

There is no one like Him.

Part 1:

Historical Jesus vs. Cultural Jesus:

**Question 1: Was Jesus a real person? (Historicity of Jesus).**

Part 2:

**Question 2: What makes Jesus different than other religious teachers?**

1) **Jesus vs. the Rest**

a. Historical Krishna

R.C. Majumdar argues for the historicity of Krishna, “There is now a general consensus of opinion in favour of the historicity of Krishna.”<sup>1</sup> While Edwin Bryant recounts that, “Early Buddhist sources also provide evidence of the worship of Krishna prior to the Common Era,” the portrait of Krishna is, at best, hazy whether one looks at the *Nidessa* from the fourth century B.C.E. or the *Mahabharata* (dated anywhere from 3100 B.C.E. to the fourth century C.E.).<sup>2</sup> While it is reasonable to conclude that Krishna was indeed a historical figure, the shaky sands of corroborating historiographical and manuscript evidence handicap the ability of scholars to establish anything other than a very vague outline of Krishna.

Such a lack of solid historical evidence, even for making a minimal facts argument, must inevitably spill over into either vagueness or a disconnect from accepted religious tradition to religious practice. Hindu ethics have long been recognized as anything but absolute (compared to the classical monotheistic religions, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity). In this light, Hindu ethical relativism.

There is no strict separation between “is” and “ought” in Hindu ethics . . . The answer to “What ought I to do?” is more complex in Hindu ethics than in the Western religious ethics like Christianity. Of course, a simple but formal answer to this question is: “Do what dharma dictates,” or “Do whatever your dharma is.” This answer, however, is empty of content. It is like the captain of the team advising his or her players, “Do your best,” which cannot guide the players’ conduct. Unlike a single scripture such as the Bible, which is the primary authority in moral matters for Christianity, there is

no single book or a single authoritative church in Hinduism to interpret what one's dharma is. Moreover, Hinduism is a pluralistic religion and has no central authority to say conclusively what one ought or ought not to do in moral matters. Each individual is therefore responsible to find out what one's dharma is and act accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

There well could be a connection between the historical uncertainty about Krishna and the other Hindu avatars and the fluidity of dharma and ethics. One could argue that a high historical probability of the overall portrait of a religious figure would solidify the parameters of religious practice and ethical belief. A lack of the former could conceivably foster a lack of security that the received religious ritual was indeed correct. Hence, in order to compensate for considerable historical uncertainties, a wide girth in religious practice, namely ethics, could be allowed. What is not being argued for is the imposition of a contemporary requirement for historical proof upon ancient Hinduism or an unwarranted conclusion such as the lack of historical certainty or high probability always alters religious practice. Rather, that vagueness of a historical grounding point inevitably produces different historical accounts, which lead to different religious practices. Moreover, if the gist of those accounts tends towards Hindu relativism then a diversity of religious ritual would inevitably increase, not only in practicality but also in doctrine.

#### b. Historical Buddha

A similar problem confronts the scholar who attempts to ascertain some semblance of the historical Buddha. Hans Penner observes, "The issue here is are the words in the text the words of a historical person? Clearly, the only sources we have for an answer to that question are late Buddhist texts."<sup>4</sup> Manuscripts of Buddhist scriptures which speak of the Buddha are extremely late in comparison with the New Testament. If the nature of the sources is a quandary for the historical Muhammad, then the sources for the historical Buddha are, historiographically, almost without value. Edward Conze, translator of, *Buddhist Scriptures*, laments the deplorable state of the reconstruction of the historical Buddha:

Buddhist tradition differs fundamentally from that of Christianity. In Christianity we can distinguish an 'initial tradition', embodied in the 'New Testament', from a 'continuing tradition', which consists of the Fathers and doctors of the Church, the decisions of councils and synods, and the pronouncements of various hierarchies. Buddhists possess nothing that corresponds to the 'New Testament'. The 'continuing tradition' is all that is clearly attested.

