

"EXCLUSIVITY"

Sunday, March 27, 2016
Objections | Easter Sunday
By: Allen Coleman

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome

- (1) Today is Easter Sunday.
- (2) Not everyone is celebrating. Not everyone is worshiping. Many have objections.

2. Objections

- (1) Limited time
- (2) Examine an ambitious survey of nearly a 100,000 people in San Francisco, Austin, Boston and Phoenix by the Sausage Marketing Group.
 - (i) Finished in 2013
 - (ii) Many **objections** found
- (3) **Top 5 Topics:**
 - (i) Intolerance
 - (ii) Relevance
 - (iii) Politics
 - (iv) Hypocrisy
 - (v) Exclusivity

[**AUDIO** - Focus Group]

II. EXCLUSIVE TRUTH

[**JN. 14:6** - Jesus told him, "I am the way, **the truth**, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.]

1. Offense and Defense

- (1) Truth not only a matter of offense, in that it makes certain assertions.
- (2) It is also a matter of defense, in that it must be able to make a sensible response to counterpoints that are raised.

2. Relativism

- (1) All truth is relative?
- (2) But is that a relative or absolute truth?
- (3) If it's absolute, then we should not believe him.
- (4) If its relative, then we should not believe him



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3. *Skepticism*

- (1) All truth is untrustworthy?
- (2) The agnostic says you can't know the truth. Yet the mindset is self-defeating because it claims to know at least one truth: that you can't know truth.

4. *Rationalism*

- (1) All truth claims must be proven?
- (2) But the scientist cannot prove the disciplines of mathematics and logic because it presupposes them.
 - (i) Ravi Zacharias: Creation is not scientific reason?
 - (ii) What came before the Big Bang?
 - (iii) Singularity.
 - (iv) Isn't a singularity defined as a point at which all the laws of physics break down?
 - (v) That is correct.
 - (vi) Then, technically, your starting point is not scientific reason either.
 - (vii) We scientists do seem to retain selective sovereignty over how we apply what we believe.

5. *Pluralism*

- (1) All truth claims are valid?
- (2) Pluralism says that it is true and anything opposed to it is false, which is a claim that denies its own foundational tenet.

6. *Absolute Truth*

- (1) Therefore, the idea of exclusive (or absolute truth) is not only logical, but preferable lest we find ourselves lost in the alternative...which is subjective chaos.

JN. 2:18 - *So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?"*

- (2) The mind seeks truth. But we must not just marvel at what the mind seeks, but what the mind is.
- (3) Re: information-rich blueprint in the human gene:

Dr. Lewis Thomas - *"The mere existence of that cell should be one of the greatest astonishments of the earth. People ought to be walking around all day, all through their waking*



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hours, calling to each other in endless wonderment, talking of nothing except that cell...if anyone does succeed in explaining it, within my lifetime I will charter a skywriting airplane, maybe a whole fell of them, and send them aloft to write one great exclamation point after another, around the whole sky, until all my money runs out."]

- (4) Dr. Francis Crick, the Nobel Prize-winning scientist who helped crack the code of human DNA said:

[Dr. Francis Crick - *"So impossible is this event, it is almost a miracle."*]

- (5) There are conventions, committees and conference dedicated to proving the naturalist worldview. But good science set's out to prove something as wrong, not something as right.

- (i) Theories, gaps in theories, are all filled

[Dr. Thomas Nagal | *Professor Philosophy | NY Univ. - "I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and naturally, hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that."*]

- (6) When Jesus says that He is the truth, is not inviting us to check our brains at the door.

- (i) The pleas of scientists for evidence force us to consider who has to have more faith?

- (ii) The Christian who use his mind to trust in God, or is it the one who, without any attempt to explain how his mind came to be, uses that same mind to demand a sign and disbelieves in God?

- (7) Bertrand Russell: "Why did you not give me enough evidence?"

- (8) The Scriptures categorically state that the problem with such people is not the absence of evidence; it is rather, the suppression of it.

- (9) In a world played with contradicting ways of defining ultimate reality. To commit one's life, habits, thoughts, goal, priorities—everything—to a certain world-view with no questions asked is, from the antagonist's point of view, to build one's life upon a very questionable foundation.

- (10)The only question that remains is where does that exclusive truth come from?

- (11) **REMEMBER:** The fact of the matter is, most of Marin County, and the US for that matter, considers itself somewhat to very spiritual.



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III. EXCLUSIVE WAY

[**JN. 14:6** - Jesus told him, "I am **the way**, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except **through me**.]

