



Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Diane,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know the definitions of Christian deism and theism.

In order to answer your question we did some research on the Internet. Below is a summary of our findings.

Deism is a religion based primarily on nature and reasoning. A deist is a person who believes that God designed and created the world and governs it through natural laws that are inherent in everything. These natural laws can be discovered through observation, experience and reasoning. Deists believe that human beings have "free will" and have responsibility for choosing how they live in relation to natural laws that govern the world. From the "designs" that are seen in our world and in ourselves, deists infer the existence of an intentional "Designer" or creator called "God."

Christian deism is different from Deism in that it branches from Christianity. Christian Deists believe that God does take an ongoing interest in the world and humanity but God does not control the world or humanity. Human beings are "free agents in a free world." Christian Deists believe that it is never "God's will" for anything "bad" to happen. Bad things may be caused by accident or by human action. God does not make a person sick or well. Our health is partly within our own control and sometimes beyond our control.

Christian Deists believe God can indirectly intervene in the world through human beings. For example, God can heal through the efforts of physicians and nurses. God can care for the poor through charitable persons and through programs designed by compassionate leaders and legislators. Christian Deists believe that according to Jesus, our mission is to create the "kingdom of God on earth." They contend that God can work through each of us if we will follow God's law of love for each other. They further believe that we are God's representatives on earth if we do God's will. Subsequently each of us can contribute in some way toward the development of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Christian Deists believe that Jesus was a deist. They say Jesus taught that there are two basic laws of God governing humankind. The first law is that life comes from God and we are to use it as God intends, as illustrated in Jesus' parable of the talents (money). The second law is that God intends for human beings to live by love for each other, as illustrated in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. Christian deism is based





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on appreciation for all creation and on appreciation for every human life.

Christian deists do not worship Jesus as God. Therefore, they reject the Trinitarian view that Jesus and God are one and the same, or difference persons of the same Godhead. In this respect we, as Bible Students, are in agreement with them. However, they do not believe that Jesus is God's Son, God's first creation, who willingly came to earth as a perfect human being in order to redeem the entire human race from the death penalty God imposed on Adam and all his progeny due to disobedience. Because they reject this belief, they reject the most basic and universal of Christian doctrines. Christian Deists see Jesus only as an imperfect human being who had to struggle with his own times of disappointment, sorrow, anger, prejudice, impatience, and despair, just as other human beings struggle with these experiences. They say Jesus never claimed to be perfect but he was committed to following God's natural laws of love. Christian Deists do not believe that after his crucifixion, Jesus was resurrected as an immortal spirit being and now sits at the right hand of God. Instead they believe that Jesus' cross is a symbol of commitment to establishing the "kingdom of God" (obedience of God laws) on earth. Christian Deists are committed to following God's natural laws, as summarized in the two "commandments" to love God and your neighbor.

Briefly stated, Christian Deism adopts only the ethics and practical teachings of Jesus, while it denies that Jesus ever was or is now a spiritual being.

The definition and explanation of Theism below is from Wikipedia.

Theism, in the broadest sense, is the belief that at least one **deity** exists. In a more specific sense, *theism* is commonly a **monotheistic** doctrine concerning the nature of a **deity**, and that deity's relationship to the **universe**. *Theism*, in this specific sense, **conceives of God as personal, present** and active in the governance and organization of the world and the universe. As such *theism* describes the classical conception of God that is found in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. The use of the word *theism* to indicate this classical form of **monotheism** began during the **scientific revolution** of the seventeenth century in order to distinguish it from the then-emerging **deism** which contended that God, though transcendent and supreme, did not intervene in the **natural world** and could be known rationally but not via **revelation**.

The term *theism* derives from the Greek *theos* meaning "god". **Ralph Cudworth** (1617-88) first used the term *theism*. In Cudworth's definition, they are "strictly and properly called Theists, who affirm, that a





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perfectly conscious understanding being, or mind, existing of itself from eternity, was the cause of all other things".

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.com. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

