

## Questions to Consider:

1. *Is religion an artificial construct made by man?*
2. *Are there cultures which do not have some sort of religion?*
3. *Is it possible for different religions to agree on central tenets?*
4. *Is it wrong to attempt to reason with people in order to win them to Christ?*
5. *How can you use Scripture as the authority for your argument (efforts to evangelize) if the person you are talking to doesn't recognize the authority of the Bible?*
6. *If a person believes in God but rejects the Christian faith, will he go to heaven?*
7. *Will the innocent native who has never heard the gospel go to hell?*

## Scriptures:

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-13 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup> "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?"

### **Psalms 111:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.

### **Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

### **John 6:29 (NASB)**

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

### **Psalms 51:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

### **Proverbs 4:23 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it *flow* the springs of life.

### **Matthew 5:8 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup> "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

### **Acts 17:16-20 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing *Gentiles*, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present. <sup>18</sup> And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. <sup>19</sup> And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is <sup>□</sup>which you are proclaiming? <sup>20</sup> For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean."

### **Romans 1:18 - 25 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

## **I. Religion - an artificial construct?**

**“Man makes religion, religion does not make man” -Karl Marx**

A. some possibilities

1.

2.

*“America makes no sense without a deeply held faith in God - and I don’t care what it is...”*

*-Dwight Eisenhower*

3.

*“Religion is the sign of an oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of a soulless condition. It is the opium of the people...”*

*- Karl Marx*

## **II. The Religious impulse is inherent in being created in the image of God.**

A. necessary premises

1.

“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing, but only by God the Creator made known through Jesus Christ.” - Pascal

“...He fills the void in each of our hearts that was made to be filled only by God.” -Augustine

2.

Acts 17:16-20

3.

“a conscious and voluntary relationship to God, which expresses itself in grateful worship and loving service.” -Louis Berkhof

4.

“The characteristic element in religion has been found in piety, fear, faith, a feeling of dependence...” -Louis Berkhof

### **III. False religion is the consequence of sin.**

A. original sin necessarily results in false religion of one kind or another.

1.

2.

3.

### **IV. Should Christians use man's religious impulse in evangelism?**

A. Yes and No

1.

2.

3.

### **V. Is there a proper starting point in evangelism?**

A. the man who wins souls is wise

1.

2.

3.