

What About Other Religions?

Intro: According to the World Christian Encyclopedia, there are 19 major world religions. According to Adherents.com there are over 4,200 religions. There are 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, 900 million Hindus, and 360 million Buddhists. Many, if not most, of these adherents are committed and sincere in the practice of their faith. And though virtually all of these other religions count evangelism and conversion to their faith as divine commandments, in Western Christianity one of the most prominent issues is "What about all those other religions?" which is to say, "Shouldn't we leave well enough alone?"¹ This week we're going to look at this difficult problem to see what the Bible has to say about it, as well as to see how the Bible actually deals with people from other religions. When you've finished, you'll be able to articulate your own beliefs about what we need to do about the "other religions" of the world.

What the Bible Teaches: Break into Groups of Four, read the following Bible verses, and discuss the questions. You may want to jot down notes and thoughts on the back of this page.

What does the Bible say about the purpose of Christianity?

Luke 19:10; Matthew 28:19-20; John 17:18-23

What does the Bible say about other religions?

Exodus 34:14; Acts 4:8-12; Isaiah 42:5-8

How does the Bible demonstrate we should treat those of other religions?

Leviticus 19:33-34; 1 Corinthians 10:32-33; Acts 17:22-27

What I Believe: Take ten minutes for silent reflection and thought. Ask yourself what you believe about other religions. Use the back of this page to formulate a response to the question:

“What about other religions?”

Write your final response here: _____

Articulations: Pair up with one other person and share your response with one another. Take five minutes each. Try to *not* look at your written statement; instead, try to tell your beliefs from your heart. This will prepare you to share whenever you are asked about what you believe.

Therefore: Jesus said His followers should Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). One of the first steps in making disciples is being ready and able to share the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15), in other words, knowing what we believe, why, and then being able to share it. Sharing your faith is important. This week, find someone—it can be *anyone*—and articulate your belief about this issue. If you have an unchurched/unreached friend whom you can share with, all the better (you can always say you have a homework assignment from church and you'd like to share it with them). Be ready to talk about your experience next week over the meal at your House Church.

¹ The real question might ought to be, do we want to sit idly by while the Muslims continue to convert some 68,000 people every day globally to their faith, and continues to increase in the US while Christianity decreases by 1 million per year in the US?