



CHURCH & CULTURE

LIVING IN A PLURALISTIC CULTURE.

Pluralism:

1. A condition or system in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources of authority, etc., coexist.
2. The practice of holding more than one office or church benefice at a time.

We've all heard the idea that there are many ways up to the mountain - you have your way and I have mine. It may seem harsh, but as Christians, we actually reject this way of thinking. Christ came declaring that He was the *only way* to heaven. This isn't a popular message in today's world, is it? In the past, the many gods were Baal, Mithras, Dionysus, and Krishna. Today, they can often be sex, money, power, fame, and pleasure. Plus we deal with the possibility of seeming unforgiving or intolerant by saying Jesus is the only way. Not all religions lead to eternal life. But Jesus does.

Can we gain some advice from Scripture on how to navigate a world where polytheism has become pluralism? Sure we can. We find people in the Bible who were resolute that God alone was true. Daniel is a fine example. Three kings tried to change his mind. Through God working in him, it was their minds which were in fact changed.

IN THE BIBLE.

Read Daniel 1

Isaiah 37:14-20

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord. 15 And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: 16 “Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 17 Give ear, Lord, and hear; open your eyes, Lord, and see; listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to ridicule the living God.

18 “It is true, Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste all these peoples and their lands. 19 They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. 20 Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Lord, are the only God.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

QUESTIONS.

- 1.) We often see an “all roads lead to Rome” mentality when it comes to religion. What are your thoughts on this? What does Jesus say about himself?
- 2.) How can you reflect Jesus and share His truths in our culture and in your everyday life?
- 3.) How do you avoid appearing intolerant when this is done?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?