The bulk of the selections in this book was written down between A.D. 100 and 400, in other words about 600 to 900 years after the Buddha's demise. For the first five hundred years the Scriptures were orally transmitted . . . different schools wrote down different things. Much of it was obviously composed centuries ago, and some of it must represent the direct and actual sayings of the Buddha himself. At present we have, however, no objective criterion which would allow us to isolate the original gospel. All attempts to find it are based on mere surmise, and the discussion of the subject generally leads to nothing but ill will and fruitless disputes.<sup>5</sup>

In light of these facts, not only does the quality of the New Testament shine brighter but also the early creeds, embedded in the New Testament, exponentially increase in historical value, especially for constructing an early Christology. There is simply no parallel in Buddhism. In an exchange with Japanese Buddhists, Paul Tillich posed the historical inquiry to the truth claims of Buddhism:

'If some historian should make it probable that a man of the name Gautama never lived, what would be the consequence for Buddhism?' After noting that the question of the historicity of Gautama Buddha has never been a central issue for Buddhism, one scholar responded by saying, 'According to the doctrine of Buddhism, the *dharma kaya* [the body of truth] is eternal, and so it does not depend upon the historicity of Gautama.'<sup>6</sup>

One would doubtfully uncover a presupposition more foreign to the Christian conception of truth claims than this. Keith Yandell and Harold Netland portray the vivid distinction between the non-necessity of Buddha's historicity and the historicity of an orthodox Christ, "Christian faith, by contrast, is inextricably rooted in the historical person of Jesus so that Christian teachings cannot be separated from his life, death and resurrection."<sup>7</sup> The proposition of this paper is not only that, as Yandell and Netland argue, Christian teachings cannot be separated from the historical Jesus but also the clearest picture of the actual Jesus is found within the creeds recorded in the New Testament.

### c. Historical Muhammad

The new religion, born out of the deserts of modern day Saudi Arabia, that took the Middle East by storm in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, is surprisingly historically anemic concerning verifiable facts about Muhammad. Of this intriguing evidential gap, Von Irving M. Zeitlin writes:

With regard to Muhammad's Meccan period, practically nothing is known for sure except his marriage and his preaching. The Quran itself provides no coherent biographical narrative, and as [F. E.] Peters aptly observes, "For Muhammad, unlike Jesus, there is no Josephus to provide a contemporary political context, no literary apocrypha for a spiritual context and no Qumran scrolls to illuminate a Palestinian 'sectarian milieu.' . . . The original text of Ibn Ishaq's biography was lost, and no extant copy of the original exists. All we have is the recension by Ibn Hisham who died more than 200 years after the Hirja...the truth, then, is that the quest for the historical Muhammad is beset with difficulties and problems, the chief of which is the nature of the sources."<sup>8</sup>

The primary problems arising from "the nature of the sources" is that they are from non-eyewitnesses far removed by several generations from the actual events. Unlike the study of the historical Jesus, which has mountains of eyewitness testimonies, as well as enemy attestation within less than one hundred years, there is no such manuscript evidence for the historical Muhammad. On this note, Peters laments:

The historicity of the Islamic tradition is . . . to some degree problematic: while there are no cogent internal grounds for rejecting it, there are equally no cogent external grounds for accepting it . . . The only way out of the dilemma is thus to step outside the Islamic tradition altogether and start again.<sup>9</sup>

Undoubtedly, parallel or contemporary sources can greatly assist understanding the historical basis of one's religion but to have to comprehensively "step outside" of the sources altogether should be a cause for serious concern. As will be demonstrated, the existence of the early Christian creeds alleviates the study of the historical Jesus from such a dire predicament.

#### d. Historical Jesus

Some claim that between the death of Jesus and the composition of the New Testament, the biblical writers changed Jesus from a charismatic leader into the Messiah. John Dominic Crossan calls the 30s and 40s of the first century: "the lost years of earliest Christianity...dark ages."<sup>10</sup> While there's usually a market for theories like this on popular level blogs, it reflects a willful ignoring of the data. Manuscript evidence for Jesus outweighs the evidence for not only every other ancient religious leader, but also secular leaders by leaps and bounds. Gary Habermas recounts:

The New Testament is easily the best attested ancient writing in

terms of the number of manuscripts. Ancient classical works have comparatively few manuscripts, with twenty entire or partial copies generally being an excellent number. By comparison the New Testament has over 5,000 copies. Such a wide difference would provide the New Testament with a much better means of textual criticism, which is crucially important in ascertaining the original readings.<sup>11</sup>

