CHRISTIANITY IS A RELIGION

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The problem with this claim is that the same people who make this claim, tend to go to church, sing hymns, say prayers, listen to sermons and such like - all things that more or less fit the dictionary definition of religion. Not only that, but many churches claim tax relief on the grounds of the advancement of religion. Just to add to the pattern, the Apostle James encourages Christians to practice pure and genuine religion by caring for orphans and widows.

This certainly looks pretty much like a religion to me!

So what do we make of the "relationship with Jesus" bit? Well, I'm pretty sure that (unlike the word "religion") this phrase doesn't actually occur in the Bible. However, the concept does, sort of. The Bible uses various phrases such as reconciled, restored, forgiven and adopted to describe the relationship between the creator and the Christian believer. These are amazing realities and theyÂ were achieved at a massive cost to God; the death and resurrection of Jesus. You simply cannot overstate the amazing facts that lie at the core of the Christian faith. God reconciling all things to himself by means of Christ's death on the cross.

This reality transcends religion, but crucially, the essence of being a Christian is worked out in a corporate religious framework and always has been since the earliestÂ days of the church. *There is more to Christianity than a religion but it is still a religion*. Claiming that Christianity is not a religion effectively does two things:

- It promotes hyper-individualism, making the Christian faith all about "me and my personal saviour", which is a denial of Scripture and 2,000 years of church history.
- It makes us look silly because outsiders can clearly see that it is a religion, even if we can't!

Personally, I would advise avoiding these. There are plenty of amazing things we can say about Christianity without making somewhat dodgy claims.