

A Sure Foundation

The beliefs that we build our lives on

Only One Path and One God

MONTH 6

WEEK 3

READ:

1 Corinthians 6-10

Religion is under attack, and spirituality is on the rise. So where exactly does Christianity fall in the tug of war between the two?

On the one hand, Christ opposed some of the religious thought and practices of His day, at least as vehemently as organized religion is opposed by some today. It is valid to reject the misguided or even corrupt set of rigid traditions that have become a false god of sorts, and a distraction from the message of Christ. The spiritually starving just don't seem to be satisfied with the plastic food that some plastic churches are offering. They want something more authentic, and I can readily agree with that. However, I have some major reservations about the alternatives that we are being served. Americans today are being offered a very confusing, though appealing smorgasbord of spirituality. We hear elements of Hinduism touted by those who claim the name of Christ and witchcraft accepted as a harmless interest. The boundaries of belief have become blurred until we don't even recognize where one belief stops and another starts. We easily fall for what sounds good, and without much thought slap the label of Christianity onto it. We are a feel good nation, and that has seeped into our faith. In fact, Oprah Winfrey was probably an unnervingly accurate representative of popular Christian thought when she said "God is a feeling experience, not a believing experience." Whatever tickles our ears at the moment becomes our god. We are more careful about the ingredients in our food than we are about the tenants of our faith.

I was blessed to be confronted with the beliefs of Hinduism and their plurality of gods on a trip to India thirty years ago when my Christian faith was at a very early stage of development. I saw a postcard of a painting that showed Ghandi, Christ, and I think perhaps Buddha, all on the same path leading to a distant radiant glow. The message was clear: no matter who you follow you will get to God. Not such a popular idea in America thirty years ago, but very much so today, in a Western makeover of this eastern religion. It sounds good; so nice and welcoming to everyone.

But is it true?

"Submit to
one another
out of
reverence
for Christ."

Eph.5:21



THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE

Many see the truth more as rigid and oppressive than freeing. Why do you think that is? _____

What is the basic foundation of truth that we hold to according to 1 Cor. 3:10,11? _____

What does Jesus say in John 14:6? _____

What does 1 John 2:22 warn us of? _____

What are some examples of the “empty words” that Eph. 5:6 warns against? _____

What kind of words are beneficial for us to speak? _____

According to Eph. 4:15, how are we to speak the truth? _____

When does accepting another’s false religious views stop being nice? _____

Do you tend to see the truth more as something to apologize for, or bless someone with? _____

ALL PATHS LEAD TO GOD, REALLY?

“in the world there are many different roads but the destination is the same.”

Confucius

It is surprising how many of the world’s religions have this same basic view. In Hinduism it is hard to even pinpoint just what exactly their beliefs are because it seems like anything goes. As the saying goes, “those who will stand for anything will stand for nothing.” This is the position of far too many Christians today. In the name of being tolerant, we deny others the only truth that can save them. Should we be kind to those who believe differently? Certainly! Should we preach the truth, even when it will be rejected? Absolutely! In 1 Cor. 1:23 Paul says, “we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.” Muslims accept Jesus as a prophet of Allah, but reject the truth that he was crucified and rose again. That point cannot be compromised.

The truth that we know is not a secret to be kept among those who agree with us, but a message meant for all. How can we effectively share that truth? _____

Why do you think Christianity is rejected? _____



LIVING AS A BELIEVER

What is one of the reasons implied in 1 Cor. 6:6 that Christians should not sue each other? _____

Who will not inherit the kingdom of God? _____

How did we gain the kingdom of God? _____

What is permissible? _____

What is beneficial? _____

What kind of care are we to take of our weaker brother? _____

How can we adopt Paul' words from 1 Cor. 9:22, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some," into our own lives? _____

In 1 Cor. 10:1-5, what was the rock that the Israelites all drank from? _____

What happened to them? _____

Why? _____

Who are we not to cause to stumble (10:31-33)? _____

For questions or comments, contact me at: kayannausherman@hotmail.com

For more studies, visit me at:

