

## RIGHT RELIGION, WRONG RELIGION, TRUE RELIGION

A terribly malignant lie is spreading across our land. It goes something like this:

**There's not a good enough reason to believe in God.  
The traditional concept of God is mistaken.**

Is it possible you've bought into this lie? If so, you need to think this through carefully, because your eternal destiny is at stake. There is not a more important matter for you in your entire lifetime.

No religion is subject to empirical proof. That's why there is constant tension between the many religions on Earth. Yet we're all religious! The secular person, the agnostic, the atheist, they all say they have no religion. But of course they do! Religion is part of everyone's life. It's how we construct meaning to everything that happens to us on a daily basis. It's what drives our choices and our behavior, and it's what motivates us. And something else, we're all inconsistent with our religions, we're all hypocrites. That's part of human nature. And we're all skeptical of other people's religions. We are religious beings.

So now let's ask the really hard question: Is your religion the right one? After all, they can't all be true; that's impossible. To think about this, let's ask first, How would we know which one is true?

The true religion is the one that God our Maker has enjoined on us. True religion is placing our trust in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to earth to fully reveal God to us, to live a perfect life, and to suffer the agony of death, taking our sins upon himself and dying the death we deserve because of our sins. It's trusting in Christ who rose from the dead and now lives to come again, and who demands that we obediently and humbly follow him. If up to now you've been living a life apart from Christ, ignoring God, you need to change and submit to him, trusting that Christ will deliver you from God's wrath upon sin. So that you can live forever in God's holy presence. This is the true religion. We therefore have to conclude that all others are counterfeits, options put before us to distract us and to prevent us from being on the side of true truth.

Is it the height of arrogance to claim that this what we've just said – and *only* this – is the true religion? Not at all. God has revealed to us in written form what He expects of us. It's in the Bible. And to prove that the Bible is what it claims to be, God, the only One who knows the future, has made the Bible self-attesting with prophecies that can only have come from Him. The Old Testament contains, scattered in various places, dozens of detailed prophecies regarding the coming of Christ. These are known as the Messianic prophecies. And when we turn to the New Testament, we find the precise fulfillment of these prophecies. Centuries later when Christ came, these many specific and detailed prophecies were fulfilled. There is absolutely no way to account for this phenomenon other than that God deliberately put those prophecies there in black and white so that we can know that He exists, that the Scriptures are truly His words to us, and that we are responsible to Him. Those prophecies also mean that what He has said regarding the future that awaits *us* is true.

Now let's think about other religions. We can't name and discuss them all, obviously. But let's ask a few general questions. First, is your religion one that you were born into? That's not a good enough reason for your beliefs. An accident of birth cannot be the basis of truth. Is your religion one you've picked up from others around you? That's not good enough either. It's easy to copy something without realizing that it's wrong. We do it all the time. Did you choose your religion on the basis of reasonable argument? That's not good enough either, because human reasoning and use of logic is necessarily flawed by our

finitude and our fallibility. This is precisely why it's impossible for anyone to know ultimate truths, and why it was essential for God to reveal them to us – because we are *human*. We aren't able, in and of ourselves, to know what's beyond the world we live in. Human wisdom just doesn't cut it. We necessarily are limited to this world, and we simply cannot know what transcends our physical world unless it's revealed to us. The reason to believe in God, indeed, to believe all that He has said, is that He has spoken! We refuse to listen at our peril.

Let's think through what objections might now be raised. The first to consider is the canard that science has disproved the existence of God. Science has not done – and cannot do – any such thing. Science is inquiry based on measurable evidence. Science cannot observe, measure or analyze God, for He is not a physical entity. God is simply not amenable to scientific study. But scientists arrogantly (and foolishly) go on to say that, as there's no tangible proof of His existence, He doesn't exist. This is laughably illogical, yet it's an assertion commonly believed today. The Messianic prophecies disprove the claim.

