

Reasons Ministries

Which Way, Or The Way?

Increasingly, people seem to think there is little difference between religions. One of America's leading theologians, Oprah Winfrey, once declared shortly after 9/11 that all people pray to the same God. In 2011 the Barna Group found that 43% of Americans believe all religions teach the same things. Religious pluralism, the view that no religion has a corner on truth, is more and more common. Why is this? One reason is that many Christians do not know what the Bible teaches. Another reason is that tolerance, is one of our culture's highest values. It is intolerant, and some believe dangerous, to tout your faith to be true exclusively. When one examines what each religion actually teaches, however, you soon realize that pluralism is wrong. When religions teach contradictory beliefs those beliefs cannot all be true. In Islam Jesus did not die on the cross and so could not have been resurrected. Jehovah's witnesses believe Jesus is Michael the Arch Angel, and therefore a created being. Buddhism rejects the existence of a personal God. How can all of these "truths" be simultaneously true? They can't! They can all be false, but they cannot all be true. So how can we know the way to God? That is what people through all of history have looked for; the way to God and immortality!

In John 14 Jesus is teaching his disciples in what is called the upper room discourse. He is hours away from being arrested and tried for blasphemy. Even so, he is informing his disciples that he is soon going to go away. This was not the news the disciples wanted to hear. They had been with Jesus for more than 3 years. How were they going to make it without him? What would happen to them? How disconcerting! Let's eavesdrop on the conversation:

1 "Don't be troubled. You trust God, now trust in me. 2 There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know where I am going and how to get there." 5 "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We haven't any idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

Thomas, speaking for the disciples, tells Jesus they do not know the "way" to where Jesus is going, heaven. He asks, "how can we know the way?" Jesus' response is what makes Christianity so unique. Instead of giving his disciples a list of religious activities or practices that they will need to do to find the way, he says, "I am the way, the truth and the life...." You see, in Islam there are Five Pillars that a Muslim must follow to be saved. In Buddhism, there is the Eight-fold path and the Middle Path that one must follow to find enlightenment. In Judaism one must do good and follow the Old Testament Law. In Mormonism one must believe in Jesus and be baptized in the Temple and obey God's commands. Only in Christianity is the way a person! While other belief systems define their way as a list of dos and don'ts not so with Christianity. Jesus is telling his disciples and us that there is nothing we can do to find the way to God. Our works are worthless as far as our salvation. The reason why the "way" is not something we can achieve on our own is that due to our sin we can never do enough and everything we do is tainted by sin. The way is not something we achieve or discover it is a person who comes to us to enter into a relationship with us forever. Only when we place our faith in him (and faith is not a work) as the Way do we find truth and life! Just as Jesus is the Way, he is the Truth. He is not only the source of truth he is Truth. To know the truth we must know a person, the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the life as well. Note that he is not a life, but he is the Life. If we want to live for eternity, life is found in a person. These three things, the way, the truth and the life are three things that are what our hearts crave and that alone can satisfy our souls. People search their entire lives for the way and are convinced the way is something they must find and do. People hunger for the truth, while all too often they believe a lie. As Jesus said, only the truth will set us free. He should know because he is the truth! The human heart longs for life beyond the grave. As the Scriptures remind us (Ecclesiastes 3:11), God has placed eternity in our hearts. Only a person can satisfy our desire for eternal life; Jesus. Here is the bottom line: Christianity stands alone as the only belief system that eschews human effort in finding salvation and instead says it is found in a person, the eternal Son of God who became flesh so that in him, we find all that we need.

Got Questions??

About God and the problem of suffering?

The Bible's reliability?

The uniqueness of Christ?

What is a worldview?

Christianity vs. Other Religions

Basic Apologetics?

Evolution vs. Creationism

**I can help with answers!
Give me a call or send me an email! I would love to come to your church for a weekend of ministry.**

Contact Information:

Rev. David Holdcraft
9217 Trentham Lane
Louisville, KY 40242

email:

david@reasonsministries.com
reasonsministries@bellsouth.net

Web:

www.reasonsministries.com

Twitter:

[@davidholdcraft](https://twitter.com/davidholdcraft)

Phone:

502-594-9885

Reasons Ministries' Mission

The mission of Reasons Ministries is to equip believers to know what and why they believe so they can stand firm in the Christian faith, be effective tools in God's hand for reaching those that do not yet know Christ



Question: What can we do about Christmas?

