

## “ON WHICH SIDE ARE YOU?”

You might remember hearing or reading about a female university professor who is now in serious trouble and could lose her position because she made the statement that Christians and Muslims worship the *same God*. The administration of the school was incensed, called her on the carpet and, in effect, indicated that her position was heretical and not in keeping with the values of the school. I have not continued to follow the story, but I believe she still is prevented from teaching her classes while the administration decides whether or not permanently to terminate her.

It's true, of course, that Muslims represent one of the many *non-Christian* religions of the world; so, on that basis, the aforementioned school contends that Muslims worship a different God, and their God has nothing in common with the God to whom Jesus pointed, the one whom *Christians* worship. The school administration quotes, as proof, a comment of Jesus in which he is reported to have said: “I am the way, the truth and the life; and no one comes to the Father except through me.” Because of that, the school contends that Muslims and other *non-Christians* are not accepted by God.

Well, what do you think about that? On which side are *you*? Are you on the side of the school—or that of the professor? The question is an important one, and most people with whom I have talked say that they're on the side of the school. Muslims and Christians do *not* worship the same God.

At our next worship gathering on Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, I am going to take a very *different* position; and, surprisingly, I plan to use exactly the *same* passage of scripture quoted by the school's administration (“No one comes to the Father except through me”) as the basis for what I shall say. However, obviously, I will be *interpreting* that scripture differently. The title of my message will be “A GOD *WITHOUT* BOUNDARIES.”

I hope you will be present for this extremely significant worship experience and for what I believe will be an immensely helpful discussion afterward. We should have a really wonderful time together as, in our usual spirit of love and caring, we explore the deeper meaning of what I believe is a consistently misunderstood passage of scripture.

Please pray that the Spirit of God will speak through me—and through each one of us.

**Your pastor and friend,  
John**

## **IT'S HAPPENING AT CCM!**

**Sunday, February 14 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Month)**

**10:00 a.m. OPENING TO THE SACRED THROUGH WORSHIP**

A disembodied gospel, one that is never applied to the realities of everyday life, is of little value. Many of the issues we face today are quite different from those that people encountered in the 1<sup>st</sup> century—and in a totally different part of the world. To use three metaphors that Jesus himself employed, we are called to be “salt” and “light” and “leaven” in our *own* day.

One of our exciting distinctive at CCM is that we take that calling seriously. We *do* apply the teachings of Jesus and the values he enunciated to our own day, just as he did in his. We'll be doing that again in our worship this morning. As John stated in his article, his message for today is entitled, “A GOD WITHOUT BOUNDARIES”—a biblical perspective that is not clearly understood in some churches—at least, not in *our* part of the country: the fact that people in other religions who do not necessarily *claim* to be followers of Jesus can, indeed, be acceptable to God.

You are invited to participate, if you wish, in a lively discussion of the sermon following worship—*another* CCM distinctive! (Out by about 12 noon)

**Sunday, February 28 (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month)**

**10:00 a.m. OPENING TO THE SACRED THROUGH REFLECTION  
AND DISCUSSION: OUR ENCOUNTER FORUM**

Every time we come to one of these special sessions, we are consciously, intentionally opening ourselves to a possible encounter with the sacred. Every time we choose *not* to be present, we consciously, intentionally, are closing ourselves off from a possible encounter with the sacred—God, and that which is ultimate and potentially transformative. That is why we deal in each session with issues and material that is extremely significant and compelling enough to be life giving.

Today, we'll explore the deep meaning of what might be called “non-dual spirituality,” *without* which our lives and human relationships can be substantially flawed. If you don't *know* what “non-dual Christianity” is (or a non-dual way of following the teachings of Jesus), then you definitely need to be present. We'll also be touching on a number of other areas that can be of immense value in helping to make life more vital and fulfilling. (Out by 11:30 a.m. or 12 noon, depending upon the extent of productive discussion)