

LESSON # 26
HARD QUESTIONS SERIES
“DO ALL RELIGIONS LEAD TO GOD?”

Many people would say **Yes** but the Bible says **“No.”**

This is a difficult question and one that obviously bring up a lot of **discussion** and **disagreement**.

Two of the Bible verses that deal directly with are:

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Acts 4:12

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

These passages are pretty clear and pretty direct. Jesus says He is the only way, and Acts says there is no other name by which we must be saved.

We’ll come back to these scriptures, but let’s examine the question and try and understand what people are saying about the issue and ask some big questions.

(I) IT SEEMS REASONABLE BUT IT’S NOT LOGICAL

A) If God is a loving God and loves all people wouldn’t it make sense that all religions that claim to know God would make to God, including participating in an afterlife with Him forever?

B) There have make many explanations and analogies to explain how this works. Here’s one of the more popular:

Have a student read this to everyone.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

This is answer comes a Sikh (Sikhs are a religion from India) parable from told a number of different ways, but goes something like this. Somebody from a balcony sees a group of blind men trying to understand and elephant. One grabs the tail and says it’s “like a rope.” One feels the side and concludes the elephant is “like a wall.” One feels the legs and concludes “it’s like a tree.” One feels the trunk and says, “it’s like snake.”

The idea here is that all humans are living in relative darkness, groping around, trying to figure out life and understand God. The conclusion is that “all religions bring a piece of understanding to the table.”

The parable at first seems to make sense, but breaks down in the end.

- (a) It never tells us the truth about what an elephant is.
- (b) An elephant is not, part tree, part snake, part wall.
- (c) The parable fails to ever tell us who God is, what He is like or how He would be worshipped.

WHAT OTHER LESSONS CAN WE DERIVE FROM THIS ILLUSTRATION?

(II) THERE ARE SOME RELIGIONS THAT HAVE MANY GODS

A) In Hinduism some have estimated there are as many as 330 million gods. Other say there are only 33 in Hinduism, others say that one god has given rise to the other gods.

We call this polytheism. Polytheism means many gods. They can't all be correct at the same time.

B) There are some religious movements that are known as PANTHEISM. This belief is that everything that exists is all part of the same existence, which itself becomes "god." You and I are part of this, as is the material universe. Everything is God.

Both polytheism and pantheism cannot be correct at the same time. One of them is wrong. Or both.

C) If there is more than one "god" we have a problem. Namely, "Which one of them created the universe?"

Since there are various accounts of creation and creators, they cannot all be right at the same time. It is impossible and impractical that two gods created the universe at the same time or at different times.

D) As important as it is to answer "Who created the universe" is the question, "How do I connect with the One who created the universe?"

Jesus claims to be both the Creator and the One that connects us to God.

Have a student read Colossians 1:6

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

Have another student read John 1:3

“Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”

(III) DO ALL RELIGIONS SHARE THE SAME VALUES AND VIEW OF GOD?

A) Surprisingly the answer is “No.” While to most people it seems all ‘religions’ promote peace, harmony, love and equality, it’s not true that all religions embrace the same values or attitudes towards life and lifestyles.

War, poverty, human rights, women’s rights are seen by various religions are not the same. Varna in Hinduism regulates people into certain ‘castes.’ How and to whom people are born determines these castes, which can rather distressing and paralyzing if you are born into a royal or “untouchable” caste. Since these castes, which often determine your lifelong work and economic status are determined by God, you cannot change them or move to another.

B) How women are viewed in different religions can be quite different. Islam in Saudi Arabia does not allow women to drive cars.

(IV) CONCLUSIONS AND DIGGER DEEPER

While it might be comforting to think that it does not matter which God you serve and worship, it simply isn’t logical. Logic means, “The proper or reasonable way of thinking about something.”

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES TOGETHER

1 Timothy 2:5-6 For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time.

1 John 2:23 Anyone who denies the Son doesn’t have the Father, either. But anyone who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

1 John 5:10-12 All who believe in the Son of God know in their hearts that this testimony is true. Those who don’t believe this are actually calling God a liar because they don’t believe what God has testified about his Son. And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God’s Son does not have life.

1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life.

Matthew 11:27 “My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

Acts 4:12 There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved (JESUS).”

John 14:6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.

Hebrews 5:8-9 Even though Jesus was God’s Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.

John 1:11-12 He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