Habermas' point concerning textual evidence is enormous. Michael Grant argues: "But, above all, if we apply to the New Testament, as we should, the same sort of criteria as we should apply to other ancient writings containing historical material, we can no more reject Jesus' existence than we can reject the existence of a mass of pagan personages whose reality as historical figures is never questioned."<sup>12</sup> Simply put, if we toss out Jesus, we'd be intellectually obligated to discard vast portions of ancient history as well. If Jesus goes down, so does pretty much everyone else. The ungrounded disparity in historical standards should pique our curiosity as to whether there's some other motivation than a quest for knowledge.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's genius sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, comments: "Once your point of view is changed, the very thing which was so damning becomes a clue to the truth."<sup>13</sup> This is precisely the point. As we've noted, we all have bias. But when our minds calcify around that bias, we run the risk of missing not merely a historical observation, but the point of life itself. If the Jesus of Scripture is indeed the real Jesus of history, then we owe it to ourselves to not run past him. Again, we would do well to heed the cautions of Sherlock Holmes: "It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It biases the judgment."<sup>14</sup>

### **Question 3: What difference did Jesus make? (Jesus and Human Rights).**

Andrew Davis, "Defending Religious Pluralism for Religious Education," in *Ethics and Education*: "Religious exclusivism, or the idea that only one religion can be true, fuels hatred and conflict in the modern world...I contend that a settled conviction that religions conflict with each other and that one particular religion is 'right', threatens peaceful co-existence."<sup>15</sup>

- 1) Valued the vulnerable
  - a. Solidified the personhood of children

Victoria Brignell observes:

We can also tell a lot about a culture's values by the language it uses. Neither the Greeks or the Romans had a word equivalent to 'disabled' but the term that they often use is '*teras*' (for the

Greeks) and ‘*monstrum*’ (for the Romans). These are the same words they use to describe mythological monsters, such as the Gorgon Medusa. The Latin ‘*mutus*’ referred to both somebody who couldn’t speak and someone who is stupid.<sup>16</sup>

Again, these are *old beliefs and practices*, which is why we desperately need the good news of Jesus Christ that will turn our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

#### b. Orphanages

Godly men such as George Mueller built orphanages and delivered untold numbers of orphans out of heartbreaking conditions in the time of the industrial revolution.<sup>17</sup>

Charles H. Spurgeon: “The God that answers by orphanages, let him be God.”<sup>18</sup>

Romans 8:15-17a

*For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,<sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,*

#### c. Infanticide and abortion

For followers of Christ, there’s no more exposing your unwanted children who’ve been born. In the early church, this extended even to the unborn. Epistle of Barnabas, “Thou shalt not slay the child by procuring abortion; nor, again, shalt thou destroy it after it is born. Thou shalt not withdraw thy hand from thy son, or from thy daughter, but from their infancy thou shalt teach them the fear of the Lord.”<sup>19</sup> The early Christians were horrified at the practice of *expositio* and responded with mercy.

#### d. Criminalization of pedophilia

One way we can see how early Christians clashed with the majority culture is to read their early writings. One of these is the *Didache*. Benjamin Wiker notes:

The first-century A.D. catechetical manual, the *Didache*, makes refreshingly clear what pagans will have to give up...once they entered the Church. It begins with the ominous words, “There are two ways: one of life and one of death—and there is a great

difference between the two ways.” The pagan converts are then confronted with a list of commands. Some of which would have been quite familiar and reasonable to Romans, such as, “You will not murder” and, “You will not commit adultery” (although for Romans, abortion wasn’t murder, and a husband having sex with slaves or prostitutes was not considered adulterous). But then followed strange commands (at least to the Romans), “You will not corrupt boys”; “You will not have illicit sex” (*ou porneuseis*); “You will not murder offspring by means of abortion [and] you will not kill one having been born.” Against the norm in Rome, Christians must reject pedophilia, fornication and homosexuality, abortion, and infanticide.<sup>20</sup>

Pederasty (sexual activity with children). This is a *major* theme in the writings of the early church fathers. They condemned time and time again the “corrupting/polluting” of boys.<sup>21</sup> Jesus valued children and warned of judgment for those who would offend one of these little ones.

e. Established the value of women

There were several sexual norms that were widely accepted in Jesus’ day outside of the Jewish community:

- Pederasty (child molestation).
- Sex with slaves (men, women, and children), prostitutes, mistresses, etc.
- Homosexual acts (homosexual orientation not required).

