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Brian McLaren on Forging a New Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World
adapted from *Why did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?*
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Few hostile people see hostility lurking in their hearts. They see love, for God as they understand God, and for their religion. **This is part of the power of religion, not that it inspires hate, but that it inspires loves so powerful that they can be expressed through hateful actions.**

Bible stories no less than Quaranic suras can easily be turned into terrorist weapons.

We need the religion industry to be converted from its reliance on the toxic energy of oppositional identity and hostility to the renewable and renewing fuel source of divine-human kindness and benevolence.

Christians need not abandon central Christian doctrines, but rediscover and reformulate them in a post-imperial, postcolonial, post-Christendom way.

The ridiculousness of pitting Jesus as a rival against other prophets or gods or saviors becomes evident when you try to imagine Jesus himself doing so.

In reading, interpreting and preaching the Bible, **we are repeatedly forced to choose between hostility and hospitality, mercy and condemnation, compassion and legalism, forgiveness and revenge, laying down our lives or taking the lives of others.**

Imagine what might happen around the world if Christians rediscover that central to Christian life and mission is subversive or transgressive friendship—friendship that crosses boundaries of otherness and dares to offer and receive hospitality.

I am not saying take Jesus and custom-design him to fit into your existing culture or religion—even though that's exactly what we Christians have done repeatedly throughout our history—instead I am saying **welcome Jesus into your community and watch everything change.**