

Counterfeit Christs

A study of false saviors and false salvation

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." - John 8:24

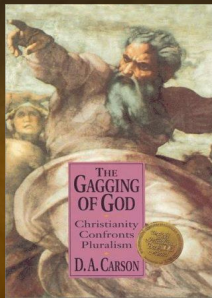
Counterfeit Christs

The Counterfeit Christ of Pluralism

"I pick and choose what I like about Jesus and ignore the rest."
- Adherent to Pluralist Philosophy

What is Pluralism?

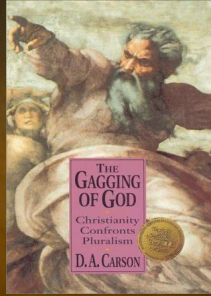
In general, pluralism is "the process by which the number of options in the private sphere of modern society rapidly multiplies at all levels, especially at the level of worldview, faiths, and ideologies"
- D. A. Carson



Three Kinds of Pluralism

Three Kinds of Pluralism:

- 1. Empirical pluralism
- 2. Cherished pluralism
- 3. Philosophical pluralism



Empirical Pluralism

Empirical pluralism simply refers to the fact that we all live in a diverse society. For example, America is a country of many languages, ethnicities, religions, and worldviews, and in modern times it is far more accurate to speak of American cultures than American culture. Empirical pluralism encourages alternatives and makes it easy for an individual to make person choices that are agreeable to them.



Cherished Pluralism

Cherished pluralism takes empirical pluralism and adds an additional ingredient - approval. Missionary Leslie Newbiggin explains cherished pluralism as: "not merely a society which is in fact plural in the variety of cultures, religions, and lifestyles which it embraces, but pluralist in the sense that this plurality is celebrated as things to be approved and cherished". Cherished pluralism says that a person must nod in agreement with a stance and in no way condemn it as wrong.



Philosophical Pluralism

Philosophical pluralism naturally flows from celebrated pluralism and says that no religion has the right to pronounce itself right or true and the other competing faiths false, or even relatively inferior. For those who espouse a philosophical religious pluralism, there is no longer any heresy, except perhaps the view that there are heresies.



"It all comes down to pairing your personal inclinations with dogma while paring down the dozens of faiths covered in the book ... "You have to pay attention to the initial attraction. But what about the lifestyle and values? Do they really match yours?"

The founders of Beliefnet, a Web site exploring spirituality, had a sense of this fluidity when launching the site in 1999, says Michael Kress, managing editor. The site created the Belief-O-Matic to have fun with all this interest. The 20-question quiz asks people about their core beliefs. At the end of the quiz, people get a ranking of religions that best match their beliefs.

-Shopping for a new religion?, Louisville Courier Journal, Aug 31, 2008

RELIGION TO FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE AND AFTERLIFE GOALS!

THE SAVVY CONVERT'S GUIDE TO CHOOSING A RELIGION

MOST APPROVED BY GOD!

COMPARE AND CONTRAST BEFORE YOU COMMIT

- CONSIDER PERKS AND DRAWBACKS FOR EACH RELIGION
- GET THE BEST FAITH FOR YOUR BUCK
- UNDERSTAND THE TIME REQUIRED BEFORE COMMITTING

99 RELIGIONS TO CHOOSE FROM!

The Downward Slide to Philosophical Pluralism

Relative Truth



Relative Language



Pluralism



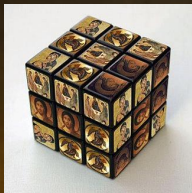
Pluralism and Syncretism



Pluralism tends to be very syncretistic in nature, forming new selections from the existing choices that exist. In much the same way a person may walk down a buffet line and place various foods on their plate to form a unique meal, a philosophical pluralist will stride through the various religions of the world and select from them certain doctrines or positions that appeal to them and meld those teachings together to form a belief that becomes something entirely new, yet something that must be immediately accepted into the pluralist culture as being valid and equal to other existing beliefs.

“The soul of religion is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms”
- Gandhi





What does the Counterfeit Christ of Pluralism look like?

The Jesus of Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson was an anti-supernaturalist, and so clinging to these presuppositions, he used a razor blade to excise references in the Gospels about Jesus' miracles, deity, and resurrection. All that was left behind was a man and his moral teachings.



“Americans write their own Bible. They fashion their own God, then talk incessantly about him.”
- Hanna Rosin,
Believers in God, If Not Church
Washington Post, 2000

Welcome to PocketJesus! Don't let the Bible interfere with your Christian lifestyle

Like you, we believe you should adhere only to scripture that supports your personal opinions

- Home Page
- Archives by Profile Text
- Pages 1 to 10
- Fun Jesus

- Dear PocketJesus
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Here at PocketJesus we understand how difficult it is to live a comfortable Christian lifestyle. The Bible is a big book. You only like the parts that are in line with your personal opinions. PocketJesus moves the riffraff out of your way and delivers only the scripture that makes sense.

