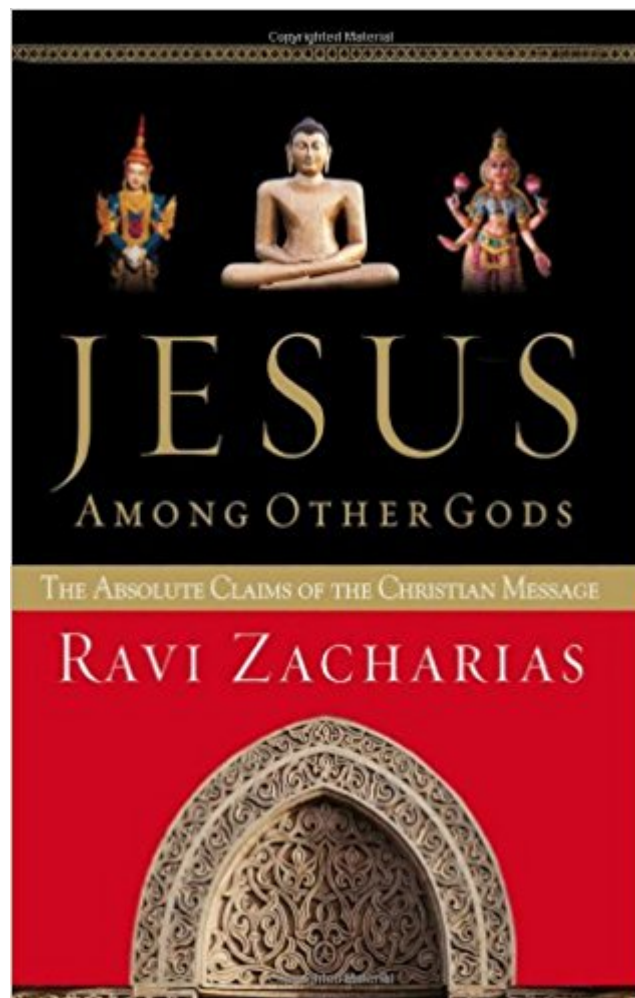




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Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims Of The Christian Message



Synopsis

“In a world with so many religions, why Jesus? We are living in a time when you can believe anything, as long as you do not claim it to be true. In the name of ‘tolerance,’ our postmodern culture embraces everything from Eastern mysticism to New Age spirituality. But as Ravi Zacharias points out, such unquestioning acceptance of all things spiritual is absurd. All religions, plainly and simply, cannot be true. *Jesus Among Other Gods* provides the answers to the most fundamental claims about Christianity, such as: ‘Aren’t all religions fundamentally the same? Was Jesus who He claimed to be? Can one study the life of Christ and demonstrate conclusively that He was and is the way, the truth, and the life?’ In each chapter, Zacharias considers a unique claim that Jesus made and then contrasts the truth of Jesus with the founders of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism with a compelling insight and passionate conviction. In addition to an impressive breadth of reading and study, he shares his personal journey from despair and meaninglessness to his discovery that Jesus is who He said He is.” In *Jesus Among Other Gods*, Ravi Zacharias demonstrates that he is one of the most intellectually gifted as well as spiritually sensitive writers of today, one of the leading apologists for the Christian faith. Zacharias brings alive the unique power of the claims of Jesus about himself and the utter relevance of his message today for the human condition.” • David Aikman, author of *Great Souls*

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Customer Reviews

When Pope John Paul II called for a massive "new evangelization" of Asia during a November 1999 visit to India, his comments sparked protest from Hindus for whom proselytizing is a form of oppression. The debate underscored the sharp difference between Western creeds such as Christianity and Islam, which tend to be exclusive, and Eastern religions that stress pluralism. This collision forms a fascinating story line, and on that basis Zacharias's new work is superficially intriguing. Zacharias, a Christian apologist who grew up in India, does offer the occasional insight into Eastern religions. He claims that despite the current Hollywood romance with Buddhism as a simple faith of compassion, in most forms Buddhism is actually a complex system, featuring 227 disciplinary rules for men and 311 for women. Yet for the most part, Zacharias is in dialogue here not with Eastern religions but with Western skeptics. He seeks to settle old scores with Darwin and Hume, resurrecting tired debates over the nature of evil and the argument from design without adding anything new to the discussion. His theodicy will be convincing only to committed Christians, and his use of scripture is entirely uncritical (he points out grammatical and textual difficulties in the Koran without even mentioning analogous difficulties in the Bible). There are touching flashes of humanity as Zacharias describes suffering people he has encountered, but on the whole he does little to advance inter-religious conversation. (Aug.) Copyright 2000 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ravi Zacharias is President and Founder of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM). Their global outreach grew from humble roots in 1984 and includes fielding a team of itinerant speakers who operate from offices located around the world including the U.S., the UK, Romania, the Middle East, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Canada. The Hallmark of Ravi's heart is his strong evangelistic and apologetic that manifests itself from a position of compassion.

