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But I've Always Been a Buddhist! (or whatever)

Section 1

Discuss what you applied in the past seven days from the last Overflow Show.

Read John 4:20-24 about Jesus and the woman at the well. How flexible or open-minded was Jesus on the popular tolerance-based conviction that all religions lead to the same place?

Section 2

Go to www.OverflowShow.com and listen to the 5-minute podcast titled But I've Always Been a Buddhist! from the book CHOOSING YOUR FAITH, by Mark Mittelberg, from Tyndale House Publishers.

Section 3

What did you think? What stood out to you as you listened?

Discuss how important is in your particular family culture to respect your parents.

Discuss how important is in your particular family culture to make your choices in life based on your parents' or community's values.

Is it possible to make choices against your family's or community's opinions while still showing respect to them? If your answer is yes, then what might that look like or how could you make those choices and still communicate respect?

What are the possible drawbacks to an individual determining life decisions based solely on his ancestors' or community's past patterns? Try to think of some real-life examples.

It is common for almost any individual on earth of any religious background to have hundreds of friends and family members who he respects highly, who all might hold the same religious view. What are some talking points that Mark Mittelberg provided to help a person see that as compelling as community tradition can be, that's not a reliable way to determine truth?

Switching to Mittelberg's second point in the podcast...discuss the soundness of this analogy that he shared: Faith, or taking action without 100% proof is involved in many areas of our daily practical life, including every time we board an airplane without having absolute proof of safety.

Section 4

Discuss some ways we could apply a few of these principles in the next 7 days.

One suggestion (if needed):

Choose 2 non-Christian friends you'll be near this week to ask these questions to:

What choices you've made in life, big or small, that match the way your parents did things?

Then ask: What are some choices you've made that are different from your parents' way or opinion?

How about religiously? Have you followed your parents' pattern or not?

Regardless of their answer, try to share one of Mittelberg's analogies, perhaps like this:

"I heard a neat analogy recently. It said that it might not be wisest for me to choose a car make on what my parents' choices were. Or to base my smoking habits on my parents' smoking habits. And the same might be true for my choice of religion. What do you think?"

Meet back next week to report on what happened.

Overflow enthusiastically recommends the book CHOOSING YOUR FAITH, by Mark Mittelberg, from Tyndale House Publishers.

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