

## Gleanings From an Unbeliever

“Rob”, whom I met this past summer, is a young college student pursuing a major in religious studies. He is polite. He is considerate and outgoing. But Rob is not a Christian.

In fact, he adheres to no one religion in particular; instead, he picks bits and pieces out of various Eastern religions to suit himself. I suppose a person would call him “tolerant”. Of course I disagree with many of his views. And yet in several ways Rob puts us Christians to shame.

First of all, he displays an intense passion for truth. Rob states that his reason for majoring in religious studies is that he was never exposed to Sunday School or religious education as a child. Regretting that fact, he is now seeking “the truth” as best he knows how by learning about different faiths and religious sects.

Rob is also an extremely disciplined person. Instead of wasting his time on more frivolous material, he reads nonfiction books about spiritual subjects. Many Sundays he can be found at the local Buddhist center, deep in meditation. He is also a vegetarian, forgoing the pleasure and convenience of eating meat.

Finally, Rob really doesn’t care much about what other people think of him. He is absent from the drinking parties so common on college campuses. Indifferent to passing fads, he simply wears whatever feels comfortable. In addition, he feels no need to be rude or unsociable unlike many young people today.

Despite his desire for knowledge, self-discipline, and resistance to peer pressure, I cannot condone everything Rob thinks or does. However, he has certainly challenged me.

Yawn! I’m seated on a church pew, fighting to keep awake during the sermon. Do I ignore this opportunity to learn more about God or straighten up and drink in God’s Word?

Beep, beep, beep! My alarm's strident voice is sounding throughout my bedroom. Do I hit the snooze button or wake up and spend time in prayer? It's Friday evening and I'm at the mall, shopping for clothes. Do I choose the low-cut top because it's the "in thing" or select a more modest blouse?

No, Rob is not a Christian and is bound for hell until he turns his life over to God. My family and I will continue to witness to him and pray for him. But I should not assume there is nothing to be learned from him in the meantime.