Relations between religions

Dr David Cheetham, Senior Lecturer in Theology and Religion, discusses his research.

Title:**Relations between religions (/schools/ptr/departments/theologyandreligion/research/videos/david-cheetham-research.aspx)** Duration: 1.40 mins

My name is David Cheetham and I've been studying the relations between religions for the past eleven years here at Birmingham.

One of the things about my field is that lots and lots of people in this field are very interested in the relations between religions. So there's very little you can say that's very new in this particular field.

But also, one of my interests alongside theology has been the arts. I'm a musician. So, I've been particularly interested lately in seeing how the arts and theology can come together, particularly with the question of the relationship between different religions.

So my question is, how can people of different religious commitments meet each other at deep levels? People are often very good at meeting each other on the streets, but they're also often very sensitive about meeting each other in religious circumstances because of course they have different religious committments and they're afraid of compromising those beliefs.

So my question is, can I create a space for these people to meet at a deep level? And I think the answer might lie in the arts. So people often talk about great profound experiences that they have when they look at a piece of painting or when they listen to some poetry or a beautiful piece of music and these are quite profound experiences.

So my question is, can I create spaces using the arts for people of different religious committments to meet each other at profound levels. But also levels that they don't feel being compromised in their particular religious beliefs.

That's my project I suppose for the next few years and what I'm writing my book about at the moment, alternative ways of meeting or spaces where people of different religious commitments can meet.

© University of Birmingham 2014