Gandhi On Christianity
Appeared in the "Faith Section" on April 18, 2015
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Question: Why did Gandhi say: 'If it weren't for Christians, I'd be a Christian?'

Answer: To fully understand this quote, it's important to know the back story. While Gandhi was a practicing Hindu, Christianity intrigued him. Gandhi was impressed by Jesus of Nazareth and wanted to know more about Jesus, whom Christians referred to as the Christ and the Messiah.

One Sunday morning Gandhi decided that he would visit a Christian church in Calcutta. At the entrance to the sanctuary, he was stopped at the door by the ushers. The ushers told him that he was not welcome, nor would he be permitted to attend this particular church as it was for high caste Indians and whites only. He was neither high caste nor white. Because of the rejection by this church, the Mahatma turned his back on Christianity. With this act, Gandhi rejected the Christian faith, never again to consider the claims of Christ. He was turned off by the sin of segregation that was practiced by the church. This is when Gandhi said, "I'd be a Christian if it were not for the Christians."

In Buddhism there is a saying – don't confuse the finger pointing at the moon for the moon itself. This teaches us that although someone points to the moon to show us the truth of its luminosity, the finger pointing is not the moon itself. Likewise, the practitioner of a religion doesn't always practice the religion the way it was originally taught.