

Think about it! (4)

"At the end of the day, all religions say the same: that you have to believe in something, love your neighbour, help others and behave as well as you can." This is not what I would say; it's what a lot of people say (or at least what they think). But is it true?

The funny thing is that if I, as a Christian, were to say something like that about almost any other subject, there would be an outcry. Imagine if I were to say, "At the end of the day, all the political parties say the same", or, "All the different philosophies say the same", or, "All the world's cultures are the same", etc. Nobody would put up with it! Why not? Well, to start with, because it simply wouldn't be true; I would be showing up my complete ignorance as to the real differences that exist between one thing and another. And in the second place, because I would be denying everything that gives a country, or a culture, or a way of thinking, or a particular person, its distinctive character. Nobody wants to lose their identity in a tasteless mass of nothing in particular! So why do people insist on denying that which gives each religion its own particular identity? Are we going to take the history, the leading characters, the beliefs and the practices, etc., of every religion, and mix them all together in a kind of milk-shake that has just about everything in it, but that doesn't taste of anything?!

And, besides, the idea that "all religions say the same" is completely illogical. For example, Hindus believe that there are many gods, Christians, Jews and Muslims believe that there is only one God, and Atheists believe that there is no god. As much as we would like to say that they're all basically saying the same thing, of the three points of view (Pantheism, Monotheism and Atheism), only one can possibly be right, or words don't mean anything!

In spite of the good intentions of those who, out of ignorance and a lack of logic, hope for world peace on the basis of an absurd 'reductionism' ("all religions say the same"), the real problem is not the differences between religions, and the solution is not to deny those differences. What makes it possible for people to live together in peace is not some kind of false agreement, but genuine respect. We can (and should) respect each other, even if we don't agree with each other.

Whether we like it or not, the Christianity of the Bible claims to be the truth, and the only truth that really works: "Even if there are so-called gods..., for us there is but one God" (the Apostle Paul, in 1st Corinthians 8:5-6); "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me" (Jesus Christ, in John 14:6); "Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (the Apostle Peter, in Acts 4:12); "No-one who denies the Son has the Father" (the Apostle John, in 1st John 2:23); etc. Only one God; only one Saviour; only one hope!

Respect everybody, but put your trust only in the Lord Jesus Christ!

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