

Do All Religions Lead to God?

(A Study on Pluralism)

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The Precepts of Pluralism

One woman reported that when she crossed the line between life and death she met Christ and that He took her for a walk. Christ explained that all the religions of the world were paths to the same destination. There was a Buddhist path, a Hindu path, an Islamic path and a Christian path. But it was explained by Jesus that all these paths were one and the same, leading in the same direction, or to the central hub of Heaven. In other words, everyone will be saved and enter Heaven in the end. Of course, this woman did not see the real the Jesus but “another Jesus” (2 Cor. 11:4).

One of the current philosophies that is very popular today is called pluralism. It simply means that there are many (plural) ways to God. The precepts or teachings of pluralistic teaching claim that all the world religions (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) and all gods and prophets (Muhammad, Buddha, etc.) are true ways that lead to Heaven. Pluralism teaches that all people are really worshipping the same God in different ways and calling Him by a different name.

In other words, even though people worship in different ways (idolatry) and have different gods and prophets, they are really expressing faith in the same God, who wears many different hats. So, in the end everybody will be saved from judgment, if they are sincere in what they believe. Pluralism says there is good in all religions and that all religions with their different prophets will ultimately lead to God in the end. They just have different approaches to get to Heaven.

The Progression of Pluralism

Are all religions moving or progressing in the same direction (toward God)? The Bible teaches that people actually move away from the

true God when they worship other gods. They are not moving or progressing toward God. Pluralism has its directions mixed up!

Romans 1:18-23 records;

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven (*presently or right now*) against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them (*intuitive knowledge*); for God hath shewed it unto them (*about God’s existence and a code of morality*). For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even his eternal power and Godhead (creation cries out there is one true God who is the Creator)*; so that they are without excuse (*they cannot say they don’t know this true God exists*): Because that, when they knew God (*an innate born knowledge*), they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations (*evolutionism, atheism, pluralism*), and their foolish heart was darkened (*spiritual darkness clouded their intuitive knowledge*). Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools (*moronic in their thinking*), And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (idolatry).

The analogy of a wheel with spokes might give us a better understanding about what is being said in these verses. The Bible is teaching that man intuitively knows God (he begins at the center of the wheel) but in time he moves away from the center and becomes “vain in his imaginations” (human reasoning or thinking) and invents other gods that are not the true God. This is because he moves away from the true God in his thinking and leaves the center of the wheel.

This Bible text reveals that people of other false religions who worship other gods are not worshipping the God of the Bible or the God they once knew about through creation and intuitive knowledge. Instead, they are worshipping other gods, which are unlike the true God. In fact, the Bible says that people change “the glory of the uncorruptible God” and create their own gods. So this message is actually opposite of pluralism. Man is not moving toward God when worshipping other gods. He is actually moving or progressing away from the true God when he invents his other gods. God identifies

those who invent and follow other gods as fools (“they became fools”). So the whole philosophy of pluralism is foolish and when following another god, other than the true God of the Bible, a person is acting foolishly and is a fool. This is God’s true assessment of pluralism.

The Principle of Pluralism

Is the God of the Bible unique to other gods? Or are the gods of Islam and other religions just as true as Jehovah God who is the only God revealed in the Bible? It’s assumed that all the world religions are really worshipping the same God or “god principle” only through different means and in different ways. This is the basic idea behind pluralistic teaching. In other words, pluralism teaches that God reveals Himself in the forms of many gods that are found in our world today. But the Bible clearly says that the God of the Bible is unique to all other gods and all those who take on different names as God.

The God of the Bible (Jehovah) proclaims uniqueness to all other deities or gods and clearly says that there is no other God beside Him (Deut. 4:35; 1 Kings 8:60; Isa. 45:5-6; 14, 18, 21, 22; 46:9; 47:8, 10; Joel 2:27, 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Psalm 135:5). This means that other gods cannot be the same God as the God of the Bible or else God loses His uniqueness as Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Acts 17:24-26).

Isaiah 45:5-6 declares:

“I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.”

All other gods and religions that promote other gods are not worshipping the true God. In fact, they are said to worship wicked spirits who are behind their false gods, idols, and pagan deities (1 Cor. 10:19-20). In fact, other gods represented in idols are nothing but dumb idols (Hab. 2:18-20) and the people who worship them are considered foolish (see Ps. 115:3-8). The God of Scripture is a jealous God that demands worship since He is the only true God (Ex. 20:5; Ex. 34:14; Ezek. 39:25).

The Path of Pluralism

Pluralism teaches that all religions are but one universal path that leads to Heaven. But is it true that all religions with their teachings and other gods lead to Heaven? In response to the pluralistic theory, Jesus said, "I am the way (not a way) the truth (not a truth) and the life (not a life) and no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus is the only path, way, or road of entrance into the Father's presence. Jesus is the only truth or trustworthy and reliable way to Heaven. Jesus Christ is also the person who gives to us spiritual life, which is His own life (1 John 5:12), so we can be born again and enter God's presence (John 3:3).