The two main distinctions that set Christianity apart from the surrounding Greco-Roman world:

- Exclusive worship of Jesus Christ as God: Rejection of idol worship.
- Exclusive sexual monogamy: Sex is reserved for monogamous heterosexual marriage (Acts 15:28-29).

Virtually the only sexual prohibition in the world of the first Christians was a free male playing a submissive role.<sup>22</sup> Philosopher Martha Nussbaum explains, “What is socially important is to penetrate rather than to be penetrated . . . the passive recipient is marked by that fact as of lower social status.”<sup>23</sup> Other than that, sexual anarchy reigned supreme. Since there was an abundance of slaves (men, women, and children), prostitutes, male escorts and female escorts, and other people of high social status who didn’t mind being submissive behind closed doors, just about anything that moved was fair game. Fortson & Grams write, “The sexual ethics of Paul the

apostle and the early church which followed his teaching turned the Roman world upside down. In a radical reversal of Greco-Roman values, Christian leaders instructed believers that sexual relations were only acceptable in heterosexual marriage.”<sup>24</sup>

Then Jesus Christ came into the picture and preached a message also carried by the apostles, of exclusive monogamy in heterosexual marriage. For a first-century Roman male, it would be difficult to imagine a more revolutionary message: No more idols, not only because God alone is worthy of our worship but also because idolatry is synonymous with sexual activity outside of marriage. Instead of all that, guys, you now direct all of your love, affection, and sexual passion towards your wife and only your wife. No more slave girls, no more slave boys, no more men (whether slave or free). And tell the prostitutes goodbye, too. Every person other than your wife is sexually off limits. Today, regardless of our religious beliefs, we understand how healthy marital fidelity is to the husband, wife, and the children. We have Jesus to thank for that.

Roman women of the time did complain but were essentially told to get over it and know their role as *something* there simply to produce a legitimate heir to the only one that really mattered, the free male. That’s the sort of world that Jesus came into. That’s the world that the Apostle Paul wrote those beautiful epistles to the early church that gave women something they did not have and could not find anywhere else which was equality in value and worth before God and in the church. In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul writes, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*” (Gal. 3:28). This may be one reason why historians note the untold numbers of women who flocked to Christianity during this time. The Christian teaching on sexuality allowed these precious women to see that Jesus was different.

- 2) Mercy & Cruelty
  - a. Ended the gladiatorial shows

William Lecky records: “There is scarcely . . . any other single reform so important in the moral history of mankind as the suppression of the gladiatorial shows, and this feat must be almost exclusively ascribed to the Christian church. When we remember how extremely few of the best and greatest men of the Roman world had absolutely condemned the games of the amphitheatre, it is impossible to regard, without the deepest admiration, the unwavering and uncompromising consistency of the patristic denunciations.”<sup>25</sup>



b. Confronted cultures of revenge

An “eye for an eye” existed to restrain violence: Genesis 4:23 *Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me.*

Leviticus 24:20

*fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him.*

Matthew 5:38-45a

*You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’<sup>39</sup> But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.<sup>40</sup> And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.<sup>41</sup> And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.<sup>43</sup> You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’<sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.*

c. Humane treatment of animals

William Wilberforce: *Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* (1824)

Deuteronomy 25:4

*You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.*

Proverbs 12:10

*Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.*

Matthew 10:29b

*And not one of them [sparrows] will fall to the ground apart from your Father.*

d. Freedom and the abolition of slavery

Genesis 1:27

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

Romans 2:11

*For God shows no partiality.*

For human rights, Christian Theism offers a foundational belief that all persons of every age, stage, and shade have been made in the image of God and thus are all worthy of dignity and respect. Jesus shows us what this looks like. Nancy Pearcey illustrates this point:

