love them? Imagine that love times 6.3 billion. Our God is love, (1 John 4:16). He created us out of love. He continued to love us even though we turned from Him, broke his laws and ignored Him. He continued to pursue us, as you would pursue your child who ran away from home, even if your child told you he hated you.

Furthermore, He continues to pursue us today.

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. (Deuteronomy 7:9)

God cannot stand to look upon our sinful nature. But He loves us so much that He sent His only Son to be nailed to a tree and die for us. Jesus' blood covers those in the human race, who believe in Him and confess Him as Lord. God does not see our sinful nature anymore because we have been cleansed. As hard as this has always been for me to understand, it makes perfect sense if you think of it in terms of love. The ultimate Love is the love of the Father for His children.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (Psalm 118:29)

God's Infallible Word?

If you feel that there are contradictions in the Bible, send them to us at beaconou@ou.edu and we will address them. www.ou.edu/beaconou

In our last edition, we made this offer to anyone truly interested. If you have something that you would like to ask us about the Bible, we will keep your name anonymous. True Christians claim the Word of God to be infallible. There are many people who have been stumped by accusations of contradictions being in the Bible. **2 Peter 3:15**

“And consider that the long-suffering of our Lord [His slowness in avenging wrongs and judging the world] is salvation (that which is conducive to the soul’s safety), even as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the spiritual insight given him, **16** Speaking of this as he does in all of his letters. There are some

things in those [epistles of Paul] that are difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist and misconstrue to their own utter destruction, just as [they distort and misinterpret] the rest of the Scriptures. **17** Let me warn you therefore, beloved, that knowing these things beforehand, you should be on your guard, lest you be carried

away by the error of lawless and wicked [persons and] fall from your own [present] firm condition [your own steadfastness of mind].” How will you know if what is being spoken about the Scripture is true or not? It is so important to study the Word of God for yourself. If all Christians and especially teachers would do what Paul commended Timothy

to do, the world would be a better place. **2 Timothy 2:15** “Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth”. www.biblegateway.com

Continued from pg. 4 Do All Roads Lead to God?

What Should Our Attitude Be Toward Other Religions?

In the course of this short discussion we have examined the attitude of religious pluralism, as well as that of Christian inclusivism. The former holds that all religions are equally valid. The latter holds that Christ is the unique savior, but that His salvation can extend to followers of other religions. In both cases, we concluded that the evidence in support of these views is inadequate.

The only remaining option is the attitude of Christian exclusivism—the view that biblical Christianity is true, and that other religious systems are false. This is more than implied in numerous biblical statements, such as in Acts 4:12: “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

This is not to say, however, that there are no truths at all in non-Christian religions. There are certainly moral and ethical truths, for instance, in Buddhism. In Buddha’s Eightfold Path, he appealed to his followers to pursue honesty, charity, and service, and to abstain from murder and lust. We should certainly affirm these ethical truths.

Likewise, there are theological truths in other religions—truths about God that we could equally

affirm. These may be more scarce in religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism. But Orthodox Judaism and Islam certainly share our belief in a personal Creator—God, though Christianity is unique in the monotheistic tradition with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity. There are even truths about Jesus that we share in common with Muslims—that He was a prophet of God, and the Messiah, and that He worked many miracles, though they deny that He was the Son of God, or that He died for the sins of the world.



We can, and should affirm these moral and theological truths that we share in common with followers of other religions. We must acknowledge, however, that in no other religion is any saving truth to be found. And as mentioned earlier, there is no other religion that presents the human dilemma, or solution to that dilemma, in quite the same way as does the Christian faith. In Chris-

tianity, the problem is not ignorance of our divine nature—as in Hinduism—nor simply our desire—as in Buddhism. The problem is our alienation from God and His blessing due to our failure to live according to His will—what the Bible calls sin. And the solution is neither in self-discipline, nor in revised thinking, nor even in moral effort. The solution lies in the grace of God, expressed in His provision of His Son, Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice for our sin. Salvation is not something we achieve; it is something we receive.

It is clear, then, that though there are superficial similarities among the world’s religions, there are fundamental differences. And the most important difference is the person and work of Christ. What should our attitude be toward followers of other religions? It is important for us to distinguish our attitude toward non-Christian religions from our attitude toward followers of those religions. Though we are to reject the religion, we are not to reject them by mistakenly perceiving them to be “the enemy.” The biblical injunction is to love our neighbors as much as we love ourselves no matter what their religion. Rather than viewing them as “the enemy,” we should see them as “the victims” of the enemy who are in need of the same grace that has freed us from

spiritual slavery—in need of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



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Rick Rood is the former director of publications at Probe Ministries, and now serves as a hospital chaplain. He is a graduate of Seattle Pacific University (B.A., History) and Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M.). He has pursued Ph.D. studies in theology at D.T.S. and has served as pastor, been a seminary instructor, and has worked for a number of years in ministry to international students. Rick and his wife Polly are the parents of two young adults.

What is Probe?

Probe Ministries is a non-profit ministry whose mission is to assist the church in renewing the minds of believers with a Christian worldview and to equip the church to engage the world for Christ. Probe fulfills this mission through our *Mind Games* conferences for youth and adults, our 3 1/2 minute daily radio program, our extensive Web site at www.probe.org, and the ProbeCenter at the University of Texas at Austin.

Further information about Probe’s materials and ministry may be obtained by contacting us at:

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Chuck Norris’

Code of Ethics

- *I will develop myself to the maximum of my potential in all ways.
- *I will forget the mistakes of the past and press on to greater achievements.
- *I will always be in a positive frame of mind and convey this feeling to every person I meet.
- *I will continually work at developing love, happiness, and loyalty in my family and acknowledge that no other success can compensate for failure in the home.
- *I will look for the good in all people and make them feel worthwhile.
- *If I have nothing good to say about a person, I will say nothing.
- *I will give so much time to the improvement of myself that I will have no time to criticize others.
- *I will be as enthusiastic about the success of others as I am about my own.
- *I will maintain an attitude of open-mindedness toward another person’s viewpoint while still holding fast to what I know to be true and honest.
- *I will maintain respect for those in authority and demonstrate this respect at all times.
- *I will always remain loyal to my country and obey the law of the land.
- *I will remain highly goal-oriented throughout my life because that positive attitude helps myself, my family, and my country.

EVEN



ODD

Page 8 **Do you want to see more of the BeaconOU on campus?**

Send money to help support printing of the newspaper. All of the staff of the BeaconOU are volunteers. We are currently raising support in order to print our third issue of the semester, continue, and extend activities of our organization to include college showings of spiritually educating films, such as, **America's Godly Heritage, A Nation Adrift, Icons of Evolution , Unlocking the Mystery of Life , Countdown to Eternity, The Messiah: Prophecy Fulfilled, The Indestructible Book, and The Hope . On our web-site, you can click on the film titles to read about them or watch trailers of the film, www.ou.edu/beaconou . We are seeking faithful financial contributors that will commit to give \$10 per edition. There are eight editions printed per year. www.ou.edu/beaconou**

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October 6th
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Cloud Ten
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You can also buy a video copy of the movie for \$10 at www.ou.edu/beaconou .