

Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

The Hard Questions Series

Topic Six: How should military Christians relate to people of other faiths in the ADF?

Week One:

Introduction

We have previously examined how we should relate to people of no faith at all. Now we tackle the question of people who practice a non-Christian religion. The bible teaches zero tolerance of other faiths. The ADF required total acceptance of other faiths. How do we reconcile the two? This study compares the ADF policy on religious freedom and compares it to God's expectation of us.

ADF Policy

- † What does the ADF policy say about religious freedom?
- † How does that conform to the use of Christian traditions and remembrance services?
- † How common are non-Christian adherents in the ADF? Just as there are "culture-only" Christians are there also "culture only" personnel from other faiths. Should we treat them differently to those who profess a strong belief in their faith?

God's Old Testament Policy

- † Joshua 10: 28-41 is God-directed genocide. Why did God demand that the Israelites destroy entire populations?
- † Is there a non-violent principle that can be learned from this extreme approach to dealing with people of other faiths?
- † Some say "it is all the same God isn't it, different roads but same destination?" Does God's Old Testament directions to the Israelites accept "variations" of faith?

Week Two:

God's New Testament Policy

- † What was Jesus' response towards other faith groups? See his response to Samaritans: Luke 9:51-56, 10:25-37, and Jn 4:1-16.
- † Who did Jesus save his most cutting condemnation for, other faiths or "religious" Jews? See Matt 23:1-36.
- † Chaplains are required to "facilitate" the religious experiences of all faiths by assisting them to find opportunities to worship. How challenging is that if we believe it to be a false belief?

Practical experiences

- † Have the group members had any experiences with working/witnessing to people of other faiths?
- † Is it easier or harder to relate to people who are practising adherents of other faiths?
- † Would we be ready to explain ourselves to adherents of other faiths if we were asked?

Conclusion

God allows no other Gods, or aspects of our lives that become God-like. The ADF holds to a stringent belief in the rights for all faiths to be exercised freely and equally. In the middle are people who need Jesus. Non-Christian faith groups need Jesus just the same as agnostics, atheists, and lapsed Christians, and they won't experience it through condemnation and conceit from us.