

# Obama says 'precepts of Jesus' drew him to Christianity

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – President Barack Obama said Sept. 28 he came to his Christian faith as an adult “because the precepts of Jesus Christ spoke to me in terms of the kind of life that I would want to lead, being my brothers’ and sisters’ keeper, treating others as they would treat me.”

He made the comment in response to a question during his visit to an Albuquerque home as part of a four-state trip.

An August poll showed confusion among Americans about Obama’s religion – nearly one in five Americans think he is a Muslim.

In explaining his religious beliefs during the New Mexico stop, the president said: “You know, I’m a Christian by choice. My family didn’t – frankly, they weren’t folks who went to church every week. And my mother was one of the most spiritual people I knew, but she didn’t raise me in the church.”

He added that “the understanding (of) Jesus Christ dying for my sins spoke to the humility we all have to have as human beings, that we’re sinful and we’re flawed and we make mistakes, and that we achieve salvation through the grace of God.

“But what we can do, as flawed as we are, is still see God in other people and do our best to help them find their own grace,” he added. “So that’s what I strive to do. That’s what I pray to do every day. I think my public service is part of that effort to express my Christian faith.”

Obama said he believes deeply that part of the bedrock strength of this country is that it embraces people of many faiths and of no faith. Though it’s a predominantly Christian country still, “we have Jews, Muslims, Hindus, atheists, agnostics, Buddhists, and that their own path to grace is one that we have to revere and respect as much as our own. And that’s part of what makes this country what it is.”

Despite their confusion over the president’s faith, respondents in the August poll

also indicated they support how Obama uses his religion to make decisions, with nearly half, or 48 percent, saying he relied on his religion the right amount when making policy choices.