"I am the way." *Jesus declares uniqueness and oneness in this statement.* There is no other person like Him and there is no other person who can be the way, the truth, and the life and open a pathway into God's presence. All other paths and people are unreliable and soul damning. All other names are not true names. The Bible says that Jesus is unique above all other prophets and names (Phil. 2:9 – "a name which is above every name") because Jesus is the only way to Heaven!

Acts 4:12 dogmatically declares:

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

It's only through Jesus Christ that people can be saved and accepted before the presence of God (Heb. 10:19-20). Islam claims that Jesus was only a prophet and that He was not the only way to God. But the uniform testimony of New Testament Scriptures is that no one can be accepted in the Father's presence except through Jesus Christ. If mankind can reach God any other way than through Jesus Christ, then Jesus would not have had to die upon the cross ("then Christ is dead in vain" – Gal. 2:21). But His death illustrates the fact that there is no other way into God's presence. The Bible and Christianity teaches that only Jesus is the way into God's presence ("that he might bring us to God" - 1 Pet. 3:18).

Many times Christians are accused of being too narrow-minded because they assert there is no other path or way to get to God. But

this is not our claim; it is the claim of Jesus Christ! Those who follow the claim that Jesus is the only way to Heaven are known as being of "this way" (Acts 9:2; 22:4). Jesus is the way-maker and path that leads into God's presence.

1 Timothy 2:5 says:

"For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Please note that there are not many gods or many mediators. There is only one mediator that can bring a person into a right relationship with God and His name is Jesus Christ. What is a mediator? A mediator is a middleman or a go-between. If Jesus is the only way to be accepted in God's presence and the only person who can get us there, should we depend upon any other religion, god, or prophet other than Jesus? Salvation is only found in the person and saving work of Jesus Christ (the cross and resurrection). Jesus, and Jesus alone is the Savior of lost mankind. The uniform testimony of New Testament writers who wrote under the inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16) is that no one can be accepted in the Father's presence except through Jesus Christ. If mankind can reach God any other way, then Jesus would not have had to die on the cross and rise from the dead. His death and resurrection illustrates the fact that there is no other way of acceptance before God's presence. Again, the Bible and Christianity teaches that only Jesus is the way to Heaven.

1 Peter 3:18

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

A Christian from China was giving his testimony and said, "I had slipped into a great ditch and the ditch was sin." Buddha came along and said, "Come up half way and I will lift you up." Muhammad came along and said, "Here are five pillars that will get you out." But I couldn't get up those five pillars. Confucius came along and said, "You're not really in that ditch, you just think you're in that hole." But I was still there in the ditch of sin. Then Jesus came by and saw my predicament. He didn't say a word but laid aside His regal robes and

got down in the ditch along with the sin and the mire and lifted me out of it by His grace.

Here is the point. The difference was who Jesus was and what His loving sacrifice on the cross did for me! Jesus was God manifest in the flesh (John 1:1) and He willingly died upon the cross bearing my sins and judgment (1 Pet. 3:18), and then rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:3), so the pathway could open to God and He could become the only mediator into God's presence (Heb. 10:19-22).

Pluralism says that all religions are but different paths to the same place. There is a fallacy in this reasoning. If all religions are but different paths to the same place, then why do the paths contradict each other? Since truth cannot contradict itself, and since Jesus said He was the only way to Heaven, then it can be said that all paths do not lead to the same place. In fact, the Bible says that all other paths are really one broad path that leads to hell or conscious spiritual ruin and eternal judgment.

Jesus taught in Matthew 7:13-14:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Jesus said that other paths are really but one large path or road that leads to spiritual ruin in hell for all eternity (Rev. 20:11-15). Don't be deceived by pluralistic philosophy. Believe what Jesus taught about the uniqueness of only entering Heaven through Him.

The Philosophy of Pluralism

Pluralism is a human philosophy that bases its findings on subjective revelation and knowledge outside the Bible (“science falsely so called” - 1 Tim. 6:20). Pluralism is a philosophy that is designed to get everybody off the hook. But the Bible suggests that this philosophy is not true and should not be embraced (“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit...” – Col. 2:8). The Bible believer should never have an open mind toward other religions and philosophies that are not based upon Scriptural truth.

Pluralism is linked to a philosophy known as *relativism* which says there is no truth or absolutes; truth changes and values change; what's right today may be wrong tomorrow. Relativism teaches that truth is rooted in culture so there is no objective standard or truth. This philosophy also says that ethical values are the product of unique cultural traditions, so there are no moral or ethical absolutes. Thus, the philosophy behind pluralism is relativism, which rejects the Bible as an objective standard of truth that transcends all other teachings.

Another sister philosophy to relativism is called *existentialism* which says that God and truth are what we create for ourselves – if it feels right for me then it must be truth. This philosophy says that my experience determines truth. So this would mean that truth is what you make it out to be and that your truth and my truth both lead to Heaven.

A young lady once said to me, “It may be true for you but not for me.” For many people today truth is based on feelings instead of an objective standard. But God’s truth as recorded in Scripture (the final authority) is to be our guiding light (“thy word is truth” – John 17:17). “Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). If we look outside the Bible for truth, we won’t find it. We will only find error that will not lead us into the presence of God.

