



Sermon Discussion Guide

Oct. 4 & 5, 2025

"Aren't All Religions Basically the Same?"

[Acts 17:16-25](#)

This five-part series in our year-long theme **52 Questions for 2025** explores what we believe and why. Over the next few weeks, we'll look at what sets Christianity apart, why there are so many denominations, what we believe about the Reformation and the church, and how faith compares to atheism and agnosticism. Join us each week as we take a closer look at what we believe.

PRAY & CONNECT

Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and trust him to guide you. Take time to recap the message or view it on [hopeonline.tv](#). Did you have any ah-ha moments where you felt convicted, compelled, or inspired during the sermon? What's been on your mind this week? Have you been able to apply the message to your everyday life?

GROW

Read [Acts 17:16-34](#) – **"Paul Preaches in Athens"**

- Paul saw the idols in Athens and was troubled. Why do you think we're drawn to create modern idols like success and control?
- What can we learn from Paul's approach to conversations about faith with people who believe differently?
- Paul proclaimed that God does not live in temples built by human hands but gives life and breath to all things. How does that change the way you think about God's nearness or accessibility? When have you sensed God's presence in unexpected places?
- Why do you think faith in Jesus is compelling *and* controversial? How can you respond with grace when people misunderstand?

Read [John 14:1-6](#) – **"Jesus, The Way to the Father"**

- Jesus tells his disciples, "Don't let your hearts be troubled." When has your heart felt most troubled about faith, life, or the future?
- How do you relate to Thomas's honesty about not understanding? Why do you think it's important to bring your questions to Jesus?
- Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." How does this challenge the idea that all religions lead to the same place?
- What makes Jesus' invitation radically different from other worldviews?

Read [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) – **"Made Alive with Christ"**

- Paul says, "God saved you by his grace when you believed." Why do you think it's hard for people to believe God's love is freely given?
- How does viewing salvation as a gift change the way you see God and yourself?
- Paul says salvation "is not a reward for the good things we have done." Why is that truth freeing and at the same time humbling?
- "No one can boast." What does that reveal about the culture of God's kingdom compared to the culture of our world?

Read [Romans 8:31-39](#) – **"Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love"**

- Paul begins, "If God is for us, who can ever be against us?" What does that truth mean to you personally?
- Where do you struggle to believe that God really wants good for you?
- Paul asks, "Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen?" Why do you think we still live under guilt or shame when God already declares us innocent in Christ? How might receiving that truth free you to forgive yourself and others more easily?
- The passage ends with Paul's assurance that "nothing ... can ever separate us from God's love." How does that promise give you strength when life feels uncertain or painful? What distractions or lies try to convince you that God's love is distant or conditional?

APPLY

Pick one of the applications below to put into practice this week.

- **Examine what you're leaning on.** Take 10 quiet minutes to reflect on what you currently "put your weight on." Write down three things you rely on for stability, like success, relationships, or control, and ask God to reveal whether they can really hold you. End your time by praying, "Jesus, teach me to trust you more than anything else."
- **Strengthen the foundation of your faith.** Read through John 14:1-6 or Romans 8:31-39 each morning. After reading, name one truth about God you can depend on that day. Share one of those reflections with a friend or family member.
- **Share the one who holds you.** Think of someone who may be placing their weight on things that can't hold them; perhaps a friend searching for purpose or someone struggling with uncertainty. Pray for them daily, and look for one natural opportunity to talk about how faith in Jesus has brought stability or peace in your own life.