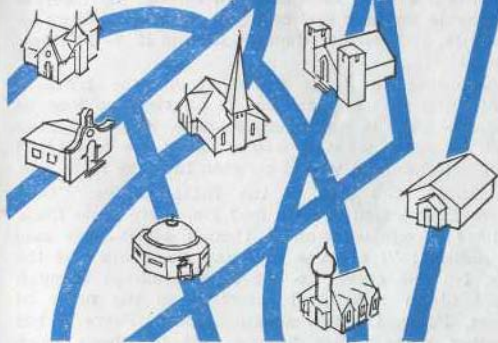


WHICH IS THE

*Right
Religion?*



Are all religions just different
roads to the same place?
Or is there only one right religion?
And if one, then which one?

WHICH IS THE RIGHT RELIGION?

The purpose of religion is to show man the way of salvation. Today, in the United States, where 'the scandal of sectarianism' is quite bad, there are more than 250 religious denominations, and there are many hundreds more in other parts of the world, 1,000 being reported in South Africa. Since all contradict one another, not all can be right. Which one is?

Many hold it does not matter what your religion is, that the various religions are just different roads all leading to salvation. Is that view correct? How could it be when Jesus Christ says: "Broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it"—Matthew 7:13, 14.

According to Jesus Christ, then, the frequent contention that any religion is all right so long as one is sincere is a dangerous snare. Sincerity alone will not make what is wrong acceptable to God. It will not change a wrong religion into the right one.

Jehovah, the God of the Bible, states: "Does there exist a God besides me? No, there is no Rock. I have recognized none." (Isalah 44:8) Jesus said of himself: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) And referring to the name of Jesus, Peter, Christ's apostle, said: "There is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved." (Acts 4:12) So according to the Bible the right religion recognizes only Jehovah God and Jesus Christ.

Since many religions claim to worship the God of the Bible and to accept Jesus Christ, how can we determine which is the right one? By comparing their teachings and actions with those of Christ and

his apostles. "By their fruits you will recognize those men."—Matthew 7:20.

God's Word and the Kingdom

Did Jesus and his disciples prefer the traditions and philosophies of men to God's Word? Did they claim that the Bible was dispensable and that their words were of greater import than the Scriptures? Did they adopt ancient pagan doctrines such as the trinity, hellfire and immortality of the soul? (John 14:28; Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4) Absolutely not!

They condemned the unscriptural traditions of men as making God's Word "invalid." (Mark 7:13) They appealed to the Bible as the sole authority. "Your word is truth." "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, . . . that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Jesus Christ put God's kingdom first. He counseled his followers to do likewise and taught them to pray: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will come to pass, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10, 33; 13:44-46) Can we imagine Jesus Christ pointing to some such human makeshift as the League of Nations or the United Nations as the "political expression of God's kingdom on earth," or "the last hope of concord and peace" and laud it as a "lofty institution," as the clergy have done?

On the contrary, Jesus said to Pilate: "My



kingdom is no part of this world." He told the religious leaders of his day that "what is lofty among men is a disgusting thing in God's sight." And the disciple James asks: "Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God?"—John 18:36; Luke 16:15; James 4:4.

In view of these plain statements of Scripture, what shall we say about those religious leaders who make common cause with the world? who mix in politics and who are the friends of corrupt politicians? who tickle itching ears? who court popularity and good reputation by wearing distinctive garb? who downgrade God's Word and who praise the U.N. as man's only hope rather than God's kingdom? Can such have the right religion?

Love, the Criterion

And how much love do we find among the members of the various popular religious organizations? Sufficient to overlook racial differences? No. Sufficient to disregard social differences? No. To eliminate political and commercial rivalry among themselves? No. To overlook national differences? No. Why, in time of war we find Protestant killing Protestant, Catholic killing Catholic, Jew killing Jew!

What a contrast between their actions and those of Jesus Christ! He showed his love, not by killing his followers, but by giving his life for them. And he commands: "Love one another; just as I have loved you." And again: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."—John 13:34, 35.

Did Jesus and his disciples continually dun the people for money, by passing collection plates, holding bazaars and operating games of chance to defray expenses, and so forth? Far from it! They warned against peddling God's Word for financial gain.—2 Corinthians 2:17; 12:17, 18.

Did Jesus and his disciples require costly besteepled edifices in which to preach God's Word and always expect the people to come to them? On the contrary, they showed love for others by going "from city to city and from village to village" preaching the good news in the homes of the people, on the mountainside, at the seashore, in the market-places, teaching "publicly and from house to house."—Luke 8:1; Acts 20:20.

Bearing the Right Fruits

From the foregoing it is evident that the popular organized religions of Christendom have been weighed in the balances and have been found wanting. But God has not left mankind without the right religion. Today there is a body of Christians who teach and practice it. First of all, they adhere strictly to the Bible and discard all unscriptural traditions and worldly philosophies—whatever conflicts with God's Word.—Isalah 8:20; Acts 17:11; Colossians 2:8.

These keep on seeking first the Kingdom by obeying Jesus' command to preach the good news of the Kingdom in all the earth, doing so in more than 197 lands and isles of the sea and in upward of 160 languages, and that by every possible means, publicly, on the streets and from house to house.—Matthew 24:14.

They keep separate from this world's politics, riots, and revolutions. They support no man-made disgusting substitute for God's kingdom.—Matthew 24:15, 16.

They show real love for one another, making no



distinction because of nationality, race, social position, and so forth. They put God's law above man's law and so refuse to kill one another at the behest of worldly governments. Instead, they are ready to die for one another. They love Jehovah with their whole heart and their neighbor as themselves, as Jesus commanded.—Acts 5:29; Mark 12:30, 31.

Who are bearing this right fruitage? They are the ones known as the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. If right worship appeals to you, you are invited to attend meetings at the nearest Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in your locality. There you will find persons who are willing to discuss your questions on religion and give you an answer from the Bible. If you so desire, they will be glad to visit you in your own home and study the Bible with you for an hour each week free of charge.

Scriptures quoted herein are from the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," 1961 edition.

HAVE YOU CHOSEN THE RIGHT RELIGION?

Since 'God is not a God of disorder' and 'Christ is not divided,' there can be only one right religion. The Bible-study aid "*Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie*" will help you to choose that right religion. Its 22 enlightening chapters deal with such subjects as "The True-Life Story as Told by the Holy Bible," "Your 'Soul' Is You," "God a Person—or Three Persons in One God, Which?" "Must You Keep a Weekly Sabbath?" and "Earth's Future as a Paradise in God's Purpose." Bound in green cover, gold-embossed, this 416-page illustrated book is available on a contribution of 50 cents.

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