1. Jesus' Claim

- (1) The claim in this statement seems pretty clear. There is not only one source of absolute truth, that being God, there is only one access point...Jesus.

2. Easter Bias

- (1) Marin County loves Eastern spirituality.
- (2) Strangely, the west is looking more like the east, and the east is trying to emulate the west.
- (3) Religion is making a revival, but often as a hybrid of western marketing and easter mythology.
- (4) If a spiritual idea is easter, it is granted critical immunity; if it western, it is thoroughly criticized.
- (5) Hindu
 - (i) Even if the husband is morally degraded, engaged in an affair with another woman and is devoid of knowledge and other qualities, the wife must treat him like a god. (Manusmriti, V: 154)
- (6) Buddhism
 - (i) At first glance, karma is a lovely idea which encourages people to be good even when nobody is watching for the sake of happiness in a future life. Where it gets insidious is in the cloud that it casts over our failures in this life.
 - (ii) A buddhist student who was having problems memorizing material for test went to her buddhist monks who explained to her that she was having such trouble now because, in a past life, she was a murderous dictator who burned books, and so now, in this life, she is doomed to forever be learning challenged.
 - (iii) Not, "Oh, let's look at changing your study habits", but rather, "Oh, well, that's because you have the soul of a book-burning murderer."
 - (iv) In Buddhism, there's a hierarchy of enlightenment. If you're a Buddhist, you can't disagree with them because you're a lower level of enlightenment.



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3. *Other Claims*

- (1) We all like the idea that we all find our way to the same place, but by different roads.
- (2) All religions, plainly and simply, cannot be true.
 - (i) They claim different things, with different means, to different descriptions of different endings.
- (3) You will be surprised to know that very few people throughout world history have ever claimed to be God.
 - (i) Others have "made" them out to be God. But very few have every claimed it.
- (4) The claims are:
 - (i) Amazingly, the religion of **Buddhism** denies that God even exists. It teaches that life and death are sort of an illusion.
 - (ii) The religion of **Hinduism** says that if you've been bad, you may come back as a rat or some other animal.
 - (iii) **Islam** teaches you're only hope of escaping God's wrath is to do religious works. God will see these, and because of them, hopefully He will show mercy—but they won't know for sure. Each person's works will be weighed on the Day of Judgment and it will then be decided who is saved and who is not—based on whether they followed Islam, were sincere in repentance, and performed enough righteous deeds to outweigh their bad ones.
 - (iv) A score of 51% won't get you out of High School.
- (5) Buddha got tired of being rich, Mohammed of Islam was a prophet, and the Brahman of Hinduism is impersonal and unknowable.

4. *One Way, Open To All*

- (1) The strange part about this word exclusive, is we don't have a problem with it in some contexts.
- (2) We like being members of an exclusive group. A team, club or community. Which is why we'll pay membership dues and sign charters of membership.
 - (i) We just don't like be left out.



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- (3) True buddhism is still mostly comprised of those from Asia. True Hindus are mostly comprised of those from India. True Muslims are still mostly comprised of those from the middle east and north Africa.
- (4) But Jesus, comes along and says one door, open to all. One way, everyone is invited. A Narrow Road, but every tribe tongue and nation can travel it.
- (5) There are more Christians, by a billion, than any other. It is the most diverse, in the most countries with the most historical evidence.

IV. CONCLUSION

[**JN. 2:18-22** - *So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body.*]

1. The Most Signifiant Evidence

- (1) How did Christianity get to be so widely adhered to? The resurrection of Jesus Chirst fanned the flames of an obscure group of followers into the largest world religion history has every seen.
- (2) This morning we celebrate the single greatest sign, the single greatest verifiable evidence, in support of the exclusivity of Jesus' person and work.
- (3) The resurrection supports the exclusive **truth** claim.
 - (i) That God created us in His image and sustains us with dignity worth a value. But because we were unreasonable, we drifted into illogical worldviews and truth claims. But God is source of all truth, apart from whom we are just speculating about the world around us.
- (4) The resurrection supports the exclusive **way** claim.
 - (i) And so God, taking on human flesh, made a single way for every tribe, tongue and nation to know Him again. By way of the cross, by faith in Jesus...not an ignorant faith...not an unreasonable faith...not a faith without evidence...by this faith our sin is put to death, or debt to God is paid, and His perfection is imputed to us. Raises to new life.

[**1 COR. 15:14-20** - *And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain....And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins...If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead...]*