<http://www.thelightedjourney.com>



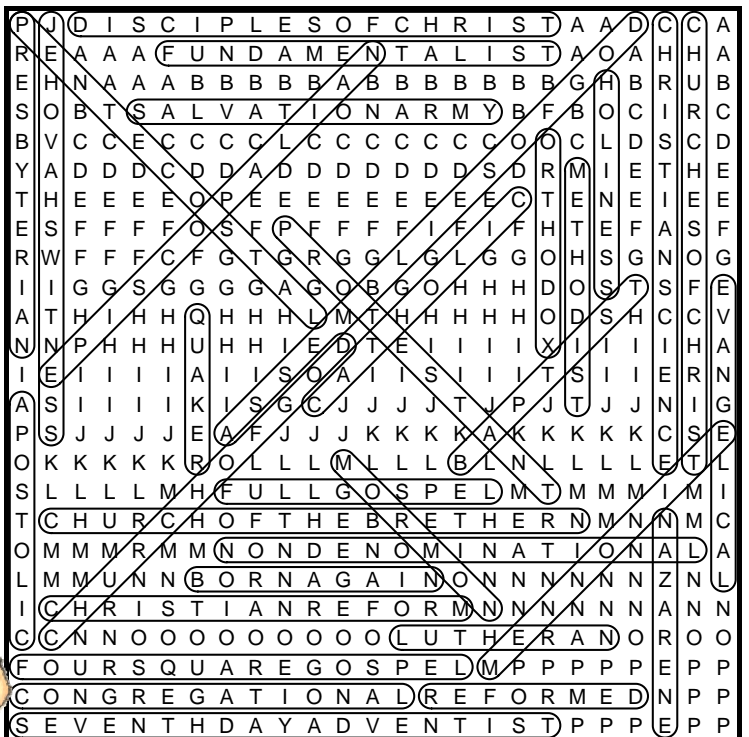
BE WHERE YOU ARE 1 Cor. 7

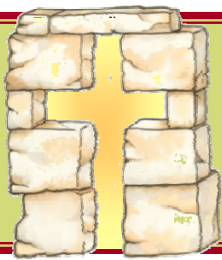
Christianity is not an excuse to end a relationship, but a call to be His and serve Him and love others in whatever situation we are in. Keeping God's commands where we are at is what counts. While we are busy looking for a way out of a bad situation, God is waiting for us to let Him into it. We have to work, live, and serve God in the context of our lives. I am a wife and mother. There are some things that I am just not free to do while I am filling that role. But that does not mean that God cannot and will not use me. In fact, He will make the most of where I am at. Paul spent many of his years of ministry in prison. What are some ways that he served and glorified God from there?

Are there any situations in your life that you feel like limit your ability to serve? _____

What does it mean to not become slaves of men? _____

Can you think of some examples of other Bible characters who served God despite what we might consider a limiting position in life? _____





PUZZLE PAGE

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

Can you name the religion that each of these symbols represents?



CHRISTIANITY – monotheistic belief in the God of Abraham and the divinity of Jesus Christ who came as a man, was crucified and rose again.

WICCA – a nature based religious system of god and goddess worship, witchcraft, spells and divination.

ISLAM – monotheistic belief in the God of Abraham as revealed by the supreme prophet Muhammad and recorded in the Koran.

SHINTO – The gods of the Shinto religion are believed to have created Japan as their image of paradise on earth, and the ruler of Japan, the Emperor, is a direct descendent of the Sun-goddess Amaterasu.

JUDAISM – monotheistic belief in the God of Abraham, waiting for the coming of the Messiah.

HINDUISM – believes in reincarnation based on morality and performance in a past life. A very open theology in which a person may be polytheistic, monotheistic, pantheistic, agnostic, or atheistic.

JAIN – their symbol represents putting a stop to reincarnation through avoiding harm to any living creature.

BAHA'I – believe in the oneness of God and of religion as revealed to man through a series of divine Messengers including Abraham, Krishna, Zoraster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammad. The most recent of these messengers is Baha'u'llah.

TAOISM (DAOISM) – based Lao Tse's philosophy, adopted as the state religion of China in the 5th century. About 200 million worldwide. The symbol represents the two forces of the universe: male/ female, enlightenment/ignorance, etc.

SIKHISM – founded by Sri Guru Nanak Cev Ji in the fifteenth century to reconcile beliefs of the Hindu and Islamic religions. Taught that men and women were equal, and that all paths lead to God. About 23 million worldwide.

<http://altreligion.about.com>

