

Teaching Time

Why I believe... Christianity is more than Religion

[Acts 17:1–31 \(NKJV\)](#)

Introduction:

The City of Athens

Center of **GREEK CULTURE** at the time.

Seat of **PHILOSOPHICAL inquiries** and **EDUCATIONAL pursuits**.

Paul's basic quest was to demonstrate to people far and wide why Christianity was not just a religion but was far more.

He made four critical claims:

Religion is about Man's SEARCH for God, but Christianity is about God's COMING to Man.

Religion arises because of Man's search for the INEXPLICABLE.

Religion is based on three main phenomena:

- Belief in SPIRITS
- Belief in MYTHOLOGY
- Belief in MAGIC

One of the solutions to which man arrived in his search for God is RELIGION.

Paul observed, "Men of Athens I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship I even found an altar with the inscription to the unknown God." –

[Acts 17:23](#)

Christianity is about God's COMING to Man – the INCARNATION.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands, and he is not served by human hands." – [Acts 17:24](#)

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among men. We have seen his glory, that of the only begotten son of God." – [John 1:1](#)

"He is the Christ." – [Acts 17:3](#)

"Word became flesh and dwelled among us." – [John 1:12](#)

"In him we move and have our being." – [Acts 17:28](#)

Christianity is more than religion because in it we have TRANSFORMATION, not REFORMATION.

The path of reformation:

- Judaism – OBEDIENCE to the LAW.
- Hinduism – pursuing good KARMA.
- Buddhism – the path of ENLIGHTENMENT.
- Confucianism – cultivating a harmonious SOCIETY and EXCELLENT human beings.
- Islam – OBEDIENCE to Allah.

All of this aims at modifying the behavior of human beings, i.e. change from the OUTSIDE.

The path to transformation:

"You must be born again." – [John 3:3](#)

"In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all men to repent. For he has set a day when we will be judged." – [Acts 17:30](#)

"Wherefore if any man is in Christ he is a new creature, old things have passed away and all things have become new." – [2 Corinthians 5:17](#)

Christianity is not about reforming human beings. It is about TRANSFORMING them from the INSIDE – REPENTANCE.

Christianity is about RELATIONSHIP, not RITUAL.

Rituals are ways communities ensure that people live in harmony with each other, nature and gods.

Paul made it clear that Christianity is about a PERSONAL relationship with a LIVING God: "In him we live and move and have our beings." – [Acts 17:28](#)

Christianity is more than religion because it offers us CERTAINTY, not empty HOPE.

"Everyone who believes has everlasting life. And to as many as receive him to them he gives the power to become sons of God." – [John 3:36](#)

"For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." – [Acts 17:31](#)

Christianity is more than religion because it is about:

- God finding us, not us searching for God
- Transformation, not reformation
- Relationships, not rituals
- Certainty, not empty hope