

Conversations for Common Questions and Doubts: **How Can You Claim that Christianity is The One True Religion?**

Transcript of Pope Francis, September 13th, 2024, at an Interfaith Event for Youth in Singapore:

One of the things that has impressed me most about the young people here is your capacity for interfaith dialogue. This is very important because if you start arguing, “My religion is more important than yours...,” or “Mine is the true one, yours is not true...,” where does this lead? Somebody answer.

[A young person answers, “Destruction”.]

That is correct. All religions are paths to God. I will use an analogy, they are like different languages that express the divine. But God is for everyone, and therefore, we are all God’s children. “But my God is more important than yours!”. Is this true? There is only one God, and religions are like languages, paths to reach God. Some Sikh, some Muslim, some Hindu, some Christian.

What are Apologetics?

1st Peter 3:15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a *defense* to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Apologetics: knowing **what** we believe and **why** we believe it, and being able to **communicate that to others effectively**

- Provides rational warrant for Christianity’s truth claim.

Accomplishes two key purposes:

1. Helpful in a post-Christian world to shape the narrative
2. Strengthens the church against the scoffers

Navigating a Landscape of Subjectivism and Religious Pluralism

Subjectivism: the idea that truth is not objective (universal and unchanging), but that it is subject to relative perspective (IE: “my truth,” “if that works for you,” etc.)

Religious pluralism: a cultural value that fosters and even encourages a diversity of views rather than a singular belief.

- What are the problems with a cultural worldview that upholds subjectivism and religious pluralism?
- What are the logical inconsistencies with both subjectivism and religious pluralism?

Why Can’t All Religions Be Equally Valid?

- The illustration of the blind men describing the elephant

*Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.*

John 14:6



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How Can You Claim that Christianity is The One True Religion?
Everyone Belongs to A Community That Reinforces the Plausibility of
Some Beliefs and Discourages Others

- None of us were born into or live presently in a neutral environment; we are all locked in our historical and cultural locations.
 - We need to acknowledge that this is true of Christians, scoffers, and all.
 - However, we as Christians have placed our trust in something beyond our own current historical and cultural locations – indeed, that transcends it!

Subjectivism and Pluralism are Nothing New

- The Greco-Roman world in the 1st century, just like our modern Western world, was also a pluralistic society.
 - None of the 1st-century Christians were culturally predisposed to believe that Jesus was the only way, the only truth, and the only life.
- The claims of the first disciples that Jesus is the only way were considered to be just as *dangerous* and as *narrow* and as *outrageous*, and as *offensive* then as it is now
 - But, the 1st-century Christians didn't teach this because they just liked to be right or because they were arrogant.
 - They believed it, and were willing to die for it because they were convinced it was *true*.

All religions are not equal; none of them have the audacity to claim what Christianity claims

“I am grateful for Shinto, for Buddhism, and for Confucianism. I owe much to these faiths . . . Yet these three faiths utterly failed to minister to my heart’s deepest needs. I was a pilgrim journeying upon a long road that had no turning. I was weary. I was footsore. I wandered through a dark and dismal world where tragedies were thick . . . Buddhism teaches great compassion . . . but since the beginning of time, who has declared, “this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many unto the remission of sins’?”

- Tayahiko Kagawa, 1888 – 1960, Japanese Evangelist

All religions are not equal; none of them seek to see human flourishing in their communities like Christians do

- Our exclusive claims don’t lead to human oppression, marginalization, or violence.
 - But actually, the exact opposite
 - Christians are good for the world!

Jesus Claims to Be Universal. He Claims to Be Exclusive. He Claims to Be True.

- Christianity dares to proclaim that there is *only one gospel*.
 - And in *the gospel*, **Jesus is not only great, but he is the only.**
 - **He has no peers, no rivals, and no successors.**
- From the very beginning, this gospel never has, and it never will play nicely with others.
 - It is *unapologetic* and *unyielding* and *unchanging*
- But here’s the greater reality:
 - It also has been and always will be *true*.

