

WHICH
GOD?

WHOSE
GOD?

Which God, Whose God?

Beyond Definitions

Pick a god, any god, any god you like. Loosely defined, a god is a superior being that is worshipped and obeyed. Obedience implies authority and submission to a higher power. Civilizations, cultures, and societies have developed down through the centuries based on the perceived nature and core characteristics of the god or gods people worshipped. Rules and behavioral norms were generated by beliefs about what was right, or excellent, what would please or displease the supreme authorities, thought to be the source of all laws and the essence of all righteousness. Religion and culture are inexorably intertwined. All of this, however, leads to conclusions and concerns over behavioral norms, and how society ought to be governed.

The Bottom line on Beliefs and Behavior

Beliefs and behavior constitute the bottom line - what we believe about how we behave. Belief-Behavior, Faith-Law, Church-State, By the People - For the People.

Originally, alternate values and belief systems meant different laws and rules of order in distinct societies. While the goal of unity and peace for all mankind may appear laudable on the surface, the spiritual cost of the underlying requirement to put citizens into spreadsheets has yet to be fully understood or appreciated.

This pamphlet is primarily concerned with the *strategic implications of the God Questions* - how shall we then live?

Beliefs have become like flavors. Choose the one you like. Multiculturalism in a pluralist society has reduced sacred histories and religious ideals to not much more than consumer choice, taste and preference. What good is freedom of faith without practice? What good is a religion that can't be implemented beyond its "decorative" elements? The real bottom line we are facing is simply this: Believe as you like, but behave as you're told!

Have You Been Homogenized?



The Normalization of Religious Culture

The normalization of religious culture is displayed by the emphasis on superficial manifestations of cultural diversity - cuisine, dress, rites, rituals, and idiosyncrasies. But if the varieties of religion are just different flavors of ice cream, and the ice cream is still made up of the same basic ingredients, apart from extra flavorings, then somehow we've managed unwittingly to turn diversity into homogenization. An apparent compromise for the sake of convenience in the name of unity could become quite dangerous to each of our individual freedoms.

Rights, Rites, Religion & Retail

In a world where we are told that we can believe as we like, as long as we behave as we're told, diversity is being limited to outward forms of display. But truly distinct differences in core values and beliefs cannot be acted upon when those beliefs cut across the grain of the social norms of the majority. Primary political and media focus on diversity as consumer choice has impeded the recognition and open discussion of one of the most important impacts of globalization on our modern world - the normalization of God and religion - and what that means.

As the international community integrates along economic lines, multiculturalism is reduced to product preference in the larger context of a superior, dominant, multinational "corporate culture".

No matter which scoop you use, or what flavor you choose, it's still ice cream - a consumer product. After all, there's only one God, right? Or did we just buy into a trap here? Which God, whose God?

The most revolutionary change in civilization facing mankind is not the focus of argument amongst the monotheists, nor is it the so-called culture war between right and left. Rather, it is the conversion to the modern corporate culture from the rich traditions and ethnic diversities handed down through the centuries from ancient religions and civilizations. Many gods, many cultures, but with a central set of rules based on security and economics, necessarily implies not just compromise, but conversion. And if not conversion, possible coercion...



CLASH OF THE TITANS

If you have many cultures, but only one police force, how many cultures do you really have? What we have here is a very serious problem - a culture clash, not between left or right, conservative or liberal, nor between Arab and Jew, Christian and Buddhist, but between modern corporate and ancient culture.

The real clash is not between church and state, the government and the people, but rather, the soul and the spreadsheet.

From a corporate perspective, as we globalize, unify, and integrate commercial and security systems, philosophy and religion are being jammed into a publicly unacceptable corner, sidelined and marginalized, relegated as an irrelevant relic of civilizations past. Nevertheless, the large corporations will sell the public what they want, if it can be managed and controlled without being offensive.



For the most part, major corporations have avoided any kind of specific, direct religious sponsorship or affiliation - like the plague. It's too controversial, and contrary to their goals and objectives. But that may change, if consumers continue to demand faith-based solutions, and a profit can be made without facing a slew of impending lawsuits.

