



RELIGION

Why are there so many religions?

“You let go of the commandment of God and cling to the tradition of men.”—Mark 7:8.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS People have an innate “spiritual need” that they can fill by worshipping God. (Matthew 5:3) In trying to satisfy that need, people have created many religions that are based on the ideas of humans rather than those of God.

For instance, the Bible says about members of one first-century religious group: “They have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge. For because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” (Romans 10:2, 3) Likewise today, a large number of religions exist that “teach commands of men as doctrines.”—Mark 7:7.

True religion is a way of life, not just ritual or formality



Is it necessary to belong to a religion?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Hebrews 10:25 uses the phrase “not forsaking our meeting together.” Those words show that God wants people to gather as an organized group for worship. But would each worshipper have his or her own interpretation of who God is and what he requires? No. The Bible says that those who worship in a way that God approves “should all speak in agreement” and “be completely united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” (1 Corinthians 1:10) They would be organized into congregations and would “have love for the whole association of brothers” worldwide. (1 Peter 2:17; 1 Corinthians 11:16) Such united and organized worship is necessary to please God.

“Let us consider one another so as to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking our meeting together.”—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

Can true religion be identified?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Illustrating how to identify those who practice true religion, the Bible says: “By their fruits you will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they?” (Matthew 7:16) You need not be a botanist to distinguish a fig tree from a thistle; likewise, you need not be an expert on religion to tell the true from the false. What are some of the fruits, or identifying features, of true religion?

- True religion teaches the truth from God’s Word, the Bible. (John 4:24; 17:17) It is not based on human philosophies.
- True religion helps people get to know God, including knowing his name, Jehovah.—John 17:3, 6.
- True religion focuses attention on God’s Kingdom, not man’s governments, as the only hope for mankind.—Matthew 10:7; 24:14.
- True religion promotes unselfish love. (John 13:35) It teaches people to respect all ethnic groups, to use their time and resources to help others, and to avoid sharing in the wars of the nations.—Micah 4:1-4.
- True religion is a way of life, not just ritual or formality. Its members practice what they preach.—Romans 2:21; 1 John 3:18.

Jehovah’s Witnesses, the publishers of this magazine, strive to honor God in their speech and conduct. Why not attend a meeting at a Kingdom Hall and see for yourself? ■

*“By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.”
—John 13:35.*

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