



God Myths

"God = Whoever You Want Him to Be" (John 1:1-18)

by Brian Croyle, 17 April 2016

BIG IDEA: By creating our own idea of "god", we lose out on the astonishing benefit of connecting with the real God.

Three fallacies with the premise that "God is whoever you make Him to be":

The Logical Fallacy

- There is a logical problem with the idea that "all religions are the same" (or are equally valid).
- As Christians, we affirm that our God and our faith are real, concrete, and consistent. So a logical problem arises if we claim differing religions are equally valid when they portray God in different and conflicting ways. If God is a reality, he cannot exist in contradiction with Himself.
- Jesus said what he said, did what he did, and is who he is – religious philosophizing can't change that.
- A Biblical "revisioning" of the concept that "many roads lead to God" – God created diversity, and invites *all* people to join in relationship with Him through what Jesus did on the cross (John 3:16, Gal. 3:26-28, Rev. 5:9 – "every tribe, tongue, and nation"!)

The Practical Fallacy

- If God is only what we make him to be, then he is no larger than we can conceive. Such a "god" serves no real purpose in our lives.
- This is the comfortable, cosmic "Teddy Bear" god – he makes no demands of us, holds no claim over us, and we can put him on the shelf whenever we like.
- Instead, God is greater than we can comprehend - His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Is. 55:8-9; Romans 11:33-36), and He is *for* us.

The Spiritual Fallacy

- By believing God to be less than or other than He is, we lose the astonishing benefit of knowing Him *personally* for who He *really* is (John 1:14, 16-17).
- Jesus came for the very purpose of showing us specifically who God is - he is entirely consistent with the Father (John 1:18).
- As Christians, we don't present a religious philosophy; we share what we have come to know about a *Person*. In 1 John 1:1-4, John presents "what we have seen, heard, touched" – not ideology, but the *living experience* of knowing and walking with Jesus.
- We, too, walk with Jesus, as the Holy Spirit lives in us to "give testimony" to the ongoing specific reality of our God. As the Body of Christ and bearers of the Spirit, we are called to further Christ's mission by revealing God's character and reality to the world (2 Cor. 5:16-21).

My Next Step

Do I usually think of my faith more as a religion or as a relationship? How often do I really make the effort to connect personally with God? This week, how can I take one step closer to the Word who became a human in order to show me how much he loves me?

FOR MY PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD THIS WEEK:

1. Read John 1:1-18. Have you ever thought about the incredible significance of God loving you so much that he became a human, and then suffered so that you could be with him? Spend time reflecting on what Jesus has done for you, and thank him for his unfailing love and amazing grace.
2. Read Colossians 1:15-23. How often have you thought of Jesus in this light, as the "fullness of God" in all his glory? Do you tend to think of Jesus only as a friend? Though he is that, he is also so much more. How can you practice thinking about the glory and greatness of Jesus?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Since God wants to make His appeal to the world through us, who might He be leading you to reach out to with the love of Jesus? What practical steps can you take to initiate contact with that person?