

Prologue No. 2

What is it That We Believe?

I wrote the following in 2010 in the book, *I Am, the Great Creator God*; it is taken from the Part 2 Chapter 1, "What We Believe", pages 96 & 97. This is shared with you as a foundation for the positions stated within these pages:

The Orthodox believer holds on to a theological knowledge based upon God's Revelation. This Revelation is presented to the world through the written words in Scripture and through what is known as "The Apostolic Tradition". Christ passed on at Pentecost the power for the apostles to do great things in the name of Christ. Jesus passed on "The Great Commission" for the apostles and all the future disciples to go throughout the world and affirm the foundational Christian Truths as clearly taught in the Bible:

1. That the Triune God is three distinct persons in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. The True Deity and True Humanity of Jesus Christ.
3. The physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
4. Salvation of the believer by grace alone, only through faith in Christ Jesus our LORD and Savior.
5. The atonement of Christ on the cross for the forgiveness of the sins of a sinner.
6. The physical return of Christ to Earth at the end of time to judge the wicked and reward the righteous.

Any Christian group that would alter or distort one or more of these orthodox beliefs would be considered an aberrant group. To push the issue farther, theologically a cult is any deviation from orthodoxy, or denial or outright rejection of one or more of the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Not to be confused with a "cult", the occult deals directly with

demonic forces; this awful practice has been engaged in throughout all history. Nothing good can come out of it.

I once heard a woman on the radio, critical of churches, saying that the church needed to change with the culture; this is the exact opposite of what an Orthodox Christian Church should do! Adapting to the culture only creates aberrant and cult groups; Jesus did not do nor did He teach that we should adapt to the culture. Deviations take all forms with some being very minor; groups normally must pull verse out of context and twist it around (give it new meanings) to create their own new theology.

One notable group, that produced “The Jesus Seminar”, goes so far as to uphold that Jesus’ ministry had nothing to do with salvation nor that Jesus viewed Himself as Messiah or the Son of God. Pretty darn arrogant and blatant when you consider the New Testament is extremely clear that Jesus in fact knew Himself as Messiah and what His role in the salvation of humanity was to be.

A more fitting deviation aiming toward this topic is Scientology. They believe the Universe was not created by a Great Creator, ex nihilo, but in fact is evil, a deadly spiritual trap sucking in the weak, and so must be overcome. What is to be gained by this belief? How sad to not see creation as a beautiful gift from God; any evil realized is evil born of mankind by our sin and not the fault of The Garden as God created it.

Today, we see the aberrant churches growing and the orthodox Christian churches struggling and under persecution. We simply must not change to suit the culture or we risk losing our way. In the first century, lions ate many Christians; today we are nibbled to death by political correctness and a Godless culture that will purport that all religions are the same so it doesn’t matter. Only one religion, Christianity, holds to the duality of Christ through whom we are saved by grace. The Devil delights in messing up the churches; we must stand for Christ no matter what.

When considering what it is that we believe in, two ancient philosophies to note are: 1) Stoicism that claimed that a person can do nothing but conform to “the grand design”. All is set and the fools are the ones that impose their own desires and passions on this preset reality. You will always

be happy if you would just desire what you get, and not wish to get what you desire. The second is, 2) Plato and Neo-Platonism, that put forth that absolute truth and the certainty of anything, could not be found in this world. Nothing can be truly known about God in any rational sense, nor can any characterization of God be strictly correct. It must be noted that both ancient philosophies, with followers still today, are counter to Christianity.

There are indeed many “twists and turns” in any study concerning what it is that we believe. In our post-modern world of relativism, many subscribe to the belief that all religions are the same, wanting the same thing and worshipping the same God. Any superficial study will reveal this is not true.

An article published in the Inter-Religious Dialogue, (a forum for academic, social, and timely issues affecting religious communities around the world) entitled “Interfaith Dialogue in the Pulpit—Proclaiming an Emerging Gospel: A 21st Century Imperative”, by Reverend Canon Dr. C. Denise Yarbrough is Canon for Interfaith and Ecumenical Relations, Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, promoting “pluralism” states:

“Pluralism is about how we engage the multi-religious diversity of our culture. We can either retreat into our own corners and speak only to those who are like us, confining our knowledge and understanding and even experience of the divine to the boundaries of our own tradition, or we can embrace the wisdom and color and infinite variety of ways of knowing and engaging the divine being we Christians call God in all the other religious traditions that share our neighborhoods and towns and villages.

Pluralist preaching is an adventure. The preacher is challenged to find new meanings in old texts and to participate in defining what is “gospel” in the twenty-first century. The successful pluralist preacher will be one who will delight in the deep wisdom that other religious traditions offer about the divine mystery Christians call God.

To engage the multi-religious reality that contemporary Christians are living is to embark on a journey of spiritual formation that is life giving and energizing and that lessens the impression that “traditional” Christianity is narrow minded, outdated, judgmental and out of touch with our postmodern world.”

How does this square with John 14:6?

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Within the Dead Sea Scrolls, thousands of original texts from the beginning...every biblical book in the OT except Ester, we see what real Christianity is as the Old Testament leads straight to Jesus Christ. We also have the eyewitness authors of the New Testament, who were willing to die for the very truth. So, we have the academic elite, like Dr. Yarbrough saying *“that “traditional” Christianity is narrow minded, outdated, judgmental and out of touch with our postmodern world.”*

Today, the academic elite have the gall to say that Christianity is outdated? A religion that has stood the test of scholarly scrutiny for two thousand years? Out of touch? In this post-modern world, we see a sinful attempt to suggest the church can only survive if it conforms to the culture, a culture out of control and bathed in evil, pride and arrogance. This plays right into Satan’s hands; he would love that!

Our world is fallen and in control by Satan; do not go along with it (1 John 2:15-17):

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.” (NIV)

Blending religions? Yes, sadly it is well underway and being tried by the mis-guided. “Chrislam” is one such attempt

where near-sighted people try to blend oil and water using Christianity and Islam. Their attempt is based around the fact that the two religions are Abrahamic in nature and monotheistic in form. The blend is impossible because the two religions have completely different ideas on who Jesus is. In fact, no other religion can blend with Christianity for the very point of who Jesus Christ is.

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:15-21 NIV)

What will you choose to believe?