



“We all worship the same God, don’t we?”

A quick review of last month’s answer in PART 1:

“I’d say it’s correct to say we are all SEEKING the same God. But while it is true that we are all seeking the same God, but we really can’t say that we’ve all found the same God. If two groups define “God” using TOTALLY CONTRADICTORY TERMS then it can’t be the same God.” It’s kind of like all the students in a 2nd-Grade classroom can be described as all “seeking” the answer to a math problem, like $2+2= \underline{\quad}$. But if some students “find” 3, and others 4 and still others 5 as the answer, it’s pretty obvious they can’t be said to have found the same solution.

The conversation needs to eventually come around to the fact that there is only one right answer to our search for God (just like there’s only one right answer to the “ $2+2= \underline{\quad}$ ” problem). And Jesus - as He has revealed Himself in the Holy Scriptures - is that only right answer. He is the only thing that truly fills our that empty spot only God can fill.

Of course, we need to be ready for the “Isn’t that kind of arrogant to say, you Christians have it right and everyone else has it wrong?!”

A couple points are necessary:

First, we need to admit that we can’t take any credit for coming to faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit - the very spirit of God - gets all the credit for that. There’s no room for a holier-than-thou, “I’m smarter than you” attitude.

Second, I would say something like this, “Would you think it arrogant to say that “4” is the right answer to the equation “ $2+2= \underline{\quad}$ ”? Of course not, because that IS the right answer. It’s the only one that works.” At this point we need to be prepared to tell why Christianity “works.”

My answer goes something like this:

The thing that sets Christianity apart - “makes it work,” if you will - is that it deals honestly with sin.

Sin is kind of like a stick of dynamite that has landed at your feet. You can’t get rid of it by pretending it’s not there. It will still blow up. You can’t get rid of it by piling all sorts of “good stuff” on top of it. It will still blow up. You can’t get escape the devastation it brings by claiming that it won’t hurt you. The only way to be saved from the blast is to pick it up and throw it as far as you can. The only problem is that you can’t likely toss it far enough. Some supernatural power would be needed to do that.

We can pretend there’s not such thing as sin, or try to pile all sorts of good deeds on top of it, or pretend that it really doesn’t hurt us. But the only solution is to have it removed far from us. We can’t remove it on our own. God has to do that. He did that on a Friday we call “Good” when His Son took all our sin upon Himself.

Finally, this key point needs to be made:

Every other belief system teaches that your access to an afterlife is based on what you did for God - or for other people. Christianity teaches that your access to the afterlife is based on what God did for YOU.

I will say something like this:

“If I’m coming down to my last breath and I have these two choices to get me from this life to an eternal life:

1) To trust in what I did for God.

or

2) To trust in what God did for me.

That’s the biggest “no-brainer” in the history of mankind... I know me! I’m sure not going to be trusting in what I did - horribly imperfectly - for God. I have got to trust in what God did - perfectly - or me when He paid for my sin on the cross and rose from the dead as proof that His sacrifice was accepted as FULL payment and that Jesus truly is who He claimed to be - the ONLY way to God the Father.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net