**Religious pluralism**

[**https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/rango/believe-in-something**](https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/rango/believe-in-something)

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Religious pluralism is the view that many religions can be equally valid paths to God and suggests that there are only small superficial differences between the religions and that these differences are greatly overshadowed by their similarities. Thus, all religions would share a fundamental unity that renders them equally valid as approaches to God.

This would suggest that no religion possesses the entire truth, but only bits and pieces of it.

Maybe you’ve heard the Indian Fable about six blind men and the elephant where each man feels a different part of an elephant and come to different conclusions regarding what the elephant is actually like.

* One blind man grabs the tusk and says, “An elephant is like a spear!”
* Another feels the trunk and concludes, “An elephant is like a snake!”
* The blind man hugging the leg thinks, “An elephant is like a tree!”
* The one holding the tail claims, “An elephant is like a rope!”
* Another feeling the ear believes, “An elephant is like a fan!”
* The last blind man leaning on the elephant’s side exclaims, “An

Each blind man thinks he is right and that the others are wrong even though all of them are touching the same elephant. In a similar way, it is suggested that all religions are in contact with the same ultimate reality and merely describe it in different ways.

But we must account for how the different religions contradict each other. There are vast difference between:

* Monotheistic (only one God) religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
* Polytheistic (many Gods) religions such as Shintoism, Taoism.
* Pantheistic (the universe is God) religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism.

There is also the difference between the Muslims & Christian claim that each person lives *precisely one* life and then faces judgment while Hindus claim that each person lives *many* lives

Judaism denies Jesus was the promised Messiah and Christians affirm he was the messiah and the Son of God.

Hindus believe in reincarnation where Christianity teaches each person only gets only one single life.

So if we look at the following two statements

* The Texans won the Game on October 8th 2019
* The Texans lost the Game on October 8th 2019

can both be true?

Just because someone thinks something is true does not make it true. Just because I might think God is a frog does not make God a frog. We see this throughout history and very much in today’s society where people are **trying to** **make God in their image and not letting God make them in his**.

In the Indian fable if the elephant would just speak up and say “I am an elephant” it would reveal that they were all wrong and that there was only one truth. God has revealed the truth of who he is in his word, The Bible.

**What makes Christianity Different from all others?**

* Salvation through works or Faith
	+ All other religions of the world are fundamentally based on one belief—one of salvation by works. Each religion sets up a particular set of commands, restrictions and ethical principles to follow, and then teaches that if a man does these things he will be saved.
	+ Christianity sets its moral and ethical standard as the very holiness and perfection of God Himself, and demands nothing less than this for salvation. Obviously, no man would invent a standard which was utterly impossible for any man to keep. Then once we understand this we realize the need for Christ alone who offers salvation by grace through faith. (So not by works)
* Founding fathers
	+ All other religions are based on the writings and teachings of their founders who have long since been dead
	+ Christianity is based on the promise of a savior from a loving father and the actions of that savior, Jesus Christ, to live, teach, die and rise again.
		- The Bible was written by over 40 authors (fishermen, kings, shepherds, a herdsman, a politician, a doctor, a tax collector, a rabbinical scholar and more) who wrote from 3 different continents ( Asia, Africa and Europe) In three different languages, covering a span of 1,500 years and they all wrote one story.
	+ Note: Jesus never wrote a word of the bible.
* The greatest difference of all [among religious views] lies in the Christian assertion that none of us can save ourselves and make ourselves acceptable to God, try as we may: all the other faiths assert that by keeping their teachings a person will earn their reward to be saved, fulfilled or reborn.”

A central claim of Christianity is that God entered human history 2000 years ago through a man named Jesus Christ who died on a cross between two thieves and rose from the dead three days later. The truthfulness of Christianity depends upon a critical historical event--the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In a first-century letter to a group of Christians the apostle Paul wrote the following about the significance of Christ's resurrection:

"If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith" (I Corinthians 15:14).

Thus, to disprove Christianity one would only need to show Christ was never raised from the dead.

**What do the skeptics say?**

Some years ago a skeptic of Christianity named Josh McDowell set out to do precisely this. He wanted to write a book that would refute Christianity. In his book *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* he writes,

After more than 700 hours of studying this subject, and thoroughly investigating its foundation, I have come to the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men, or it is the most fantastic fact of history.

As a skeptic of Christianity Josh McDowell not only found the evidence for Christ's resurrection from the dead compelling, but himself became a follower of Jesus Christ. Many others have attempted to disprove only to become Christians themselves

**God is an Absolute**

One of our great difficulties in understanding God is our unwillingness or inability to distinguish between the relative (Subjective Truth) and the absolute (Objective Truth). God is an absolute and our faith cannot be based on who we are, what we have been taught or how we feel.

An example of an absolute (objective truth) would be 1+1 always equal 2 no matter when you were born or how you feel 1+1=2 this is an absolute in the same way our faith in who God is must be absolute.

A relative / subjective statement would be 1+1 = something between 1 and 10. Subjective truths can be based on feelings. For example. “That person looks nice”. But when it comes to my eternal residency I want to be absolute about what I believe.

People want to make God in their image and to conform to their ideas that is why we can always tell a false message because it will sound strangely like our broken world. ( Its ok to Lie, Cheat and steal)

The Bible tells us there is only one way to God

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Acts 4:11-12 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

* **Jesus is an absolute! Do you believe it ???**