The only logical grounds for affirming that “all men are created equal” is an appeal to a Creator . . . Even the arch-atheist Friedrich Nietzsche recognized that the “Christian concept . . . of the ‘equality of souls before God’ . . . furnishes the prototype of *all* theories of equal rights...A Christian concept of personhood depends not on what I can do but on who I am—that I am created in the image of God, and that God has called me into existence and continues to know and love me.<sup>26</sup>

We not only find vast support in Christian theism for the idea that all persons have value, but also foundations for unity. For example, Paul’s admonition to slave owners to remember that they also had a Master in heaven blazes the intellectual trail to freedom (Col. 4:1). Scripture also points to a day where persons from “*every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,*” will stand *together* before God as His redeemed people from every conceivable place and culture on the planet, yet as one family (Rev. 7:9). This “all nations” snapshot stands in stark contrast to the Empires of crushed and oppressed peoples. The Bible presents God weaving together a beautiful tapestry of unified persons into a new nation, a new family. No longer are those persons identified by old ethnic prejudices or racial hatred, but by a collective unity in belief that Jesus is Lord. Because of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul writes, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*” (Gal. 3:28). Because of Jesus, a Christian man can say to another, “You are truly my brother from another mother.” Wayne Grudem explains:

Paul was saying here that when people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds are able to love one another and work together in the church, this is remarkably different from the tendency throughout history for people of different backgrounds to live in animosity and sometimes even war against one another. But God brings it about because in Christ he has “*broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility*” (Eph. 2:14). Angels see this and rejoice, while demons witness it and are infuriated.<sup>27</sup>

Plato captures the pagan view of slavery in what has become known as “Might Makes Right.” He opposed enslavement of fellow Greeks but believed that, “nature produces a ‘slavish people’ lacking the mental capacity for virtue or culture, and fit only to serve.”<sup>28</sup>

2 Corinthians 3:13

*“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”*

Isaiah 61:1

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;”*

Luke 4:16-22

*And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. <sup>17</sup> And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” <sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. <sup>21</sup> And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”*

Galatians 5:1

*For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*

John 8:31-32

*So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

e. Compassion for the poor

- Jesus repeatedly mentions the circumstantially poor in the Gospels
- Luke 10:25-37 Parable of the Good Samaritan

“greatly ministered to the physical and spiritual needs of millions of poor in the urban areas of the world (although the spiritual emphasis seems to be played down in most of the chapters today).”<sup>29</sup>

Proverbs 14:31

*Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.*

Proverbs 22:2

*The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all.*

Carl J. Richard contrasts the Christian ethic to the callousness of paganism: Converting to Christianity meant joining a family that offered physical, economic, and emotional support in an exceedingly troubled time. Early Christians shared their wealth freely with widows, orphans, the elderly, the unemployed, the disabled, and the ill. They placed their lives at grave risk caring for victims of the plague and other natural disasters, while pagans fled. They ransomed one another from barbarian captors, distributed bread during famines, and visited prisoners and miners, the most wretched of all the slaves. One group of Christians in Rome even sold themselves into slavery to raise the money to ransom their brethren from prison. They provided for the burial of the poor and were hospitable to travelers.<sup>30</sup>

Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop wrote in their book, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* “Cultures can be judged in many ways, but eventually every nation in every age must be judged by this test: *How did it treat people?*”<sup>31</sup>

#### f. Hospitals & Hospice

Nancy Pearcey writes in, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*:

Most people do not know that the hospice movement has Christian roots. It was the brainchild of an English medical humanitarian, Dame Cecily Saunders, in the 1960s, and it arose directly from her deep Anglican faith...The concept behind the hospice movement is that patients are whole persons, not just physical organisms. Saunders said, ‘I coined the term ‘total pain,’ from my understanding that dying people have physical, spiritual, psychological, and social pain that must be treated.’ For many people, the greatest pain in dying is the emotional isolation...Hospice care has even changed the minds of some

non-Christians. Ian Haines, an oncologist who describes himself as a secular humanist, used to believe ‘that euthanasia was the only humane solution. I no longer believe that.’<sup>32</sup>

