



**Only Two Religions?
Introduction to Worldview Evangelism
by
Dr. Peter Jones**

*Director, [truthXchange](http://truthXchange.com) and
Scholar in Residence, Westminster Seminary California*

Section 3A

Religions Are One

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Religions Are One

Oneism is defined as the worship of creation, where all is one when creation is worshipped and served as divine. In Oneism all distinctions are eliminated and through “enlightenment” Oneism proclaims that man is *also* divine.

Twoism is defined as the worship of the divine Creator of all things. In Twoism God *alone* is divine and is distinct from His creation, *yet* through His Son, Jesus, God is in loving communion *with* His creation.

By now, you are getting the idea. If All is One, and Humanity is One, then naturally, all Religions are One. You may have heard people talk about the various religions as slices of a pizza. Each religion is a piece of the whole and at the center they all share the same delicious, gooey experience of spirituality. It really doesn't matter which slice of pizza you are served. If you eat through the crust (the doctrine or the teachings), you get to the good part (the experience). That spiritual experience, a kind of ecstasy, a losing of one's self, being absorbed into the whole—that experience is surely shared by all religions.

People also use the image of an underground source that feeds all the rivers, or different roads, all of which lead to the top of the mountain. All roads lead to the top of the mountain. All rivers come from the same underground source. In a Oneist way of thinking, doctrine and creeds are useless. Words mean little and should always be abandoned in favor of common mystical experience. If our religions all lead to that similar experience, then surely they come from the same source and are therefore the same religion.

Utopia: Worldwide Peace

Some argue that for the world to be a peaceful, unified place, we need a common set of moral values and a common global justice system. The Bible seems to imply that some anti-Christian political systems will have, at least on the surface, a “peaceful” look and feel to them. But God warns his people in the Old Testament about listening to prophets who say, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” God will bring peace to the world in his own way and in his own time.

Oneists who seek global peace and unity attempt to bring all the religions together to help out. Even though the religions seem so different, surely they must agree on most things. Can't they

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come together on the basis of what they have in common? Interfaith chapters and organizations like the **Parliament of the World's Religions**ⁱ present a goal of worldwide religious unity. And actually, those who seek such unity often have more success than one might think. At the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993, representatives from one 125 different religions danced around a huge ballroom, arm in arm, singing. They were perfectly happy to join the global religious celebration. Because Oneist religions share the same ultimate truths, union with other religions is not a huge problem, especially if the unity is based on mystical religious experience and not on doctrinal statements—especially that of the revealed word of the true God.

What *is* that common experience? It is characterized by emptying the mind, losing one's identity in the whole, and attempting to find a balance between contrasting ideas. The phrase used is the "joining of the opposites." When a religious experience leads you to that perfect point of suspension, where good and evil are the same and work together to produce a higher self, a higher planet, a greater union with the all—then you have experienced true spirituality.

Of course, there is a wide variety of religious systems in the world. Some worship ancestors, some the elements (sun, wind, sky). This even happened among God's people in the Old Testament:

And he [the good king, Josiah] deposed the priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who burned incense to Baal, *to the sun and the moon and the constellations and all the host of the heavens.* ([2 Kings 23:5](#))

Some have set in place elaborate rituals for purification. Some insist on separation from certain physical activities (including marriage) or certain foods. Paul speaks about this in Colossians: "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations: 'Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch'" ([Colossians 2:20–21](#))

Some offer animal or even human sacrifices. Many rely on **talismans**,ⁱⁱ curses, magical rites and intense physical discipline (even suffering). Some are overtly political, while others draw away from society, creating their own world. All of these activities are meant to re-assure the worshiper that the gods are appeased and will not punish an offender. In all of these religions, the earth itself, or something in it, is the object of worship and service. This can include the self, money, success, the admiration of others, or service to actual idols. The techniques in these religions may vary, but the themes are the same.

To find unity, those who seek to bring the religions together will emphasize certain aspects of spirituality common to all:

ⁱ **Parliament of the World's Religions:** The motto of this organization, which meets both internationally and regionally, is "Bringing people of faith together for a better world." Christianity, however, cannot join with other religions to do God's will.

ⁱⁱ **Talisman:** an object (such as a ring or stone) that is believed to have magic powers and to cause good things to happen to the person who has it.

Characteristics of Oneist Spirituality

1. Intensely personal and inward-focused experiences;
2. A growing consciousness of being united to all things;
3. The joining of the opposites (especially good and evil, to assuage the conscience);
4. A blurring of the distinction between mind and body;
5. A deliberate silencing of the mind.
6. A hatred of the Creator/creature distinction

Don't be fooled by the very structured look of some religions. You will find, if you dig in a little deeper, that these structures do not ultimately provide peace in the heart of the devotee. They are not ultimately satisfying. A religion in which you can never do enough to satisfy the gods; in which you are always afraid that some evil power will make you sick or kill your children; in which you are never really sure if the gods are on your side—or even if it's possible to know those gods—a religion like that cannot be satisfying to anyone. There is always something more that should be done, some fear of the wrath of the gods, some doubt about the quality and effectiveness of one's worship.ⁱⁱⁱ We humans have the same fears and worries no matter what version of God we are worshipping—unless that God is the God of the Bible. He is faithful and we do not rely on our religious activities to please him! He is pleased with us because of the righteous works that his Son, Jesus accomplished in our place, and accepts the punishment that fell on him, so that we do not have to endure his judgment. Christian spirituality is entirely different from Oneist spirituality.

In the next section we will see why all religions cannot be brought into the pie. There is *one* that just won't fit.

With this section in mind, use the Marketplace Research in the practical section of this chapter to train yourself to identify and understand Oneist spirituality. You will soon become adept at recognizing Oneism in the culture around you. You may also be surprised to discover that some aspects of Oneist spirituality need to be eradicated from your own Christian practice.

ⁱⁱⁱ If you have access to the internet or to a digital reader, you might be interested in downloading and reading a truthXchange compendium volume, called *Global Wizardry: Pagan Spiritual Techniques and a Christian Response*, ed. Peter Jones (Main Entry Editions: Escondido, CA, 2010). The chapters are written by Christians in a variety of cultures and a variety of religions, yet the pagan spirituality is astoundingly similar. If you cannot afford to purchase this volume, you can download at no expense the lectures that were presented by logging on to the truthXchange website: www.truthXchange.com. Go to the audio and video section. The lectures for Global Wizardry are from 2008.

Optional Exercises

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Marketplace Research

1. Ask two people from a religion other than Christianity what it means for them to be “spiritual.”
2. Ask two Christians outside your own denomination or fellowship what they think it means to be “spiritual.”
3. Record your answers and discuss them with your group.

Challenge Question

Pick a religion other than Christianity and write down five of its basic beliefs. Look also at its practice of spirituality and record five or more aspects of its worship. See how many of the five Oneist qualities seem to fit the religion you have chosen. Share your research with the group.