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Religion

Between Allah and Jesus: What Christians Can Learn from Muslims
Peter Kreeft
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Imagine driving a car down a familiar street and seeing a woman wearing long, flowing trousers and tunic in complementary colors, her hair and neck completely covered by cloth. Now, imagine the first thoughts one might have upon seeing this person.

Between Allah & Jesus informs readers who aren't part of Islam that much of what they *think* they know of its adherents is woefully incorrect. Its topics and viewpoints are presented by fictitious characters in a series of discussions that are simultaneously riveting and deeply informative. If that sounds dull on the surface, rest assured it's a false impression.

Boston College student and devout Muslim 'Isa Ben Adam becomes involved in a protracted comparison of Muslim and Christian beliefs and religious practices with three other students (Christians of different sects) and a boardinghouse owner. Through philosophical dialogue, these characters pursue their topics from beginning to end with no one throwing a punch. 'Isa succeeds in showing his classmates that Islam is not solely what world media and certain Muslim sects would have them believe. He also demonstrates that there are more similarities than differences between Muslims and Christians, and acts as a reminder that proclaiming a set of beliefs should be more than just talk.

Author Peter Kreeft holds a PhD in Philosophy from Fordham University. He has written more than fifty books and has taught philosophy at Boston College since 1965. Those decades of teaching have served him well, for the way in which each student represents a set of beliefs within a larger faith is never cartoonish or false. Setting his points within a fictional frame serves to engage the reader further, and no point is belabored.

Given the current state of the world, *Between Allah & Jesus* fully deserves to be called a must-read for everyone, regardless of spiritual belief or political affiliation. Fear of the unknown and shunning of the Outsider seems inevitably to lead to conflict. Kreeft creates a way to look at the perceived divide between Islam and Christianity without violence. His characters may not be

fully realized, but they are solid enough to come alive for readers; any other method of presentation would likely fail.

It’s easy to caricature that which is unfamiliar with generalizations that make us feel superior. Peter Kreeft encourages readers to step outside that demonization habit and look clearly, to bring the Outsider closer, and shows that we can all benefit from a little courage.