

This File Contains The Following Articles:

“Why Are There So Many Different Religions?”

“Why Are There So Many Denominations?”

There are so many different interpretations of the Bible,
why should I believe yours?

“Why Are There So Many Different Religions?”

It has been well said that religion is man's way of trying to deal with his guilt. Different religions have different ways of attempting to rid their adherents of sin and its consequences. They fast, pray, deny themselves legitimate pleasures, or chasten themselves, often to a point of inflicting pain. They do this because they have a concept of what they think God (or the gods) is like, so they seek to establish their own righteousness, being ignorant of God's righteousness.

The Good News of the Christian faith is that no one need suffer the pains of religious works. Christ's blood can cleanse our conscience from the dead works of religion (Hebrews 9:14). Jesus took our punishment upon Himself, and He is the only One who can save us from sin and death. See Acts 4:12 and John 14:6.

From The Evidence Bible - Irrefutable evidence for the thinking mind, Compiled by Ray Comfort

(See also “Is Jesus Really The Only Way” on this CD)

“Why Are There So Many Denominations?”

In the early 1500's, a German monk named Martin Luther was so conscious of his sins that he spent up to six hours in the confessional. Through study of the Scriptures he found that salvation didn't come through anything he did, but simply through trusting in the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ. He listed the contradictions between what the Scriptures said and what his church taught, and nailed his “95 Theses” to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany.

Martin Luther became the first to “protest” against the Roman church, and thus he became the father of the Protestant church. Since that split, there have been many disagreements about how much water one should baptize with, how to sing what and why, who should govern who, etc., causing thousands of splinter groups. Many of these groups are convinced that they alone are right. These have become known as Protestant “denominations.” Despite the confusion, these churches subscribe to certain foundational beliefs such as the deity, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, “The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his” (2 Timothy 2:19).

Thomas Jefferson once wrote of a preacher, Richard Mote, who “exclaimed aloud to his congregation that he did not believe there was a Quaker, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist in heaven, having paused to give his hearers time to stare and to wonder. He added that, in heaven, God knew no distinctions.”

From The Evidence Bible - Irrefutable evidence for the thinking mind, Compiled by Ray Comfort

(See also the article below and “Common Christian Beliefs” on this CD)

There are so many different interpretations of the Bible, why should I believe yours?

One of the complaints we often hear is that everyone has a different interpretation of the Bible. Because many people arrive at varying conclusions when they read the Bible, there is supposedly no way to get a consensus. People point to the variety of denominations as an example that there can be no unanimity of agreement between Bible believers.

This idea neglects to take into account certain facts. The great majority of Bible readers have no problem with agreement on the central teachings of the Bible. Even those who do not believe the Bible to be true have no difficulty whatsoever discerning the main message.

Within all branches of Christianity, we find the same basic understanding as to what the Bible teaches. They usually accept the same creeds that assert such basic truths as that God made man in his image, with freedom of choice, and that man chose to rebel against God, thus bringing sin into the world.

God, because of His everlasting love, became a man in the person of Jesus Christ and died a substitutionary death on our behalf, paying the penalty for sin. Mankind can have their relationship restored with God through placing their faith in Jesus Christ.

The message of the Bible is clear for those who will read it and seek to find out its meaning. The problem comes when people bring their preconceived notions to the Bible and attempt to make the Word fit their preconceived ideas. This is not the fault of the

Bible, but of the persons who force the Bible to say whatever they want it to say.

As for the matter of the various denominations, it must be stressed that they are not formed because of division over the central teachings of Christianity. The differences are a result of a variety of factors, including cultural, ethnic, and social. When closely compared with one another, the doctrinal differences are not always that crucial.

Some people use this argument as an excuse for not believing Jesus, but like all others it does not prove to be valid. Jesus made the main issue crystal clear, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life: but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36, NASB). Often the disagreement is not so much with the interpretation of the Scriptures, but rather with the application.

This article is from *Answers To Tough Questions skeptics ask about the Christian faith*, by Josh McDowell and Don Stewart

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE SOURCES

- Marshall, I. Howard, ed. *New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Sproul, R. C. *Knowing Scripture*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1977.