A New Perspective
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For almost as long as I have been a Christian, I have vehemently believed that my beliefs were veritable and trustworthy. My approach to every other religion had been, “Oh but they don’t know what they’re talking about.”

Unfortunately, this is the state of mind for many of us. So let’s pause and reconsider. I am not implying that one should doubt their own beliefs or faith. But consider all the outstanding men and women of the past and present, who have led selfless, benevolent lives by contributing so unsparingly for the betterment of mankind.

The Problem of Limited World-View
Can we classify these people into one specific religion? I doubt it. No matter what our inherent religious beliefs are, qualities such as kindness, patience, selflessness, forgiveness, and purity are touted in all religions alike. Unfortunately, due to our narrow-mindedness and prejudices and limited knowledge, we are aware of only our side of the story -- our religion, our beliefs, our rites, rituals, and faith.

As a whole, we have been ineffectual at gathering the courage to step outside of our comfort zone and examine those things that may not coincide with our own narrow scope of beliefs. I believe, when taken to the extreme, this is the root cause of violence, disunity, and discord the world over.

Taking a Broader View
Take a moment and realize that we are all connected by our need to institute a relationship with Him, the Supreme Being. He created each one of us individually and distinctively, founded us on an incredibly intricate thought process to make each one of who we are. And His fine creation includes me, you, our neighbors, parents, politicians, employers, family, friends, also those we may perceive as enemies.

So, How Can We Connect Then?
1 Peter 3:15 “...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..”
To me this verse means that inter-faith dialogue is important. It’s crucial that we talk, discuss and learn from one another, to slowly dissolve these boundaries we have created. Instead of making ignorant assumptions about each other’s ideas and beliefs, let us engage in intelligent, discerning, and rational conversation to gain new respect for another. Let us exchange logical points of views and rid ourselves of the prejudices and bigotry we carry in our minds and attitudes. And let us treat each other with gentleness and respect.

The only avenue to finding the truth is questioning and reasoning. Be able to see God as outside of an earthly religion; above all don’t make religion your God. He is a superior entity- omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. When we shut ourselves in without exploring and learning we impede our growth.

Mark 12:31 “..Love your neighbor as yourself..”

Jesus said this was the second most important commandment right after loving God with all your heart, mind, and soul. I remember reading once that the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. You may not be actively involved in hurting or harming someone of a different religion, but by being indifferent, we’re not allowing love to grow. Notice how the verse doesn’t say, “Accept your neighbors as they are.” It says, love them as you love yourself.

We Come From the Same Seed
Realize that if we were all brought together on this earth by the same Creator, our lives have an outstanding purpose which can not and should not be swallowed by frivolous and contemptible differences. From there we envisage this simple truth- that at the crux of it all, we were called to love without any regard to differences.

By not extending the same love and compassion as God did to us, we’re discrediting him and in a way, denying one of His key attributes: that of love. It may sound inexplicably hard to love someone you don’t care for but that’s why He is right there holding your hand and permeating your heart with joy and compassion so you can offer that same humanity, grace, and clemency to those around you.