### 3) Science & Education

Rodney Stark: “While the other world religions emphasized mystery and intuition, Christianity alone embraced reason and logic as the primary guide to religious truth... Rene Descartes justified his search for natural “laws” on grounds that such laws must exist because God is perfect and therefore “acts in a manner as constant and immutable as possible,” except for the rare exceptions of miracles.”<sup>33</sup>

#### **Question 4: What difference can Jesus make in my life?**

The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus: “To sum up all in one word—what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world...They marry, as do all [others]; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all.”<sup>34</sup>

#### **Q: Who is Jesus Christ?**

**A: “He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.”<sup>35</sup>**

#### **Q: What difference can Jesus make in my life?**

**A: Ephesians 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,***

G. K. Chesterton, *The Paradoxes of Christianity*: “Christianity came in here as before. It came in startlingly with a sword, and clove one thing from another. It divided the crime from the criminal. The criminal we must forgive unto seventy times seven. The crime we must not forgive at all...We must be much more angry with theft than before, and yet much kinder to thieves than before. There was room for wrath and love to run wild. And the more I considered Christianity, the more I found that while it had established a rule and order, the chief aim of that order was to give room for good things to run wild.”<sup>36</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, vol. I (Bombay [Mumbai], Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1951), 303.
- <sup>2</sup> Edwin Francis Bryant, *Krishna: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4.
- <sup>3</sup> Robin Rinehart, ed., *Contemporary Hinduism: Ritual, Culture, and Practice*, "Hindu Ethics," by S.S. Rama Rao Pappu (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Inc., 2004), 166, 169.
- <sup>4</sup> Hans H. Penner, *Rediscovering the Buddha: Legends of Buddha and their Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 128.
- <sup>5</sup> Edward Conze, trans. *Buddhist Scriptures* (New York: Penguin Books, 1959), 11-12.
- <sup>6</sup> 'Tillich Encounters Japan,' edited by Robert W. Wood, *Japanese Religions*, vol. 2 (May 1961), 48-50. Cited in, Keith Yandell and Harold Netland, *Buddhism: A Christian Exploration and Appraisal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 197-198.
- <sup>7</sup> Keith Yandell and Harold Netland, *Buddhism: A Christian Exploration and Appraisal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 198.
- <sup>8</sup> Irving M. Zeitlin, *The Historical Muhammad* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007), 1-2.
- <sup>9</sup> Francis E. Peters, *Muhammad and Origins of Islam* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 312.
- <sup>10</sup> Paul Barnett, *The Birth of Christianity: The First Twenty Years* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 1. R. T. France claims: "Mark's presentation of Jesus as Messiah was not a development from Jesus' own claim but a falsification of it." R. T. France, "Development in New Testament Christology," *Themelios* 18 (1992), 5, *ibid.*, 2.
- <sup>11</sup> Gary R. Habermas, *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ* (Joplin: College Press, 1996), 54. See F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 16.
- <sup>12</sup> Michael Grant, *Jesus: An Historian's Review of the Gospels* (New York: Scribner's, 1977), 199-200, in Habermas, *The Historical Jesus*, 36.
- <sup>13</sup> Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Problem of Thor Bridge," *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2003), 594.
- <sup>14</sup> Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet* (Madison, WI: Cricket House Books, 2010), 23.
- <sup>15</sup> Andrew Davis, "Defending Religious Pluralism for Religious Education," *Ethics and Education*, 5, No. 3 (November 2010): 189, 190.  
<http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=55816088&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- <sup>16</sup> Victoria Brignell, "Ancient world: Smeared in mustard, paraded naked - the curious and often cruel treatment of disabled people in Anci," *New Statesman*, April 7, 2008, <http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/crips-column/2008/04/disabled-slaves-child-roman>.
- <sup>17</sup> See George Muller, *The Autobiography of George Muller* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1984).
- <sup>18</sup> Charles Richmond Henderson, "Christianity and Children," *The Biblical World*, vol. 8, no. 6 (December 1896): 477.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Epistle of Barnabas* (Volume 1), Philip Schaff trans. & ed., (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885), Chapter XIX—The Way of Light 400.
- <sup>20</sup> Benjamin Wiker, "Gay Marriage—There is nothing new under the sun," *Catholic World Report*, May 22, 2012, <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2012/05/22/gay-marriage-nothing-new-under-the-sun/>.
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