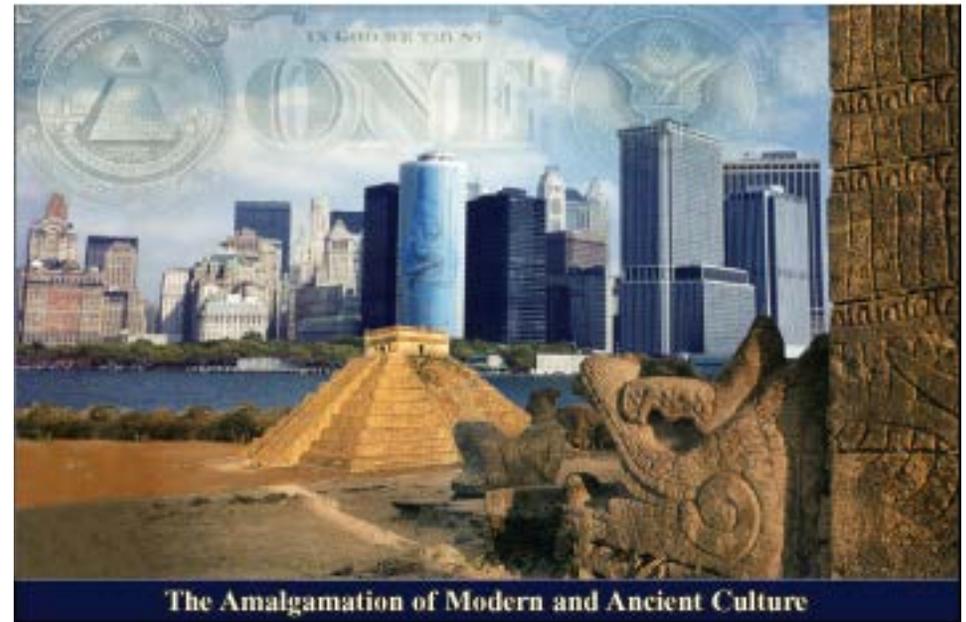
So what can we expect next? Let's have a look, from start to potential finish.

Worship. Authority. Obedience. Why?

It's so key. So deep. Should a boy bow down to the woman he can see, or the God he cannot? God or Goddess? Mother Nature or Father God? There is a clear, definite distinction between the idolatry and polytheism associated with sexual Fertility worship and the worship of pure Love, that invisible, intangible character personified in the Almighty, Intelligent Creator.



These are the very core issues of life which have faced mankind since the dawn of time. Ought we to worship the creature, creation itself, or the Creator? Do we look to the stars for guidance, or the One who set the stars in place? Do we look to the god within or without? Is God merely the energy force that drives the machine of the Universe, the Ultimate System of things, or is He really, personally in charge of what's going on, with plans to do something about it?



Pros and Cons of Polytheism versus Monotheism

There is enough hard, empirical scientific evidence to prove at least one thing - man is obsessed with notions about who God is, and how God ought to be worshipped. If there really is no such thing or Person, then why do we spend so much time building edifices, making laws, and printing money, all in the name of God? But if you look closely at the back side of an American One Dollar Bill, it is not the God of Heaven depicted, but rather the symbols of Egyptian Sun Worship. Pharaoh, you may remember, denied the existence of the Almighty.

It seems ironic that in a world struggling between absolutes and relativity, with a quirky combination of zero tolerance policies and accommodation for diversity, that it is only the God of Heaven who truly tolerates the worship of other gods - even though He doesn't like it. He doesn't deny they exist, but rather warns us that they'll get us into trouble. But for the other gods to justify their own authority, they must deny His existence. Otherwise, sensibly speaking, the sun worshippers know in their own hearts that if He does exist, they're screwed. So why does it seem like the monotheists are the most intolerant, and religious liberty in a secular society is fast becoming freedom *from* religion not *of* religion? What kind of combined conglomerate will evolve as we seek to unite? How will the political will of the people ensconced in faith-based patriotism merge with corporate finance?