Answer: In a recent Pew survey, “Celebrating Christmas Then and Now,” we find that 92% of Americans celebrate Christmas. In response to the question “For you personally Christmas is, A. more of a religious holiday, B. More of a cultural holiday or C. Both/Other.” The responses show that 51% believe Christmas is more of a religious holiday, 32% believe it is more of a cultural holiday and 9% think it is either both or other.

We live in an increasingly secularized culture. The process of secularization pushes religion to the periphery of society. Religion is being marginalized and often is seen as increasingly irrelevant. This seems to be what the Pew survey is reporting. What is interesting though is that among those that see Christmas as a secular holiday, 50% believe in the virgin birth. But this secularization is not just happening to Christmas. Easter has become all about the Easter Bunny. When the original Thanksgiving is mentioned the “thanks” offered, it is said, was that of the Pilgrims to the Indians instead of what really happened, thanks was offered to God. More money is spent on Halloween than all holidays except Christmas. It seems that every other day an

atheist organization is filing suit against a public religious expression with the goal of relegating religious expression to private acts and banning it from the public square. What is remarkable though, is that the gospel is still being proclaimed in some unlikely places. This Christmas season, traditional and contemporary Christmas carols are heard in restaurants, in stores, on secular radio and even on TV. Jesus is called Lord, Son of God, Immanuel, King of Angels, King, Lord Jesus, Holy Infant, the King of Israel and many other names and titles.

This year, I have heard Christmas songs like “Silent Night,” Joy To The World,” “O’ Come Let Us Adore Him, Hark the Herald Angel Sings, What Child Is This” and many others as I have been shopping, eating in a restaurant or driving in the car. In fact in Louisville, at least three radio stations that play secular music are, instead, playing Christmas music 24/7. And you know what? the ACLU or People for the American Way or the Freedom from Religion Foundation cannot do anything to stop private entities like radio stations or businesses from playing Christian Christmas music. Even though there have been attempts to eliminate the word Christmas from school calendars and communities have “holiday displays” and “holiday trees,” the real message of Christmas is still getting out in some surprising venues. God will not be silenced! “O’ Come, O’ Come Immanuel!”

About David



— 18 Years of Pastoral Ministry. Ordained and Licensed through the Ohio Valley District of the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA)
 — Adjunct Professor @ Indiana Wesleyan University at the Louisville, KY Campus since 2001 Have taught 11 different courses and over 800 students (many courses were in Bible and Apologetics).
 — Graduate of Toccoa Falls College with a B.A. in Missiology and Alliance Theological Seminary with a Masters in cross-cultural and theological studies.

- Additional Masters level work at TFC and Columbia International University
- Serving on Ohio Valley District Licensing Ordination & Consecration Committee and as a District Presbyter
- Started Reasons Ministries in November 2008
- Married 33 years to Beth with three adult children and two adorable grandchildren.
- Work currently as a mortgage loan advisor for First Fidelity Mortgage in Louisville, KY.

Prayer Needs:

- Please pray for speaking opportunities for me in spring of 2014.
- Please pray for God to provide increased financial support for the ministry.

Past & Upcoming Events:

June 6, 2013— Led an all day Scripture Workshop for those pursuing Ordination in The C&MA, Ohio Valley District.

June 23, 2013— Preached at 1st Alliance Church, Columbus, OH.

July/August, 2013 — Taught a New Testament Survey Course at Indiana Wesleyan in Louisville.

October 2013 — Taught “**Themes In Biblical Literature**” @ IWU A course that looks at our origins, the nature of God, why we suffer, what it means to be human, sin and salvation.

March 5 — April 9 (Wednesdays) Teaching a 6 week series, “Meeting Jesus All Over Again!” at Northeast Christian Church in Louisville

How about hosting an apologetics weekend at your church in 2014?

About David’s Ministry:

David has been such a blessing to us at Northeast. We have an AMAZING worship service each weekend. Yet we know that for our people to continue to grow in their spiritual walk, it takes more than just engaging in a weekend experience. David’s teaching has helped us satisfy that place for our mature believers to dig deeper, and at the same time challenge our younger believers to seek answers. David is always prepared and brings in many resources to aid in keeping our people engaged. After every session, there are always those who stay to discuss in more detail.

Thanks David!

—Laura Wingfield, Groups Minister. Northeast Christian Church, Louisville