Another common objection is the one that goes, I prefer to be neutral. This too is illogical. We all necessarily begin our thinking with certain assumptions, certain presuppositions. These presuppositions cannot be proved, but we have to begin with something, so we begin with these. Usually we're not conscious of these presuppositions, but they're always there. And these presuppositions determine how we think and what conclusions we reach. To be neutral assumes that God has not spoken. It assumes that there's no evidence for the existence of God. It assumes there's no alienation between us and a holy God who sees our every act, hears our every word, and knows our every thought. It assumes that we have no guilt and that there's no judgment awaiting us in the future. Neutrality therefore is impossible. We either submit to God's demands, or we continue in rebellion and face the consequences.

One other very common objection has to do with evolution and with billions of years. Don't billions of years (let's call it deep time), an infinitely vast universe (deep space), and the gradual, progressive appearance of living forms over millions of years mean that God doesn't exist? Well, who says billions of years? That's nothing more than someone's interpretation of data based on unproved (and un-provable) assumptions. Deep time is not a fact, it's not evidence of anything. The numbers displayed by the instruments that geochronologists use are the evidence, but those numbers have to be interpreted. Similarly, the observations astronomers make have to be interpreted, as do the observations of biologists. And all those interpretations are fallible, being determined largely by the presuppositions that underlie them. The bold assertions science makes regarding origins, once the scientific vocabulary and the highly technical methodology are wiped away, can be seen to be nothing more than speculations. A recent creation by an all-wise God followed by a fall into sin and that by a global flood as judgment on sin, as the Bible narrates, cannot be disproved. It can be rejected and ridiculed, but it can't be refuted. In fact, to the contrary, the evidence scientists who study origins have discovered can be reasonably interpreted to confirm what the Bible reveals to be our origins.

Those who hold to evolution, deep time and deep space have a naturalistic world view. They believe that nature, its substance and its laws, are all that there is. There is no supernatural, no spiritual dimension, no God in heaven. Naturalism reinforces the prior assumption that there is no God. But it's impossible to hold that naturalism is absolutely true; it's just a belief, and no more than that. And it's a weak belief at that, as it cannot account for love, for morality, or for the beginning of the cosmos, to mention just a few of the problems philosophers have identified. If naturalism is true, any meaning or purpose to life and any dignity to humanity is contrived. Nothing makes sense. In contrast, a theistic world view derives from the revelation of a good God. The God of the Bible is personal, not an abstraction. He is wholly separate from His creation, which He brought into existence for His good

purposes. And He has put into our world evidences by which we can know He created us, such as the design that in nature is ubiquitous, and the complexity of interacting physical and biological processes, and the beauty that thrills us and causes us to marvel. Only a self-existent, eternally existent, willful, super-intelligent Creator satisfactorily explains the existence of our universe. The anthropic principle of physics isn't because we're in a lucky universe; it's because God left His fingerprints all over His creation for us to know He's there and He did it. Science is possible only because He built order and stability into His creation, and because He continuously, providentially maintains it. More, the God of the Bible loves His creatures, rebels that we are, and He has made a very great sacrifice to rescue us from our folly. Why do such a thing? Because He's a good God.

We began by asserting that all people are religious. Those who claim that God doesn't exist, or that they want to be neutral, or that scientific evidence disproves God really simply believe their particular religion. They have great zeal for their religion, indeed, deep convictions, but it's the wrong religion. Their religion is based on the assumption that man is the measure of all things. They push God out of their life, as far as possible from their thoughts. They are religious, but their religion is anti-theistic. Dear reader, if you are in this category, you are in rebellion against the God of the Bible. That's an unenviable position to be in. You're trusting in your own flawed and limited abilities while ignoring the evidence in the Bible and in nature that has been placed there to lead you into revealed truth.

We've been made in God's image. So we have a will and we can think things thru logically. Let's think. The Scriptures tell us we've disobeyed God, that it's our nature to sin, and that we're therefore alienated from our Creator. Further, Scripture says that there's no remedy available to us other than what God has already done to rescue us. God the Son, Jesus Christ, came to earth at a certain point in history to die, bearing the wrath we deserve, so that by faith in Him we can be justified and saved from a coming judgment. By affirming this, by acknowledging its truth and relying on it, we receive the benefits of all that Christ accomplished in his life and on the cross. We need to willfully abandon whatever presuppositions and beliefs we'd previously held and instead place our trust in the God who has spoken. This religion is right and true.