

Christianity is a straitjacket.

Q: What is one of the biggest sacrifices you have ever made?

### **Introduction**

“One-truth-fits-all approach is too confining.”  
To say that someone should accept everything in the Bible or otherwise they are wrong limits people’s freedom.

Christianity bars from its community those that do not adhere to its beliefs/standards.

Christianity seems to fail to realize that they are other cultures that see reality differently. [Christianity should not claim to have the corner on truth.]

Some people think that Christianity will stifle their creativity and growth because it is too narrow and limiting.

“Christianity looks like the enemy of social cohesion, cultural adaptability, and even authentic personhood.

**However, this objection is based on mistakes about the**

### **The nature of**

1. **truth**
2. **community**
3. **Christianity**
4. **Liberty**

### **Truth is unavoidable**

***All truth-claims are an attempt to get power.***

Example: “everyone should do justice to the poor”

Two possibilities: really love justice

OR want to start a revolution that would give you power and control.

PROBLEM: the statement, “All truth-claims are an attempt to get power.” is also a truth claim. (pg 38)

*(bottom of pg 38) The new rebel is a skeptic, and will not truth anything...[but] therefore he can never be really a revolutionary. For all denunciation implies*

### **COMMUNITY CAN’T BE COMPLETELY INCLUSIVE**

#### ***What some claim***

Christian community requires one have particular beliefs in order to be a member. Some say this is divisive and unnecessary and unrealistic.

Common morality is unnecessary for people to live in harmony, in fact, this facilitates the opposite state.

Pg 39 Case in point: urban neighborhoods have many beliefs and cultures represented, “...but each person respects the privacy and rights of others and works for equal access to education, jobs, and political decision-making for all...common moral beliefs are not necessary, it is said, in a liberal democracy.”

#### ***Problem with above claims***

PROBLEM: the above does assume a common morality. Q: what are the tenets of this morality?

Preference of individual to community rights  
A division between private and public morality  
Sanctity of personal choice

If someone does not follow the above, they would be excluded from the community.

#### ***Examples of problem of the above claims***

Q: What if a board member or leader of local Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Community announces they have had a religious experience and not believe homosexuality is sin?

Q: what is a board member/leader of Alliance Against Same-Sex Marriage had decided same sex marriage is ok?

What would happen in both cases?

“Any community that did not hold its members accountable for specific beliefs and practices would have no corporate identity and would not really be a community at all.”

So how do we evaluate whether a community is good?

By looking at how the values of the community influences it to treat people outside of the community.

### **CHRISTIANITY ISN'T CULTURALLY RIGID**

#### ***What some claim***

Christianity forces people of diverse cultures into one single mold (diversity is impossible)

#### ***Christianity compared to other religions (pg 41)***

Hinduism, Confusionism, Islam all still have as the center of their religion the same region(s). The center of Christianity has moved with time. (middle east, Greek, western world (USA, Europe), future → Africa, Latin America, China

Pg 42: Christianity and Africa [sub-Saharan Africa]

“Sanneh [African scholar] argus that secularism with its anti-supernaturalism and individualism I much more destructive of local cultures and “African-ness” than Christianity is.”

#### ***Why has Christianity adapted to so many cultures?***

Christianity has core beliefs, but also has flexibility so that can be practiced in different forms.

Example: music

There is no directive for rhyme, meter, style, etc.

Rev 21-22 “Every tribe, tongue and nation will worship...”

### **FREEDOM ISN'T SIMPLE**

#### ***What some claim***

Christianity limits freedom because it does not allow people to choose their own beliefs.

“...an enlightened human being [is] one who trust in his or her own power of thinking, rather than in authority or tradition.”

Confinement and constraint are a means to freedom

Limiting oneself to practicing the piano gives freedom to play skillfully in the future

Q: what are other examples of limiting freedom in order to gain more?

Problem with “each person should determine there own reality”

““Is there anyone in the world right now doing things you believe they should stop doing no matter what they personally believe about the correctness of their behavior’?”

### **LOVE IS CONSIDERED FREEING, BUT IT ACTUALLY INVOLVES LIMITING FREEDOM**

In marriage can't unilaterally made decisions— must make decisions together

Must give up person autonomy.

Illustration: Cecile after work.

In most religions only humans do all the adjusting to be a part of the religion.

In Christianity God also adjusted by coming to earth in the form of a human to make a way for us to have a love relationship with Him.

“Once you realize how Jesus changed for you and gave Himself for you, you aren’t afraid of giving up your freedom and therefore finding your freedom in Him.”

“Freedom is not the absence of limitations and constraints, but it is finding the right ones, those that fit our nature and liberate us.”