

RELIGION BY MAJORITY

A Pew Poll of 35,000 Americans, released in June 2008, revealed some interesting statistics about religious beliefs. More than half (57%) of “evangelicals” (strong in their belief in the Bible and in Jesus as God’s only begotten Son, right?), opined that Christianity is **not the only way to Heaven**. “Mainline” Protestants (e.g., Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, et al.) stated the same opinion by a whopping 83%. The average of all who professed any sort of religious affiliation (70%) said that there are many ways (religions) by which one might attain eternal life.

Of those polled, 92% claimed to believe in God. Belief in the Bible registered 88% among Evangelicals, 61% among “mainline” Protestants, and 63% over all those surveyed. Among other things, these figures indicate a widespread religious pluralism, reflecting the popular philosophical nonsense known as “post-modernism.” This philosophy denies the existence of objective truth and makes all things relative. Its deluded adherents babble about “your truth” and “my truth” as if all views were equally true and valid. This drivel is but the natural progression of the generations-old denominational inanity: “It makes no difference what you believe, as long as you’re sincere.” The Bible says it makes **all** the difference. Just as there is one God and one Savior, there is only one Gospel by which men can enter Heaven (Mark 16:15–16; Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:6–9).

Postmodernism has opened the door for the “Emerging” or “Emergent” church movement that has been gaining momentum since the last decade of the previous century. It is the ultimate Burger King, “have-it-your-way,” approach to religion. It smacks of the old anti-establishment movement in culture and politics of the 1960s, only applied to religion. The Emerging/Emergent church movement is an unabashed attempt to bend religion to every Humanistic, secular, and pagan (including Islamic) influence in society.

The Emerging/Emergent approach allows one to believe and/or practice anything (or nothing) regarding God and man’s relationship to Him—and still call himself a “Christian.” It holds few, if any, moral absolutes. Its main concerns are with the here and now and “social justice,” rather than with sin, redemption, and immortality. One critic likened it to a “Build-Your-Own-God” shop, while another identified it as outright paganism.

Propositional truth and Biblical authority are passé, if not subjects of ridicule to its leaders. The Bible is of no use or concern to them. Were we still in the days of outhouses, these pseudo-theologians would doubtless place their Bibles alongside the Sears-Roebuck catalog in such facilities. To them, one can deny the Father and the Son—John’s definition of an “antichrist” (1 John 2:22)—and still be a “Christian.”

The concept of many ways to Heaven (assuming one still believes in the immortal soul) indisputably contradicts the claim of belief in the God of the Bible. The very basis of the Mosaical law pronounced the God of the Bible to be the **only** true and living God, not “a god” among many:

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God... (Exo. 20:3–5).

The New Testament echoes this cardinal fact throughout. That very God sent the Redeemer into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, and “like Father, like Son”—He claimed to be the **exclusive** avenue to eternal life: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). Biblical religion is decidedly **monotheistic** and **anti-pluralistic**. It may evince “tolerance” for declared believers in God and in the Bible to aver that there are many paths to Heaven; it is also hypocritical and patently anti-Biblical. **Men may reject this Bible teaching, but it is consummate folly to deny that the Bible so teaches.**

Paul’s warning is ever-appropriate: “Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8).

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX

[Note: I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Lighthouse*, weekly bulletin of Northpoint Church of Christ, Denton, TX, August 2, 2015, of which I was editor.]