What is it that makes Jesus radically different from other gods? Ravi Zacharias's thought-provoking book should be read by those who are wondering why they should accept Christianity over and against any other religion, as well as for Christians who desire to know how to better communicate the truths of the Gospel to those of other faiths. JESUS AMONG OTHER GODS provides an informative overview (but not an exhaustive study) of eastern religions including Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. It will give readers a starting point for engaging those of other faiths, by going deeper into human existential questions. For example, we must consider that every world-view is not just Christianity's must give an explanation or an answer for evil and suffering. As Ravi Zacharias explains,

“Either evil categorically does not exist, as the atheist avows, or evil is not ultimately real evil as the pantheist claims, or evil is most coherently explained by the Christian view of God and His purposes in creation. Having argued for the exclusivity of religious truth claims, Zacharias then examines the major world religions, showing how they fail to answer the fundamental questions of life, then presents a strong argument for Christ - He is who He claimed He was - the way, the truth and the life. Only through the acceptance of these exclusive claims could we make sense of life and find salvation. All religions cannot be right, because they fundamentally contradict one another. Some say religions are fundamentally the same but superficially different that’s false. They may be superficially the same but fundamentally different. As the author states “All religions are not the same. All religions do not point to God. All religions do not say that all religions are the same. At the heart of every religion is an uncompromising commitment to a particular way of defining who God is or is not and accordingly, of defining life’s purposes. The author’s defense of Christianity is plainly aimed at the Christian reader, but it is so deep and challenging that it compelled me to address many questions that I had never considered before.

This was not a quick and easy read. Although a number of the thoughts and concepts in this book have been expressed by Ravi in his talks, I still found myself having to go back and reread sections to understand them. I think I could read this book twice more and still get new perspective. What I really appreciate about this book is the approach Ravi takes. This is an argument for believing in Jesus Christ. He does this by contrasting Jesus and Christian teaching with the leaders and teachings of Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Atheism is also contrasted, but presented as it claims to be, a view of life and the universe without a God. He does this rather respectfully, I believe presenting the teachings and commenting on the logistics of the teachings rather than simply expressing emotional blasts like a sports fan of his team’s rival. Mostly I appreciate that Ravi thinks and he calls the reader to think. Not just to take someone’s word, or to glance at the surface to see if it looks good, but to look deeper and to see where such a teaching or philosophy leads. Further, he calls Christians to see the teaching of Jesus from the perspective of Jews in the first century rather than interpreting them from a 21st century perspective by default. This book has definitely challenged me and has brought fresh thoughts and perspectives to my mind. So why four stars and not five? I am trying to refine my ratings to be more accurate in my thoughts of them and the impact they have on me rather than a response to the high of having finished a book. This is a really good

book. Right now it is not one I would consider being of one of the most important I've read.

In our modern world we are constantly bombarded by the mantra that all religions are the same and that no one of them can be the truth; that the truth is subjective. This book will help solidify the honest believing Christian that the message of Christ and true Christianity is the only hope for mankind. There is no condemnation of others who do not accept the Christian faith, in fact, Mr Zacharias encourages acceptance of all who practice other faiths, while at the same time adhering to the Biblical principal that Christ is truly the only way to God, and therefore the only way to true and lasting peace. Beautifully written and easy to follow with many stories and quotes from other writers, this book should be on every serious Christian's shelf, if only to remind us regularly that, as Christ Himself said, "I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man comes to the Father but by Me."

Ravi Zacharias has approached this subject--comparative religions and Christian apologetics--differently from how I expected it and differently than I wanted, but in the end I bowed to his wisdom. It will not give you a full picture of Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism, but there are other books for that. It is designed to give the reader a starting point for engaging those of other faiths, by going deeper into human existential questions. Ravi has an Eastern love for asides and stories within stories that can get off track sometimes. I prefer listening to him on the radio to reading him, but he is still a fine writer.

Very good book. It's amazing how God used a man born into a non-christian family to reach so many with the Christian message.

This is not light reading - Ravi is on a different level of logics and apologetics, he can make your head swim. But if you pay attention and follow his train of thought, his arguments are irrefutable.

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