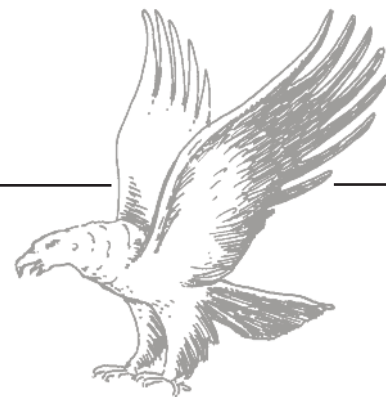


# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



September 27, 2015

## The Painful Legacy of False Religion

Contrary to popular opinion, not all religions are the same. If we wish to minimize the suffering inflicted by religion, we must learn to discern between true religion and its cheap imitations.

*“The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart” (Jer. 14:14).*

*“Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way” (Psa. 119:104).*



Multiculturalism insists that all religions are equally valid, that no one religion is any better or worse than others. The peculiarities of all faith systems are legitimate expressions of cultural taste; therefore, the very idea of proselytizing people from one religion to another is considered narrow-minded and bigoted.

But that tolerant philosophy is difficult to defend in light of the suffering that can be linked directly to religious dogma. The Middle East today is aflame with a barbaric war driven by a virulent strain of Islam. The caste system in India—a feature of the Hindu faith—keeps millions in crushing poverty.

The followers of Jesus have no room to gloat. Most modern variations

of the Christian faith have ugly stains on their history, and even today are plagued with outrageous excesses and abuses. (See Ross Douthat’s *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics* [2012] for an overview. Douthat writes as a believer embarrassed by the circus atmosphere that characterizes modern Christianity.)

It’s foolish to argue that “all religions are equally valid.” The breathtaking scope of human misery caused by religion allows atheists to condemn *all* religion as a toxic plague on humanity (see Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* [2007]). But a world dominated by atheism would be no happier. If the history of communism in the twentieth century is any clue, we would likely be *worse* off, not better.

So we seem to be stuck: We cannot live without religion, but are miserable with it. Is there a path out of this conundrum?

There is, but it requires that we first jettison the multicultural assumptions that now blind us. All religions are *not*

the same; some are most definitely worse (or better) than others. That understanding frees us to acknowledge the fact of *false religions*. And if some religions are false, then the possibility exists that at least one might be true.

Our task, therefore, is to search for the faith system that best corresponds to reality—and reject all others as misguided (or worse) and potentially harmful.

The Bible is the story of God calling humanity to a simple task: To love and serve Him above all else. Yet again and again that simple task has been obscured by the seductive voice of false religion. It was false religion that occupied much of Jesus’ attention during His ministry here on earth, and it was false religion that finally killed Him. And just like today, the outcome of all those counterfeit philosophies was catastrophic. False religion is intrinsically destructive.

The true religion of Jesus, unlike its competitors, is a refreshing balm for those who find it. But it requires that we study it with an open mind, and be willing to cast aside all the changes that have corrupted it over the centuries.

– David King