



September 19, 2010

*We're All The Same, Aren't We*

A few years ago, as the aftermath of 9/11 was felt throughout the country, a lot of Americans wanted to learn more about Muslims and Islam and why the attack on the World Trade Center had taken place. As details and documentaries about the religion aired some were surprised to find that the scriptures of Islam, the Koran, were interpreted by spiritual leaders, referred to as Imams, and the average Muslim was being told what to believe. There was a degree of derision in that and some characterized Muslims as being mindless followers of an ideology in the hands of a few fanatics who could use thousands to achieve their personal agendas. As I thought about that I realized there were more similarities between Muslims and those who call themselves Christians than what one might think. Many today do not study their Bible. They wait for a preacher, pastor, priest, elder, or whatever title is worn, to interpret the scriptures for them. To some degree many think they are unable to come to an understanding of the scriptures and place their spiritual well being in the hands of a few they follow without question. There are some who have criticized Muslims for suicide bombings and other acts against peaceful people. There are so called Christians who have done the same thing. Some have assassinated medical practitioners in the name of God to stop them from performing abortions. There are some who have walled themselves inside communes and cut off contact from the outside world while on the inside dictating every move to men, women and children up to and including ordering them to kill themselves. There are others who have molested children, embezzled, evaded taxes and lied to the public about who and what they are. The list could go on for pages when we look at the atrocities that are performed in the name of God and Christ. When we take a look at what God intended it is obvious that true Christianity bears little resemblance to what most people are introduced to. The scriptures tell us that God loved us enough to send his Son to save those who would believe (**John 3.16**). Christ told us that he came to do the will of his father and finish his works (**John 4.34**). Christ's final statement concerning this being, "***I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***" (**John 14.6**). Peter emphasizes the need to speak only those things that God wills. "***If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...***" (**1 Pet 4.11**). Too many have substituted their opinions for the "***oracles***" of God. There are those in the Muslim world who claim to know and reveal the will of God. There are those who claim to be Christians who do the same thing. Paul deals with this as he addresses the growing divisions at Corinth as different influences compete for control of the congregation. "***If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.***" (**1 Cor 14.37**). As Paul also wrote, "***There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.***" (**Eph 4.4-6**). Christ prayed for unity among all believers (**John 17.17-21**) who would come to him through the words of his disciples. The one God revealed one doctrine through his one son inspired and recorded by his one spirit so that we have his one word. We can all follow that if we pay attention and stop relying on others to interpret the scriptures and fashion our lives for us. We are told that we will all stand in judgment before Christ and account for the things that we have done both good and bad (**2 Cor 5.10**). How much of someone else's actions do we want to account for? How much of God's word do we really know that has not been interpreted for us. As I see it there are more similarities between humans of all religions and God's word still rings true and plain as the Lord intended it.

**TLC**