E PLURIBUS UNUM

The Tryanny of Public Opinion

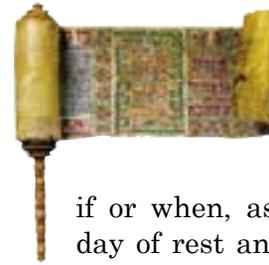
Masses of people around the world are actively rising up to proclaim the renewed importance of their faith. But there is also a simultaneous push for unity, equality and security. Compromises and concessions for convenience and commerce must be made. Inevitably the needs of the many will outweigh the wants of the few, and the idea of protecting minorities at the cost of the majority will wane. Every science fiction movie or fantasy epic portrays a dark, cruel grey world where only the heroes and heroines appear to have the heart to live in vibrant color. While we all seem to have a shared inner knowledge of this, there is also a defiant denial. Is ignorance really bliss? The mass media mindset is to nod the head and let it happen, all the while proclaiming the virtues of faith without risking anything for it. After all, only fanatics die for their faith, right? Or the young men and women in the military we send to the front lines. The rest of us just want to be left alone.

How often have we heard it said, "Keep it to yourself." "Don't push your religion on me." "Not interested." And yet we all buy milk at the same grocery stores, pay our bills with the same credit cards. As much as we want to live our own lives, we don't exist alone. Eventually, the "system" which has no definable "faith" of its own, takes on an intolerant authority equal to the size and cruelty of the ancient pagan empires. To placate the people the government is implemented in God's Name - but without His Heart.

Today we seem to have arrived at a perverse blend of god and mammon, as we move towards unity in the global village. Money, or mammon, greases the wheels of international commerce, while definitions of God are so vague, so varied, so watered down, as to be no more meaningful than different channels on the television screen. Nevertheless, God is yet invoked as the protector of the people, whether or not God is allowed to be defined or discussed publicly, or worshipped according to the dictates of individual conscience - if the details are in disagreement with the accepted norms, city council zoning laws, or other needs of the many.

If money is indeed mammon, then somehow mankind has managed to come full circle in the conflict over worship between God and mammon. In the ancient times, the Pharaohs were worshipped by the Egyptians as God-Kings, but according to the God of Heaven in the Old Testament, Pharaoh represented Atheistic rebellion. And Babylon represented a single culture, unified in its defiance of the God of Heaven.

UNITY - AT WHAT COST?



Survival of the Smallest

How then, can a monotheistic minority of a single group like Sabbath-keeping Jews survive in a world dominated by sun worship and nominal or meaningless monotheism? What will happen if or when, as a hypothetical example, an international family day of rest and worship is promoted for primarily economic and environmental reasons, but the end result is that Sunday is chosen as the international day of rest - as a matter of social and economic convenience - and the world community views observant Sabbath worshippers as dogmatic nitpickers, a nonsensical nuisance?

Monotheistic Madness

Arabs, Jews, and Christians alike are mistaken if they think they can establish some kind of God-oriented faith-based righteousness in this sick sinful world. The God of Abraham never intended for us to survive forever by "managing" evil through some kind of command and control system to implement righteousness. His original plan was to prove it doesn't work. The original Will of God described in Scripture was to show that only by Love, not Law, by Faith, not Force, can permanent peace be found. According to the Scriptures - Jewish, Islamic and Christian - this is not something God expects us to achieve apart from direct Divine intervention. "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth."

No Fences in Heaven

If God had valued security more than freedom, He might have placed a barrier around the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Instead, He gave us the right to be wrong, a courtesy we rarely extend to one another. The only real hope, Biblically speaking, is Judgment Day. And it needs to be presented in a secular liberal context, not as the apocalyptic paranoia portrayed in the mass media mindset, but rather as the final deliverance and release from the suffering of sin - and a new beginning...And these concepts ought to be factored into our thinking, diplomacy, politics and discussions. How might our attitudes change?

The end of the world may seem negative to some, but compared to the alternatives, it is the best and truly most politically correct solution for us all - with the end result being left to God not Man. I want my milk and honey too, but not if I have to eat it under armed guard and constant video surveillance. Isn't it time we let God, be God? Isn't this why God is God?

WHICH GOD, WHOSE GOD?

A DEEPER EXAMINATION OF THE OPTIONS OF FAITH, WITH AN ANALYSIS OF HOW THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MONOTHEISM, POLYTHEISM, AND MULTICULTURALISM PLAY OUT IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY DEDICATED TO DIVERSITY BUT HEADED FOR HOMOGENIZATION.

Do you sometimes feel you know, more than you need to know, about more than you need to know about, and not enough about, what you know you ought to know more about?

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