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## Living with Other Gods: Discovering How People Live in a Religiously Pluralistic Environment

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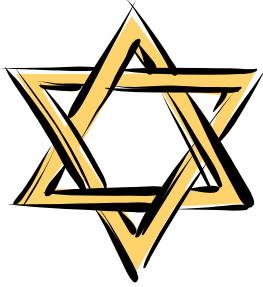
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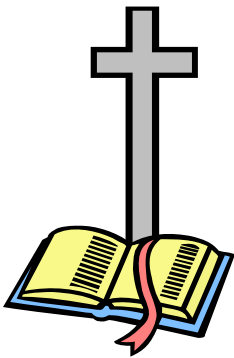
## **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"It is inevitable that people will always disagree on different matters in life. One of the most controversial issues in today's world is religion. There are numerous religions in the world and each one carries different beliefs. What many people do not understand is that in order to live peacefully, people need to be willing to accept and respect that everyone does not share the same religion. Instead of arguing over who is right and who is wrong, we as a people should respect each other's right to believe in whichever religion we choose to believe in."



# Living with Other Gods



2006

# Winners



## “Living With Other Gods: Discovering How People Live in a Religiously Pluralistic Environment”

By: Hope Tomaselli

It is inevitable that people will always disagree on different matters in life. One of the most controversial issues in today's world is religion. There are numerous religions in the world and each one carries different beliefs. What many people do not understand is that in order to live peacefully, people need to be willing to accept and respect that everyone does not share the same religion. Instead of arguing over who is right and who is wrong, we as a people should respect each other's right to believe in whichever religion we choose to believe in.

I myself am a Christian. I believe in only one God. However, some of my closest friends are Jewish, Wiccans, and Atheistic. Although I disagree with their religious beliefs, they have a right to believe in whatever god they want to or to not believe in any god at all or to have whatever religious beliefs they might want to have, just as I have a right to believe in only one God and Jesus Christ as my savior. My friends are amazing people. I love them for who they are, not for what religion they are.

It disturbs me how there are people that go around telling other people that if those people do not convert to that person's religion, they are going to Hell. I know someone who goes around telling people that there should only be one religion – his religion. The world should not be so close-minded. It is the religiously close-minded people who start religious wars and angry mobs; that's no way to live.

Perhaps there is a reason why there are so many religions in the world. I believe that each religion has something to bring to the table of life. For example: Christianity

brings the Ten Commandments, on which some of the constitution is based. Hinduism and Buddhism bring meditation to the table, which many people use as a great stress reliever. Confucianism brings ethics to the table; love within the family, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty to the state, etc. The list could go on and on with how people use each religion without even knowing it.

Then there is the factor of diversity. Without all the religions that there are, this world would not be nearly as exciting as it is. There would be no culture to learn about in school, no different holidays to celebrate with friends of other religions.

Where is the fun, and what is the point of having a world where everyone is the same? I learn something new about people all the time because of their different religious beliefs. If all people could open their eyes and accept that there are different religions in the world, this world would be a much more peaceful, happier place to live.