

## **Answers to the church of Oprah**

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### **Questions**

God is not offended by our questions. The very reason we have questions is because we have minds. We are gifted with attributes of reason and the capacity for thinking. It is God who said, “Come let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18). The greatest commandment of all, according to Jesus, is to “love the Lord with all of your heart, soul and MIND” (Matthew 22:37). God made us this way, so it is no surprise to him that we might have questions.

People who are entrenched in skepticism often portray themselves as heroes of free thought while they blatantly mischaracterize Christians as being mindless. I don’t remember receiving a lobotomy the day I received Jesus as my Savior. Christians have freedom of thought. Our minds are alive and well – and free. We also have freedom of attitude.

The attitude, or mind-set, that prompts questions about God can be just as important as the questions themselves. Questions can be an honest attempt to discern the truth. Questions can also be a way to avoid having to face the fact that there might be plausible answers after all.

Jesus answered a lot of questions. He spoke with the woman at the well in John chapter four. He answered many of her questions in far more detail than she might have anticipated. By the end of their conversation Jesus had revealed deep things of the kingdom of God that few people were ever privileged to hear directly from him.

In contrast, we can read that “Herod plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer” (Luke 23:9). The woman at the well went away rejoicing with the added benefit that new life came to her home town. Herod, on the other hand, received nothing and his questions benefited no one. Attitude matters. Jesus never turned the humble away. The same is still true today.

### **Oprah**

Oprah was asked why she abandoned Christianity. She said it was when she took God out of the box. First of all, who boxed-in God? People are forever freeing God from a box in which he never took up residence. King David tried to build a box for God and God’s response was that he never lived in a box and didn’t plan on it anytime soon (2 Samuel 7:5-7).

Oprah did not take God out of the box. She removed herself from the box – the box of logic and clear thinking. She did not like the idea of being boxed-in by certain doctrines of the Bible. The doctrine that gave her the most trouble was that pesky statement by Jesus that there was no way to God, but by him. The Church of Oprah must correct the error of the narrow-minded fundamentalists who take the Bible literally.

Is it narrow-minded to say that Jesus is the only way to God? It is not a question of being narrow-minded, but of what is true. Sometimes truth may seem narrow-minded, but it still is true. Truth must have boundaries. Truth lives in a box. Take truth out of the box and you have deception. There must be boundaries of right/wrong, true/untrue, yes/no. Truth has dimensions. Oprah took God out of the box and now for her “all roads lead to God.”

Philosophy 101 says that for a person's worldview to be true it must have two components. First, it must be logical. It must make sense.  $2 + 2 = 5$  does not make sense no matter how passionate, rich or famous a person might be. "Let's take math out of the box." As soon as you do it ceases to be math.

Do all roads lead to God? Try this: Do all roads lead to your house? Most of us don't need a college education or prime-time celebrity status to know that "all roads lead to my house" is nonsense. Imagine holding a Thomas Brothers map book in your hands and you open it to find directions to discover that it contained only one page with one road. The map would be worthless. "All roads lead to God" breaks the first rule in logic because it makes no sense.

The second rule is that a philosophy must work in the real world – it must be livable. The very people who claim that all roads lead to God cannot live by their own stated belief system. If they lived by their own standard then they would accept Jesus' claim in the Bible that "no one comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). They betray their own world view by saying, "All roads lead to God – except THAT one." A more accurate statement would be: "All roads do not lead to the SAME god." This statement would not only be more reflective of reality, but it is also something we can all live with. "All roads do not lead to the same god" is both logical and livable.

### **Pluralism**

The error of pluralism is the hijacking of world religions and then dissecting certain beliefs that don't agree with how the hijacker sees the world. Larry King had a panel of religious experts on his show. He turned to John MacArthur, the representative for the Christian faith, and asked him, "You mean a Hindu can't go to heaven?" What would prompt such a question? It is the error of pluralism. Religious pluralism forces people into the false premise that all roads lead to God. Pluralism is religious imperialism. It is a hostile takeover which takes a world religion where it does not want to go.

A Hindu does not want to go to heaven because there is no heaven in the Hindu faith. No Hindu would want anyone eliminating the teaching that there are many gods, that we are gods, that there is such a thing as reincarnation and karma. No Buddhist would want anyone to eliminate the teaching that there is no personal god, that there is are four noble truths, an eight-fold path and that there is no heaven. The Mormons would not want anyone eliminating their teaching that all other churches but theirs is false, that we can be gods on our own planets and that Jesus is Satan's brother.

All roads do not lead to the same god – or concept of god. We are privileged to enjoy religious freedom, but no one can say that Jesus didn't say, "No one comes to the Father except through me." If they do claim that he didn't say it (or really mean it) they are being more than narrow-minded – they are telling a lie. It's time to find another church – Oprah or not.

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