PocketJesus serves the two Christian lifestyles

The Righteous Being the personal vessel of God that you are, you know how hard it is to pass God's judgment on others. It's easy enough to find scripture that aligns well with your gut feel of right and wrong, but other passages seem to fly in the face of your moral compass. And with today's busy lifestyle, all you want to do is get started telling others how to live! You know God is on your side, but you need to make sure "Love Thy Neighbor" isn't going to bite you in the ass when the time comes. Don't worry, PocketJesus has your tail covered!

The Pliable For you "softer" Christians, you know that the important thing is the spirit of Jesus' message. But then you run into that hard-core Leviticus stuff and it disrupts your love meditation. PocketJesus is here to stop the buzz kill.

Change the World
One T-Shirt at a Time



PocketJesus Store

The Jesus of Most Pluralists

The common characteristics that make up the Pluralist's Jesus are:

1. Always loving
2. Tolerant and accepting of all; Non-judgmental
3. Peaceful
4. Never imposing His morality
5. Would never condemn anyone in this life or the next

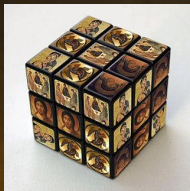


The "Un-Jesus" of the Pluralist

Characteristics that no pluralist identifies as belonging to Jesus:

1. Intolerant
2. A judge of morality
3. Angry
4. Imposing His Lordship
5. Condemning of anyone in this life or the next





Response to Pluralism and its Counterfeit Christ

Pluralism is a Self-Defeating Philosophy

Philosophical Pluralism says that every worldview, religion, and viewpoint is equal and true. However, Pluralism rejects the Christian claim of their only being one and only way to God (Jesus), so Pluralism excludes Christianity and therefore does not adhere to its philosophy of accepting all beliefs as true.



“Pluralism cannot survive if Jesus Christ is the unique way to God. So the pluralist has to try to explain away the evidence for the incarnation and the resurrection. The pluralist has to reject the Trinity and salvation only coming through Jesus. He simply cannot allow the Christian faith to be what it claims to be.”
- Paul Copan

Pluralism Confuses Taste/Opinion and Truth

Pluralism fails to make the distinction between matters of opinion (e.g. I like chocolate and you don't) and matters of truth (e.g. one true God exists). A person's opinion or desire cannot change reality.



“Pluralism is desirable and tolerable only in those areas that are matters of taste rather than matters of truth.”
 -Mortimer Adler,
Truth in Religion

Pluralism Causes Tolerance to Trump Truth

Pluralism prizes tolerance above truth because it does not recognize any view as being objectively true. But should society tolerate every view, belief and behavior? What about Nazism, racism, and other such beliefs? How about tolerating those who say 2+2=5? Should those be embraced and accepted?



Father of 9/11 Victim Fights to Have 'Murdered by Muslim Terrorists' Inscribed on Son's Memorial

Posted by October 27, 2009
FOX NEWS
 By Douglas Kennedy



James Gadriel

KENT, Conn. — Peter Gadriel wants everyone to remember his son, James, who was killed during the September 11 terrorist attacks. And he also wants people to remember how he died: "murdered by Muslim terrorists."

For Gadriel, any tribute to his son would be woefully incomplete without those words.

"I think it's important, because I think there's a nationwide effort to suppress the identity of the people who were involved in the attacks," Gadriel told Fox News.

Eight years ago, 23-year-old James Gadriel worked for Cantor Fitzgerald on the 103rd floor of the World Trade Center. He died when a hijacked plane crashed into the North Tower.



For years, Gadriel's hometown of Kent, Conn., has wanted to honor the young man with a memorial plaque next to its town hall. But the tribute has had a snag because James' father wants to include the phrase, "murdered by Muslim terrorists," under his son's name.

For Peter Gadriel, it is a central fact of the Sept. 11 attacks that is often left out.

"It isn't just overlooked, it's suppressed," Gadriel said. "It's simply wrong to imply that people just died. The buildings didn't just collapse, they didn't just fall down — they were attacked by people with a specific intent, a specific purpose."

"Town officials call the phrase too controversial for a small town memorial, and they recently voted against erecting the plaque if Gadriel insists on the language.

