

Religious Pluralism

Dub McClish

The term *pluralism*, when applied to religion, lauds diversity. *Wikipedia* states: “Religious pluralism holds that no single religion can claim absolute authority to teach absolute truth.” It insists that various religions (e.g., Hinduism, Judaism, Confucianism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, et al.), are all equally viable in their respective “truth claims.” Acceptance of the validity of such diverse (and contradictory) concepts of deity (e.g., dualism, polytheism, pantheism, deism, Greek mythology, monotheism, et al.) logically follows for the pluralist. The moronic bumper stickers that employ the symbols of various religions to spell the word *COEXIST* are produced by unmitigated pluralists.

Perhaps the ultimate pluralist was Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith. He taught “God is one” and therefore that Abraham, Krishna, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, and (predictably) himself are all God’s messengers. Bahá'u'lláh was right about there being one God, but his conclusion concerning God’s messengers could not be more wrong.

Jesus the Christ does not allow Christians to (1) force their religion on others, (2) prevent non-Christians from practicing their religions, or (3) seek to make converts by any means besides preaching the Gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15–16). However, one simply **cannot believe the Bible, be a Christian, and believe in religious pluralism.**

The Bible unabashedly reveals and describes one God, the Creator of all things, Who alone is worthy of honor and obedience by His creation (i.e., the Bible proclaims monotheism). Hundreds of passages from both Old and New Testaments forbid the worship of anything or any being (imagined or real) besides the one “true and living” God. The great summary of all of the Bible’s monotheistic claims is the first of the Ten Commandments, which solemnly begins: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exo. 20:3–5). One may disagree with and reject what the Bible teaches in this regard, **but none can rationally deny that it so teaches.**

Likewise, one cannot accept pluralism and Bible teaching concerning the identity of God’s “messengers.” Although God once called Abraham a “prophet” (Gen. 22:18), we have no record of the message he proclaimed (albeit, God spoke to him on many occasions [e.g., Gen. 12:1–3; 15:7; 17:1; 18:23–32; et al.]). Moses was God’s great Old Testament prophet and lawgiver, to Whom God spoke in a unique manner (Num. 12:6–8). Upon his death, the Bible said of him:

“And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face” (Deu. 34:10).

Pluralists pay no attention to God’s chastisement of Peter at the Transfiguration. He proposed building “tabernacles” for Moses, Elijah, and the Christ, respectively, “not knowing what he said” (Luke 9:33). God immediately revealed to him the unseemly implication of his proposal as He returned Moses and Elijah to their Hadean resting places and thundered from Heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Mat. 17:5b). If God would so summarily pre-empt the fledgling pluralism of Peter when it involved two of God’s mightiest spokesmen, we need not wonder what His attitude is toward those who equate false, self-appointed “prophets” with His Son.

Jesus is not merely “one of God’s messengers.” He is the Messiah/Christ of the Old Testament prophets (Mat. 1:21–23; Luke 1:26–33; Acts 3:19–26; et al.). **He alone** is the Savior of mankind from sin and its eternal consequences (Luke 19:10; John 1:29; 3:16; 8:24; Heb. 7:25; et al.). **He alone** – not Krishna, Buddha, Mohammed, Baha’i, nor any other – can bring men to God (John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5–6). Since He came down from Heaven, God has spoken only through Him (Heb. 1:1–2) and those to whom He revealed His will through the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; Acts 1:1–8; et al.). Pluralism is the devil’s means of deceiving mankind and leading them from God; Christianity – as the New Testament defines it – is God’s way. Again, men may reject this teaching, **but the Bible undeniably teaches it.**

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Lighthouse*, weekly bulletin of Northpoint Church of Christ, Denton, TX, May 15, 2011, of which I was editor.]

Attribution: From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.