**Abstract (50 word max):**

This study examined the role that religious affiliation plays in in-group and out-group dynamics with respect to positive and negative behaviors and trait attributions directed toward hypothetical in and out-group members. Results showed that religious affiliation played a role in people’s willingness to engage in certain positive and negative behaviors.

**Summary:**

Prior work on in-group bias typically finds that individuals prefer their own groups but show a negative bias toward members of out-groups (Levine, Prosser, Evans & Reicher, 2005). The present study looked to explore the potential effect that religious affiliations (Christian, non-Christian) can have on in-group and out-groups’ preferences or biases with respect to a wide range of hypothetical actions (positive and negative) and trait attributions. Participants were college students who identified as Christian (N = 111) or another affiliation (e.g. Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Agnostic, Hindu or Other, N = 102). Individuals were grouped into either Christian or Non-Christian (due to the nearly equal sample split between those groups). In this work we examined whether or not these particular groups would show a group bias toward a hypothetical target that was identified as Christian, Atheist or Neutral. To examine this, participants were first asked to self identify their religious affiliation and were then randomly assigned to see one of three different pictures of a hypothetical person named “Jeremy”. “Jeremy” was pictured as wearing a Christian t shirt (had the phrase: Jesus, Just Believe in him), an Atheist t shirt (had the phrase: Atheist, this is what an atheist looks like), or a neutral t-shirt (blank t-shirt). Upon seeing the picture, participants were asked to read a brief description of Jeremy that took participants through a day in Jeremy’s life through the eyes of a friend (this was an adapted version of the Srull & Wyer, 1979, Donald paragraph). Participants were then asked to rate Jeremy as to the degree participant’s felt Jeremy possessed either positive (Friendly, Mild, Accommodating, Patient, Giving) or negative (Hostile, Aggressive, Combative, Short-Tempered, Selfish) traits on a 11 item Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all expressed) to 10 (completely expressed). Participant’s were then asked to indicate the degree to which the participant was willing to engage in a variety of behaviors with Jeremy (e.g., shake hands, ostracize, talk badly about, etc.) using a 5 item Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not At All Willing) to 5 (Extremely Willing).

Findings indicated that Christian’s were more likely to say hello to fellow Christian t-shirt wears than they were an atheist t-shirt wearer while Non-Christian’s showed no statistical difference among conditions. In addition, Christians were also more likely to refuse help to a neutral t-shirt wearer than Non-Christians were. Non-Christians showed no statistical difference across conditions with respect to their willingness refuse help. However, Non-Christians were more likely to ostracize Christian t-shirt wears compared to atheist and neutral t-shirt wearers. Non-Christians were also more likely to talk badly about Christian t-shirt wears than they were neutral t-shirt wearers. Christians show no statistical difference across conditions in either their willingness to ostracize or talk badly about atheist or neutral t-shirt wearers. Lastly, we found no reliable evidence of any differences by religious affiliation for positive and negative trait attributions. These results indicate partial support that religious beliefs can influence a person’s willingness to engage in positive and negative behaviors.