"We perceive ourselves as a very warm, loving town," said Ruth Epstein, a Kent selectman and one of two town leaders to vote the plaque down. "To disparage any one ethnic group is just against everything that we stand for here. We have at least one Muslim family living here with children and it — it would be just awful to have them see something like that," Epstein told Fox News."

Would it be intolerant to have a plaque at Auschwitz saying that those who died there were murdered by Nazis?

Pluralism Fails to Make Critical Distinctions

In his book, "A Pilgrim's Regress", C. S. Lewis tells an allegorical story about being fronted with "the spirit of the age". At breakfast, he commented to the waiter (who embodied the spirit of the age) how good his milk tasted and the waiter said it was only the secretion of a cow and not different from any other emission such as urine. Then Lewis commented how good the eggs tasted and got a more horrible reply from the waiter.

Lewis said he began to despair until Reason came riding up on a white horse, scooped him up, and saved him. "You lie", Lewis said to the waiter; "You lie. You fail to understand what nature meant for nourishment and what nature meant for garbage."

"It is the task of the philosopher to make distinctions."
- Thomas Aquinas

Pluralism fails to understand that, while all people have equal worth, not all ideas do...

Pluralism is Simply Self-Made Religion

"This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'"
(Matthew 15:8-9)

Syncretism Denounced in Scripture

"You are to keep My statutes. You shall not breed together two kinds of your cattle; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together."
(Leviticus 19:19)

Is God concerned about wool/polyester blends? No, He's saying do not take your pure religion and mix it with the pagan religions around you.



"In my most somber moods I sometimes wonder if the ugly face of what I refer to as philosophical pluralism is the most dangerous threat to the gospel since the rise of the Gnostic heresy in the second century, and for some of the same reasons. Part of the danger arises from the fact that the new hermeneutic and its assorted offspring are not entirely wrong; it would be easier to damn an ideology that was wholly and pervasively corrupt"
-D. A. Carson

Syncretism Denounced in Scripture

Balaam had been guilty of counseling King Balak to cause Israel to sin through intermarriage with heathen women. Balaam knew that they would pollute the Jews pure religion given by God with their false gods and idol-worship (cf. Num. 22-25; 31:15-16).

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality."
(Revelation 2:14)

The Real Jesus Combined Love and Truth

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:16-21)



Did Jesus Really Say and Do THAT?

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)

"For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son." (John 5:22)

"And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." (John 2:15-16)

"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46)

"You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?" (Matthew 23:33)

Pluralism's Counterfeit Jesus is not Needed

Because every view is accepted in Pluralism, there is no real right and wrong, and sin becomes an antiquated term. If there is no sin or moral standard to meet, then there is no need for a Savior, no need to be rescued, and no need for redemption.

The Pluralist's Jesus is simply a man who espouses moral teachings that may be cherry-picked from and whose authority is circumvented by each individual's conscience – a conscience that has been scared by the effects of sin (Eph. 4:17-19).



"It is the nature of all hypocrites and false prophets to create a conscience where there is none, and to cause conscience to disappear where it does exist."
-Martin Luther

"God wants our conscience to be certain and sure that it is pleasing to Him. This cannot be done if the conscience is led by its own feelings, but only if it relies on the Word of God."
- Martin Luther

The Gospel is Exclusive, yet Available to All

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me." (Exodus 20:2-3)

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6)

As such, these claims exclude any and all challengers to them. Any other religion is deemed invalid.



The Reality of Exclusivity

In Relationships

Saying "Yes" to your spouse means saying "No" to all other people in the world (billions of them).

In Government

How well do you think the government would function in America if Democracy, Communism, along with a few other government systems were practiced all at the same time?

In Economic Policy

What would the end result be if Capitalism and Marxism were combined or if one group in a culture used one form of economic policy and another group attempted to practice a system that was 180 degrees from the first?

Exclusivity in the Gospel

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

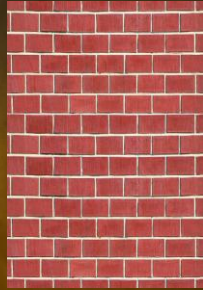
"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11)

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

Isn't Christian Exclusivism Bad?

- All religions exclude on the basis of doctrinal beliefs
- Is Buddhism wrong because it excludes millions of Christians?
- Truth is not determined by how many people believe it
- Christianity excludes no one – the Bible says that whosoever will may come: "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost." (Revelation 22:17)



Do All Roads Lead to God?

Yes they do...!



Because God is real, no matter what road you're on, you **will** meet Him when you die, regardless of the road you've travelled. But what then...?

"The fact is, the truth matters – especially when you're on the receiving end of a lie."

- Ravi Zacharias

