



## Session Objective

Participants will learn that all of us, whatever religious beliefs we hold, were made in God's image. They will investigate what it means that God loves and pursues all of God's children, even though we may understand and worship God in very different ways.

## Faith Statement

God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of our world. God's Spirit works in surprising places throughout creation and is found even among people who are unaware of the Spirit's presence. The Creator endows all persons with God's own image.

—Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue, Part 2



## Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- What path did you take to get here today?
- Are any paths better or worse? In what respect are they better or worse?
- How is religion like or unlike traveling here?
- Are there many paths to experiencing God? If yes, are any paths or denominations better or worse? In what respect are they better or worse? If no, can some paths get you somewhere, but not quite to God? Where might they get you?



## Explore

Read Isaiah 25:6–8 and explore these questions:

- To whom does this passage refer? (*all people*)
- What does the passage say the Lord will do for all people?
- What does the passage imply about God's care for you? What does it imply about God's care for Christians? What does it imply about God's care for non-Christians?
- How do you feel about this message that God cares and has plans for people who do not believe what you believe? Is that fair? Why or why not?



## Express

Use the following questions to help the participants express what they've learned. Also, consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the Bible passage.

- Why are you a Christian? Was it your own wisdom and faith that brought you to God? Did God pursue you, or were you ever just in the right place at the right time?
- In terms of people from other faith traditions, did they choose their religion? Did God lead them there, or were they in their place at their time?
- Does God hold it against people who were born in a country in which Christianity is uncommon or oppressed? Does God expect people who never hear the gospel to commit to following Christ?



## Exit

Ask: How does your personal faith fit into your religion? Close your time together with prayer.





## Session Objective

Participants will consider what it means that there is a God and that God is One. This session can help your participants proclaim this most basic statement of Christian belief, as part of their own personal creed and to non-Christian neighbors who think we believe in too many or too few deities.

## Faith Statement

We confess and acknowledge one God alone, to whom alone we must cleave, whom alone we must serve, whom only we must worship, and in whom alone we put our trust.

—Scots Confession (3.01)



## Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- What might Christians like you have in common with people who belong to other religions?
- What's so special about believing in one God?
- How would your life be different if you didn't believe in any gods? If you believed in many gods?



## Explore

Read Joshua 24:14–15, and explore these questions:

- Have you chosen to believe in God, or have you always simply assumed that God exists? Why?
- Why might someone believe there aren't any gods? Why might someone believe there are many gods?
- Why do you choose to believe in God rather than not to believe in God?
- Why do you choose to believe in one God rather than many gods?



## Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Also, consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the Bible passage.

- In 1 Corinthians 8:4–6, Paul denies the existence of *so-called* gods. What are some things that seem like so-called gods in contemporary culture? What are the so-called gods in your life?
- How do people treat so-called gods? How do you treat them?
- What can so-called gods do for your life? What can God do?
- How can you ignore the so-called gods? How can you focus more of your attention and obedience on God?
- What will happen if you can focus more on the real God?



## Exit

Give each person an opportunity to share a different reason why he or she believes in God. Close your time together with prayer.





# What Do Other Religions Believe about Jesus?



## Session Objective

Participants will investigate what sets Christianity apart from other monotheistic religions, namely its commitment to Jesus the Christ. They will learn what other religions say about Jesus and what we distinctively proclaim.

## Faith Statement

### Question 49. Will all human beings be saved?

No one will be lost who can be saved. The limits to salvation, whatever they may be, are known only to God. Three truths above all are certain. God is a holy God who is not to be trifled with. No one will be saved except by grace alone. And no judge could possibly be more gracious than our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

—Study Catechism: Full Version



## Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- What would Christianity be like without Christ? What would we believe? What would Christian worship be like if we didn't care about Christ the way we do?
- How might your life be different if you believed Jesus was merely a prophet, and not the Son of God, who died for your sins?
- Why do you think Jews, Muslims, and Baha'is believe in the same God as us, but don't believe in Jesus?
- What is a good reason for you to believe in Jesus? Would those reasons convince someone who didn't grow up believing in Jesus?



## Explore

Read John 3:16, and explore these questions:

- What do you believe about Jesus? What are some other things that other Christians believe about Jesus?
- When someone believes in Jesus, do they necessarily believe all of these things?
- Is God more likely to forgive a very moral non-Christian or a very immoral Christian? Why?
- Read John 3:16 again; if God "so loved the world," the whole world, will God grant any non-Christians eternal grace? Why or why not?
- Does God send non-Christians, who grew up with another religion and maybe never even heard the gospel, to eternal damnation? Why or why not?



## Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Also, consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the Bible passage.

- Do you have any Christian images in your house, car, or locker? Why do you or don't you display them?
- Do you think about God when you wear or display a cross? How might your faith change if you thought about God more often?
- How would you feel if a non-Christian came to worship wearing a cross? How would you feel going to worship at a non-Christian service if you had to wear something special (such as a yarmulke) or sit apart from other genders (as in mosques)? Why?
- Is there anything in worship that should be done only by Christians? Can you pray genuinely with people of other faiths?
- When do you cross the line of your faith by interacting with people of other religions?
- How is Jesus Christ a boundary for your faith?



## Exit

Pray together the Shema, the prayer that many devout Jews use to start their mornings:

Hear, O Israel, the LORD is our God. The LORD is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom forever and ever.

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

And you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall speak of them

when you sit at home, and when you walk along the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up

And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.

And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.



## Session Objective

Participants will discover that respect is key to interfaith relations. They will explore how to learn from people of other religions and how to talk to them about Christianity. In doing so, participants will discover a way of learning more about themselves and their own faith.

## Faith Statement

Christians find parallels between other religions and their own and must approach all religions with openness and respect.

—Confession of 1967 (9.42),  
Inclusive Language Text



## Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- Do you ever spend time with people who are not Christian? If not, why not? If so, do you ever talk about your different religious beliefs?
- How can rarely or never talking with people who are not Christians affect your spiritual journey?
- What is the best thing that can happen by having friends from other religions? What is the worst thing?
- How would Jesus treat people who are not Christians?



## Explore

Read Luke 10:25-37, and explore these questions:

- Why does Jesus use a non-Jewish Samaritan to tell Jews a story about being a good neighbor?
- If Jesus was here today, would he tell a similar story about a "Good Muslim"? What would it mean about neighborliness if the story were about a "Good Atheist"?
- How are you a neighbor to people of other faiths? How can you be a better neighbor?



## Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Also, consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the Bible passage.

- Some Muslims believe that God wants the whole world to convert to Islam. Do you think everyone should be Christian? Why or why not?
- Who should hear the message of Christ most of all?
- What does it mean to "approach all religions with openness and respect"? How have you done that? How can you do it more?
- How can you be respectful to people of other religions and still share your faith?



## Exit

Work together to create and say a prayer that is distinctly Christian and yet respectful to use with people of other faiths.

