

Weigh In

Weighing the facts about Ethiopia

1.

Food in Ethiopia is served on a communal platter; each person scoops it up using a piece of a spongy bread called "injera." No forks allowed!

2.

Ethiopia welcomes refugees from Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia, as it sits in the middle of numerous conflict-ridden areas.

3.

Christians in Ethiopia may be denied access to community resources, such as water from the village well, because of their decision to follow Christ.

4.

Ethiopians who leave Islam to become Christians are typically persecuted and disowned by their Muslim family members and community.

Sources:

<https://www.ethiopiaimmigration.org>

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/ethiopia/>

<https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/ethiopia/>

<https://vomcanada.com/ethiopia.htm>

<https://operationworld.org/locations/ethiopia/>

Corresponding Question Points:

1. What does sharing food from one big plate tell us about how Ethiopian people approach friendship and community? Do you think you could share one big plate with your family?
2. Can a region surrounded by conflict ever truly offer refuge, or is it a temporary illusion of safety, especially for Christians who flee religious persecution? Explain your answer.
3. Persecuted Christians in Ethiopia are forced to find new ways of meeting their daily needs – and these solutions are often inconvenient or costly. Are there areas in your life where being a Christian has required sacrifice or inconvenience? Share your experience and how it affected your faith.
4. In a culture that revolves around community and relationships, is the decision to follow Christ an easy one? Compare and contrast the cost of becoming a Christian in Canada versus Ethiopia. What similarities and differences did you find?

One Way

Christians and Muslims share many beliefs about Jesus, but they disagree on two major points. Christians believe Jesus died on the cross and that He claimed to be God. The Quran, the holy book of Islam, teaches otherwise.

Author Nabeel Qureshi once described how, as a middle-school student, he convinced a girl on the bus that Jesus didn't die on the cross. The Quran specifically says that Jesus' enemies "did not kill Him, nor crucify Him, but it was made to appear so" and that "God raised Him up."¹ Nabeel argued that Jesus hung on the cross for only three hours, which wasn't typically long enough to kill someone. Some people lasted for days. He also claimed that the Roman governor Pilate ordered Jesus to be taken down early because of a dream his wife had. According to his argument, Jesus

Religious Comparison: Compare & Contrast What the Bible Says

was put in the tomb alive, treated with medicines by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and healed over three days.

These kinds of arguments can sound convincing if you aren't prepared to respond. Looking at the medical evidence alone, Christians and non-Christians alike come face-to-face with strong indicators that Jesus *did* die on the cross – evidence further supported by scientific, historical, archaeological and Biblical records.

Consider the list of evidence below.



Roman "cat o' nine tails" scourging: This whip wasn't just painful; it was brutal. The metal and bone pieces tied into the leather straps ripped deep into a person's skin and muscle. Many people died from the blood loss before they ever reached the cross.

Carrying the crossbeam: By the time Jesus was forced to carry the heavy wooden beam, He had already lost so much blood that He was close to collapsing. The journey itself added more strain to an already weakened body.

Crucifixion: Crucifixion was designed to kill a person slowly by making it harder and harder for them to breathe. Roman soldiers were trained to make sure the victim died – if they failed, *they* could be executed for not doing their job. Their own lives depended on confirming the death.

The spear wound and the "blood and water": When a soldier pierced Jesus' side, a mix of blood and clear fluid (John 19:34) came out. That only happens *after* someone has died, once the blood separates inside the body. It's a medical sign of death, not survival.

Medical consensus: Modern experts – including non-Christian historians and doctors – agree that no one could survive a full Roman crucifixion. The combination of scourging, blood loss, shock, suffocation and the final spear wound makes survival medically impossible.

The point isn't to focus on the gore, but on the facts. Learning how science, history and Scripture come together to confirm the story of Jesus gives us confidence that our faith is rooted in truth – not just feelings. This prepares us for thoughtful conversations with others so that we can stand boldly in our Christian beliefs.