Books like the Koran, Book of Mormon, or New World Translation have no authority over the Bible which is the only book called “the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The Bible is backed by over 5,300 manuscripts dating from many different centuries. No book is verified like the Bible. The Bible has proven itself to be true through its internal unity. It was written over a period of 1,600 years by 40 different authors and it interlocks together in perfect precision in regards to historical details and prophecies. This points to a providential work of God.

The Bible is also proven to be true through fulfilled prophecy, accurately prerecorded historical facts, archaeological findings, and scientific truths that support creationism and many other details related to science. Added to this we have the tremendous influence that the Bible has had on the lives of people. No other book has

changed the lives of people like the Bible. To state it simply, the teachings of the Bible are final in regards to faith, life, and practice. There is no other truth outside the Bible and what it says. Jesus believed and taught the infallibility of Scripture (Matt. 19:4-5; 22:29; 23:35; Mark 7:13; Luke 24:44; John 5:39; 10:35).

Satan wants to get people away from objective truth and move them into the realm of subjective experience and mystical experiences that counteract objective truth found in the Bible. Jesus said in Mark 4:15 that "Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts." One man at a street fair said to me, "There is truth in everything if you will just look at things with an open mind." In other words, we must keep an open mind to new things (Acts 17:21) since truth is flexible like a rubber band. This is the pluralistic thinking of our present day.

Of course, the Bible says that only Scripture is given by the "inspiration of God" and is God's truth and final authority for man today (2 Tim. 3:16). The Bible claims revelatory uniqueness in that the Bible is the very breath of God. What the Bible says about God, His uniqueness, and Jesus being the only way to Heaven, must be believed as the only accurate recording of truth for mankind today. God holds the accuracy of the Bible above His own name (Ps. 138:2).

The problem with a pluralistic society is that there is no objective standard. But the Bible claims to be the only objective standard and final authority. Subjective moods, feelings, and other religious experiences or teachings have no authority or weight over the Bible. And the Bible teaches that if you fail to "repent" (change your mind) about false, pluralistic teaching ("except ye repent" - Luke 13:3) and fail to "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4) found in the Bible concerning Jesus Christ and salvation, then you will be damned to hell for not believing the truth ("that they all might be damned who believed not the truth" - 2 Thess. 2:12).

Jesus said in Luke 13:5:

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Pluralism cannot and will not take anyone to Heaven. A person must embrace the claims of Jesus Christ if they are going to enter Heaven when they die.

The Plight of Pluralism

The plight or distressing nature of all pluralistic teaching is that the Bible condemns everything that this philosophy promotes. In summary, the uniqueness of God the Father (“there is none beside me” - Isa. 45:5-6), God the Son (“I am the way” - John 14:6), and God the Spirit (“spirit of truth” – 1 John 4:6) through the witness of Scriptures (“thy word is truth” – John 17:17) all condemn pluralism. The teaching of pluralism that says that all ways and religions lead to God, or Heaven, and all gods are but representations of the same one God, does not square with what the Bible teaches. The pluralistic teaching that takes away from the uniqueness of God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, and the only way of salvation through Christ is causing millions to go to hell.

Long ago, the prophet of Isaiah, in Isaiah 5:14 declared: “Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure.” This means that hell and not Heaven is being filled upon by those who are embracing other ways to Heaven. Will you be one of those millions who spend eternity in hell? Have you been trusting in another path to get to Heaven? If so, don’t be fooled!

Proverbs 14:12 declares:

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Pluralism might seem popular and appealing to a philosophical mind. But the Bible condemns this ideology and philosophy. Jesus condemned it (John 14:6). It is only through personal faith in Jesus Christ alone that you can be saved from hell and given the promise of eternal life with God in Heaven.

Jesus said in John 6:47:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

Dear friend, you need to transfer all of your trust or belief in Jesus Christ, who has died as your substitute upon the cross, bearing your sins and deserved judgment (1 Pet. 2:24). Jesus died for you personally and then rose again the third day (1 Cor. 15:1-3) in order to provide the free gift of eternal life for you (Rom. 6:23). Jesus died so you might not be judged for your sins and He rose again the third day so you can go to Heaven when you die (John 14:1-6).

Why don't you right now express belief in Christ instead of some other false path that does not lead to God? Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." You can express personal belief in Christ by calling upon Him to save you today.

Romans 10:13 promises:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Below is a simple way you can express your belief or trust in Jesus Christ to save you. You can make this personal commitment to Jesus Christ right now. It's a commitment of your faith alone to Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to give you eternal life forever.

"Dear Lord Jesus, I am a sinner that is separated from Your holy presence. I have never personally trusted in You to be my Savior. But today, I understand that You died as my substitute (replacement) upon the cross. Thank You for taking my own sins and judgment upon Yourself, which I deserved, and providing the way of salvation for me. Today I am ready to transfer all of my faith and trust in You. I believe that You alone can become my Savior from hell. I thank You for the gift of salvation and eternal life, which You have provided for me through Your death. Right now I'm trusting in You to give me eternal life and save me forever. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Let us know if you have expressed faith in Christ alone to be your Savior. Contact us through the church website.