

## A Dialogue With A Christian

**An example of thinking from an Orthodox Christian point of view.**

**Careful study of the Christian Orthodox responses is warranted.**

- 1. Is this the only way to interpret the Bible?**
- 2. Does this interpretation truly serve the cause of Jesus?**
- 3. If so, how does this thinking reconcile itself with what is taught in “The Lord’s Prayer” where Jesus teaches us to pray to,” Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name,” -not to Jesus but to God?**
- 4. Is this thinking symptomatic of a world condition of mistrust, conflict, terrorism, intolerance and inquisition; where Moslems, Christians, Hindus, sects within sects, etc. are professing the only path to true salvation; where God is on their side and not available to others.**
- 5. In contrast, how does this thinking promote true reconciliation and lay the foundation for a much needed world peace with justice and equity between all nations, races and religions?**

(The real name of the Christian in this e-mail correspondence has been changed to “Christian”.)

Message: A friend of mine has you as a link on his site. I like the site design and layout but the audio was very low.

I am a member of the Baha'i Faith. My site is <http://onenessbecomesus.com>

MTR coal mining is a serious matter in Appalachia. see <http://speakingoutworld.com>

Hello David,

Thanks for visiting the site. I am sorry the volume was too low. It could not be helped.

Being good stewards of the earth is certainly a good thing, but not if it will lead to a one world religion where those not subscribing to it will be persecuted and killed.

I am somewhat familiar with the Baha'i faith. I learned a bit of it from a co-worker many years ago and from this website:

<http://www.watchman.org/profile/bahai.htm>

Christian

Hi Christian:

Thanks for the e-mail. I did go to the link on the Baha'i Faith. Although much of it is accurate it seems they have gone to a lot of trouble to attack it. There are many passages

where Baha'u'llah says "We were created noble in the image of God, that you will find Me (God) within yourself. The first commandment of Baha'u'llah, as in the Gospels, is to love God and seek a relationship with Him. Yet God is treated as a Being with human qualities. All Baha'u'llah is saying is "we can never truly grasp the divine Reality". Baha'i is not a faith that condemns all other faiths, Indeed Baha'u'llah teaches all major world faiths such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, etc. were inspired directly by God. Christianity itself has a pretty grim history when it comes to domination by Inquisitions, Crusades and the like. Christian friends say to me "I need salvation", We all need salvation by turning to God...whether God is called Vishnu, Gitchi-Manitou, Jehovah, Ahura-Mazda, Allah etc. we need to turn to, love and worship the personal creator of us all. It is only when any religion claims to be the only one that we have conflict.

David

Hello David,

I think that is the crux of the issue. Jesus in the Gospels says He is the only way to God. No one comes to the Father except by Him, not Him or Vishnu, Gitchi-Manitou, Jehovah, Ahura-Mazda, Allah, or whatever so-called god is in the world. This message brings conflict because many do not really desire the Truth, but prefer instead to follow the dictates of their own hearts and minds.

How can Baha'u'llah say all major faiths of the world were directly inspired by God when faiths such as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam teach differing and opposing doctrines? It would seem that this statement by Baha'u'llah cannot be true, no matter how good it may sound on the surface.

If the Baha'i faith was able to become the one world religion, or at least become the religion of a particular country, would its adherents not also pressure, persecute and eventually kill those who refuse to convert? Too often in history religions will preach love and tolerance until it gains dominance. Then the message changes to convert or die. Islam and other religions have this history. Certainly the Crusades and the Inquisition were terrible events, but they came as a result of an abandonment of the teachings of Jesus in favor of power over people making use of religion. Jesus never taught His followers to kill or torture people to make converts for His kingdom. Also, it can be argued from history that the Crusades came about initially because Muslim raiders were continually attacking Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land.

If Jesus' claim about being the only way to God and salvation is true, and there is plausible evidence to support this, then other so-called gods and faiths cannot save anyone who trusts in them. If there is only one bridge over a deep chasm to the other side, then no matter how sincere some may feel about taking an alternate way, it cannot save them. Only the bridge. Some pointing to the bridge as the only way to safety may be deemed divisive or intolerant by those preferring to take another way, but only those taking the bridge will make it to safety, while others taking alternate routes end up losing their lives in the chasm below.

So if anyone is to be saved by God and enter His heaven, it can only be through trusting in His Son Jesus alone. God has the right to establish the way to salvation. We as His creation cannot tell God that we would rather reject His gracious offer and seek our own way to heaven and expect entrance. We would not allow someone into

our home unless they accepted our invitation to enter through the front door. Someone trying to sneak in by a back door or window would not be welcome.

Jesus taught in John 10:1-5,

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

It seems that Baha'u'llah and founders of other world religions have sought to climb up some other way because they could not enter the sheepfold by the door. Why not follow the Jesus the Messiah? He is not a thief and a robber, but the Savior and True Shepherd who gives eternal life freely to all who trust in Him alone.

