

The Right Religion

To speak of the 'right religion' in everyday conversation is to invite some hostile reactions! It is not 'politically correct' to speak of the 'right' religion. Current thinking demands that we accept all religions as 'right'; in the realm of religion all is relative with any claim to absolutism rejected! However, our Anglican liturgy is unashamedly an advocate of absolutism. The Collect for Trinity 8 asks God "to nourish us with true religion", and the Ordinal (the Service for the authorization of Ministers in the Anglican Church) states that such ministers have the specific function in the Church to labour for "agreement in the faith and the knowledge of God, and ... that there be no place for error in religion" in the Church.

Why does our Anglican liturgy place such a strong emphasis upon the 'true' Christian Faith? Part of the answer lies in the fact that the Christian message is that men and women can only be 'saved' from 'eternal punishment' through believing that Jesus Christ is the only 'Saviour' and 'Lord'. The message of the gospel or 'good news' is that our sin deserves God's punishment and Christ's death on the cross is the only means of forgiveness and reconciliation, received by faith; faith meaning not merely trust, but the turning of one's life to obey Christ's teaching.

A further reason our Liturgy lays such stress on the Church believing in 'true religion' is the ever present danger for church members to be led away from salvation by accepting 'error' into their belief and practice. We are reminded in the Old Testament that only a 'remnant' were saved. Many New Testament passages warn believers to be 'alert' and 'attentive' so as to hold correct teaching and be transformed in their conduct by their obedience to every aspect of Christ's teaching. Let us pray for one another that God would "nourish us with true religion".

Pastor J Lowe