

## Don't all religions basically teach the same thing and lead to God in the end?

Unfortunately, regardless of our religion, we all will be led to God in the end. The bible tells us about the day we'll meet God and stand in His presence; God **“has set a day when he will judge the world with justice (Acts 17:31,) the day when “God will judge men’s secrets” (Romans 2:16.)** The bigger question is; when I face God’s judgment, will I be found innocent or guilty?

The book of **Romans (chapter 2, verse 15)** in the bible tells us that the requirements of God’s law are written on our hearts. Our consciences bear witness to the fact that we have sinned against God. We all know it’s wrong to lie, steal, lust, murder, and so on. Since our consciences remind us that we’ve sinned, the problem for man over the ages has been; how can I be right with God?

Over time, religion has sought to find a way to earn a right-standing with God. The obvious problem stated above reminds us that sinful people can’t fellowship with a God they’ve offended. There are a few common remedies to this problem that the religions of the world have tried:

1. Some have tried to reconcile this relationship by **doing as much good as they can**, with the hope that the good might outweigh all the wrong they’ve done.
2. Others have tried **inflicting pain upon themselves** to pay up their debt or purify themselves.
3. Still others **rely on God’s goodness to forgive them**.

Since we’ve broken God’s law and will face him in judgment, let’s see how the remedies mentioned above would work in a court of law.

1. Imagine you’ve been caught red-handed stealing an exotic sports car and you’re standing in court before the Judge. You must pay a \$150,000 fine (which you don’t have) or you’ll be sent to jail. When the judge asks you why he shouldn’t throw you in jail you say “I know I stole the car, but I felt bad and gave some money to the Ronald McDonald House this week.” Your defense would seem foolish to the judge, even if you had given money to the Ronald McDonald House, you still stole a car and you’re still a law-breaker. He must punish you for your crime. In the same way, all the good you might do in your life will never undo the fact that you have broken God’s law (the 10 Commandments). God in his justice must punish you.
2. Same situation. But this time your defense is “I know I stole the car, but to punish myself I’ve cut off my left foot.” The judge isn’t going to let you off ‘cause you’ve cut off your left foot. Your fine is \$150,000, not a left foot. In the same way the fine of being a sinner is death, **(Romans 6:23)** not self inflicted pain or mourning.

3. Same situation. This time you say “I know I’ve stolen the car, but I know you are a good judge, so I’m asking you to let me off.” The judge might respond “You’re right, I am a good judge, and because I am, I must punish people for their crimes.” You see it’s because God is good that he must administer justice. When someone is murdered, raped or robbed, we long to see justice fulfilled. God being full of justice must punish sinners for their offences.

This is why Christians make such a big deal about Jesus. We recognize that nothing we do could ever make us right with God. But the bible tells us that **“God made Him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”** Jesus, who lived a perfect life, was the only one to walk the earth who could say He didn’t have the penalty of sin coming to Himself. Then, when he offered himself to be killed in our place, he was essentially paying our debt with God, so we could be seen innocent in God’s eyes. God’s justice was satisfied since our debt was paid. He forgives us, and credits Jesus innocence to us when we repent and trust in what Jesus did.

In his book, *Christ Among Other Gods*, Lutzer reminds us that we are each entitled to our own opinion, but not our own truth. For instance, I could believe with all my heart that I had the ability to fly, but if I go jump off a cliff it will become painfully obvious that I was wrong. My belief in my ability to fly didn’t change the law of gravity. What we believe doesn’t change truth, so we owe it to ourselves to make sure what we believe is truth.

The book of Hebrews in the bible tells us **“man is destined to die once, and after that judgment (9:27.)”** We all know in our hearts that we’ve sinned against God, what will be your defense on that Day of Judgment? Are you willing to trust in your own ideas or will you repent and trust Jesus to wash your sins away? God wants to have relationship with you and Jesus is the only way you can have that. **“He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.”**