

One True Religion?

From The Reason for God

Tim Keller

A Matter of Arrogance

- *It's arrogant for anyone to claim that they have exclusive truth. We need to embrace a more inclusive approach*

Response:

The reality is that everyone is exclusivist. The person who believes that the religious exclusivist is wrong and that this position is false is excluding all other exclusivist beliefs except his own. In other words, we have to see that philosophical pluralism denies other religions the right to lay claim to the truth.

However, it presents its own worldview as the absolute truth. In the end philosophical pluralism's dismissal of dogma turns out to be just another "dogma."

Causes War & Violence

- *Religion and religious exclusivists cause war and violence.*

Response:

- It is a historical fact that many wars and conflicts have resulted from religious causes. But it is also a historical fact that the most secular period of human history (20th century) was also the most violent. If secular non-theistic belief systems (ie. communism, fascism) were the cause of just as much, if not more, violence than religious belief systems, then the cause of war and violence is not a problem for just religion but for every belief system. The question then becomes which belief system best provides a basis for reconciliation, respect, and peace?

A Matter of Intolerance

- *But it's just so intolerant to insist that you know the truth and that other people's views are false.*

Response:

- Absolute tolerance of all viewpoints is impossible (ie. we cannot tolerate the viewpoint that murder and rape are morally acceptable). So, some standard of what we can tolerate and what we cannot is unavoidable. There must be dialogue concerning what is tolerable and what is not. The most dangerous position is to simply label a view as intolerant and avoid discussion concerning which belief system best accounts for and protects human rights and provides a meaningful moral basis for a tolerant society.