

# Why Christ

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I believe that man is capable of knowing God. We are all created to seek God. For example, when thinking of the planet earth and the universe or just looking into a single flower, we will recognize the existence beyond us.

I hear people say, "I'm not sure if it should be called God, but I do believe there is a greater power that created man and reigns over the whole universe." Many people believe in a God-like being, and say, "I've prayed to God." This is indicative that God has given us the power to know Him.

However, while believing in a God-like existence, most people resist accepting one specific God.

I used to be one of them. It was easy for me to consider God as an energy in the universe, but it was quite difficult to admit that Christ is the God and that He is the only God. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to believe it by our intellect or willpower.

That is because man's ego prevents it. The more he holds on to his way of thinking and what he thinks is right, the more he resists believing in Christ. Although at birth or even before birth man is given the desire to know God, during the maturing process he develops an idea that God is not needed.

Some may say, "I believe in something divine, but I don't believe in Christ." While this may be an honest remark of those who seek God, it is the strongest assertion of man's ego that would not accept Christ. He is merely insisting on his own intellectual pleasure and ego-centric way of life.

As long as man keeps asserting himself, he can never believe in Christ. When he keeps demanding that his ego should be fully persuaded, his eyes are constantly turned to himself.

Actually what man wants is a god who accepts his ego-centric way. Such a god should not have a specific name, because if he believes in the one and only God, he has to give up other gods, losing freedom of his self-dominion. Man by nature guards the kingdom of his own self.

Even if he admits the one God, he now murmurs why it should be Christ. “Why not Buddha or Muhammad? How about the fanatic followers of Aum? They believe in their leader as the absolute god. What is the difference from faith in Christ?”

Why Christ? My answer is this: Because the cross is given to us only through Christ. This is not the intellectual answer to please your ego. Do you want to continue your old way of not believing unless you understand, or do you believe in Christ though you do not understand? Christ is love. You may not understand what kind of love it is, but won't you dare to gamble on Him?

Then you may ask, “Why couldn't I gamble on something else?” If you gamble on Aum, for instance, you are made to listen to a recording of the founder's voice for a thousand hours so that you may revere him as god. You can buy your rank with money, and your goal is clearly visible.

The cross of Christ, on the other hand, is not visible and we cannot touch it with our hands. No matter how deeply we believe, we cannot have a visible proof of faith. We are not asked to pray for a thousand hours, and even if we pray that much, it does not necessarily deepen our faith. Studying the Bible and obtaining profound knowledge neither promotes us

to a higher rank as strong believers nor gives us more love from Christ. A large amount of money offering does not make us righteous. Even if we ask, “What should I do to prove my faith?” there is no answer, because the answer lies in faith, which is the faith in the cross.

Faith without the cross, I am afraid, will lead us to the things of this world and eventually make us attached to them. It means that our eyes will be averted from God. Because there is no cross, we will end up worshipping a man and following his words. Our eyes will be turned to a man, only to a man. It will make us cling to the worldly values such as money and power.

Without the cross we will end up justifying our self-centeredness.

The cross has the power to free us from our ego and separates us from the worldly things. The more we know the cross, the more we are detached.

The cross stands in-between my desire to believe in God and my ego that fights to prevent it. I seek the truth, yet my ego tries to avert my eyes from the truth. The cross breaks down man’s arrogance which keeps him from seeing the truth in Christ. Moreover, the cross destroys the power of the enemy that hinders man to see the truth. And it is done by Christ without any effort on man’s part.

However, Christ is love. Japanese martial arts and other religions may also lead people to enlightenment of selflessness, yet training and discipline is necessary. Only a few can actually attain it. Knowing little of such enlightenment, I cannot talk big, but such a world of selflessness is different from the world of Christ’s love. His love never leads us to nil, but fills us with His absolute love.

The Aum leader claims to have achieved enlightenment

and murders people with poisonous gas. It shows us the extremity of where there is no cross. Power aims for more power and binds people. Love aims for more love, liberating people continually.

When we believe in Christ, life as a new person begins. The power of the cross and resurrection of Christ reigns over those who believe. I am no longer living by my ego, but given the life of Christ. No training is demanded and no discipline is required. Man is justified by faith, and this is only possible by the cross.

The more I believe in the cross and know the cross, the freer I become. I still have problems and pains, yet they can neither shake the core of my being nor destroy me. Rather I can believe that the cross makes those pains and problems work for good.

The risen life of Christ has the extraordinary power. It is not swayed even by death.

He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? (John 11:25-26)

“Do you believe this?” Jesus is asking the question to each one of us, for faith alone is sufficient.

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\* Aum Shinrikyo is a Japanese cultic religion known as a terrorist organization which carried out the Sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995. (Editor)

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