Please take a look at [www.gospeloutreach.net/gospel.html](http://www.gospeloutreach.net/gospel.html) and [www.gospeloutreach.net/saved.html](http://www.gospeloutreach.net/saved.html). These pages will provide a good summary of the Good News.

Christian

Hi Christian:

I have read the Gospels and find much evidence to support Jesus being a servant of God. He prayed to his Father in Heaven. Jesus also proclaimed "these words are not from me but from the One who sent me". Many Christians are unaware of the Creed of Nicea composed by a committee of Bishops near 327 AD. At the time of Constantine there was much misunderstanding as to the true nature of Jesus and the Christ which anointed him. It is here that the deity of Jesus was made official. I have a website where different scriptures of different faiths are compared. The same universal truths of "love of God" and "the spiritual nature of man" and the need for the salvation of God are found in all major world faiths. For a Biblical study of Jesus as deity or savior link to <http://onenessbecomesus.com/Christianity.pdf>

Hi David,

But Jesus said in the Gospels, specifically John 14, that He is the only way to God the Father, not one of many ways. Salvation comes only through Jesus according to His own teachings in the Gospels. Any founder of another religion, whether it is Baha'u'llah or someone else, that says all major religions are inspired by God cannot be telling the truth since they teach differing and contradictory things about God and salvation. Also, the deity of Jesus is taught in the Gospels quite clearly, especially in the Gospel of John and the rest of the New Testament. The Council of Nicea only confirmed this teaching in light of the Arian heresy that had arisen at that time which falsely taught that Jesus was not deity, but a created being.

The only way into God's heaven is through trusting alone in His Son Jesus according to the teachings of Jesus Himself. Either Jesus was a liar, a lunatic, or He was telling the truth. Other faiths that teach nice things about the love of God yet point to

someone or something other than Jesus as the sole means for salvation cannot provide entrance into God's heaven. We enter the heavenly gates His way or not at all according to Jesus. Neither Baha'u'llah nor faith in his teachings can save anyone. Only Jesus the risen Savior is able to save all who trust alone in Him.

Christian

Hi Christian:

Jesus does speak the Words of God but, at the same time he is not God. He was anointed by the Christos, Greek for Holy Spirit, Baha'is believe this Holy Spirit of Truth is the only way. This "Spirit of Truth" is what John refers to when he says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning,": NIV

The only way we can know God is through the Word through which God makes His Presence known to us. John 7:16 Jesus says, " My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth,"

There are many passages in the Bible where Jesus clearly shows he is not divine but is doing the will of his Father. To me, it is self evident Jesus is one of many lamps giving light to the world through the Word of God. I ask you; would God the Father `choose only one faith and creed as the doorway to salvation. What matters is your relationship to God, not what particular religion you adhere to.

These truths are seen in many different faith traditions. God's love embraces all. I have felt the love of God many times in my life as have friends of different faiths.

David

Hello David,

Since Jesus does speak the words of God, a careful study of the Gospel of John even from the first chapter shows that He shares the same nature as His Father in heaven. Passages like John 1:1, 10:30-31, 20:28, and many others attest to this.

Since Jesus speaks the words of God, consider His words.

"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (John 8:12)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6)

Note that those refusing to believe or trust in Jesus have no eternal life and are under God's wrath, walk in darkness rather than light, and lose out on the sole way to God the Father. Notice also that Jesus taught that He is THE light of the world, not one of many lights. He is THE way to God, not one of many ways.

These are the words of Jesus. No one who teaches or believes that there are many ways to God truly takes seriously what Jesus taught their claims notwithstanding.

Such people may claim to say Jesus speaks the words of God, yet they negate them when they refuse Jesus' own words and teachings on His exclusivity.

Why would God choose only one way to salvation? He is God and we are not. It is His sovereign right to establish the way to salvation. No one truly loves God while refusing to adhere to His terms, especially since He is not required to save anyone. So it may feel right to believe in many different ways to God, but it is clearly shown from the teachings of Jesus that such a belief is not only false, but cannot save anyone.

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."

(Proverbs 14:12)

Christian

Hi Christian:

I hope I am not offending you. I would like us to be friends in God, the All-knowing, the All-Wise!

Orthodox Christianity assumes the "Son " means the flesh and blood Jesus of Nazareth. My Faith teaches the "Son of God" is not of the physical but of the spirit. The spirit has no beginning or end but is eternal. If I read aloud passages from the Bible to an audience are they not hearing words of divine truth? Yet, it is not my words that are spoken. In like manner, when Jesus speaks with the authority of God the words he speaks are not his own but from God.

David

Hi David,

It is not me you should be concerned about offending. It would not be possible for us to be friends in God since you serve a different god from the God of the Bible. Actually, orthodox Christianity holds that "Son of God" attests to Jesus' deity since He shares the same nature as His Father. This is based on Jesus' own teaching about Himself that I shared with you before. So your denial of Jesus' own teaching and the rest of the Bible make it impossible for us to be friends in God. We can be friends in a more general sense, however.

I do not say this to be offensive, but to tell you the truth.

Christian