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Christianity, the absolute religion

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Christianity, The Absolute Religion:

The tendency of the best thought in every age has been toward the teaching of the Bible, that the Power which created, preserves, and governs the universe is a unit. Back of all created things and beings, whether visible or invisible, there is One Being whom we rightly call God; and as such He is justly entitled to the loyalty of every moral being. They naturally owe to Him reverence, obedience, and love.

While this is true, that there is but one God, on the other hand the conclusion has also been reached that humanity is a unit; that Paul announced a fundamental truth when he said God "hath made of one blood all nations of men." We understand this more fully when we observe that whatever is for the benefit of one tribe or nation, everything considered, is for the good of all other tribes and nations. This holds true whether taken in the

social, commercial, political, intellectual, or moral sphere.

Viewed as a moral and spiritual being also there is a close analogy between man and all other created moral and spiritual beings in the universe. Hence, what is good for such beings in one part of the realm of God's government, the environment remaining about the same, should conduce to their welfare and the Divine Glory everywhere.

This leads us to conclude

that there ought to be one religion fit to become universal; by its nature so perfect and complete that we may term it The Absolute Religion. We hesitate not to affirm that Christianity answers the demand, being such a Religion.

Men have had their dreams of universal empire, and two or three of earth's geniuses have thought to establish systems of religion which they hoped would become universal. But those systems are either dead

or dying; they were of man,
and thus human; yes, and of
the earth, earthy. No Divine life
giving current flows through
them, to invigorate and renew
with perpetual youth.

We interrogate Christianity as
to its Author and origin and
for an answer we are carried
back to a period in the history
of God's moral government
which antedates even creation
itself, and learn that it was
thought out in the secret councils
of the Almighty, before ever the

morning stars sang together
for joy. God Himself is its
Author and thus it is the
Divine plan for securing harmony
with His will throughout the
moral universe.

A glance at the great funda-
mental doctrines of the Gospel
will confirm us in our po-
sition that Christianity is the
perfect, complete, final, and
absolute Religion. The Theocracy
of the Old Testament and the
Church of the New Testament or
Gospel Dispensation constitute but

an inadequate outward form on world side of the Kingdom of God. Here is revealed to us God, the creator, King, yet loving Father of all. His Kingdom must be commensurate with the entire universe. There may be here and there for a brief period small sections of the vast realm in hostility or open rebellion against Heaven's King. It was to provide a remedy in case of such possible emergencies that the principles of Incarnation and Atonement were made an essential part of the original

plan. So far as we are able to judge of the various religious systems that have obtained in this world the two elements of Incarnation and Atonement are what mark Christianity as the only system worthy to be called the Religion.

Every moral being in the universe in a normal condition feels a longing after the Divine. It may have been the seeking to gratify this aspiration of the moral nature in an improper and unholy way that led to the fall

of Satan and his coadjutors
in the angel world. No fact
connected with man's religious
nature stands out more prominently
in the mythologies of all peoples
than this longing after union
in some way with the Divine. This
feature of Christianity, demanded to
satisfy the inclinations of all holy
spiritual beings, could have been
accomplished on the part of
God had sin never marred and
blasted the beauties of the universe.
Thus had all remained pure we
might have had all spiritual beings

by an Incarnation without an
Atonement united and bound to
God with an indissoluble bond.

While sin is always a possibility no system of moral government could be perfect that does not provide the best remedy against the time when sin becomes an actuality. Hence the Atonement in Christ constitutes the very central transaction of the moral government of God. It is an appeal to that which is highest, noblest, most powerful for good in the nature of moral

and spiritual beings. It reveals to us the deepest depths of Divine love and mercy. It is God's way for the return of a wayward and sinful child to the bosom and home of a loving father. Outside of Christianity all other systems of religion utterly break down along the line of a satisfactory atonement. It is the boast of Christianity that its doctrine of Incarnation and Atonement is not only sufficient but also final. For since God has become Incarnate and has made an Atonement for sin nothing more

can be added. The greatest sacrifice that God could command has been freely offered. Salvation has been accomplished for or brought within easy reach of every individual.

The revelation Christianity has made to us of God's nature and character can never be superseded; for it is God revealing Himself. The light thrown upon man's creation, nature, and destiny can never become dim or false; for it is the description of the temple by the Master Builder.

Slowly but surely Christianity is leavening philosophy, and at no very distant

day the only philosophy worth mentioning will be Christian Philosophy; for the Reason Why of Him who is both the Author of reason and of all else must ultimately stand.

Christianity is an intellectual; moral, and spiritual system, not containing or depending upon anything material, or sensual; there is nothing local in its nature; it is equally well adapted to any part of this world, likewise to any province in the realm of God's moral government. Being unbounded by time and space, with only a part

of its developments occurring in this world, how widely it differs from all other forms of religion known to man! These other systems have been so loaded down and bound up with errors of a local and physical character that to introduce thorough instruction in metaphysics and some of the other sciences is but to undermine and destroy their value and usefulness as religious systems. Christianity on the other hand contains in itself everything that is of value to man in all these other forms of religion. Its superiority is seen in the fact that

its nature is such that it is perfectly adapted to every condition of moral beings in the universe; its services are simple; and its requirements are easily complied with. It also contains in itself the very principles and forces by which its own perpetuity and existence are to be maintained. God, angels, and men are the agents employed in forwarding its great interests.

And here we notice that in all great enterprises where permanence and importance are required there is much which may be called foundation work.

and it not only requires great patience and sacrifice but is necessarily slow. We are only laying the foundations and polishing the stones out of which the temple of Christianity is to be built. So far as we can observe there are no indications in either the moral or physical world which suggest that Christianity has reached anything more than its childhood days. Wait until it blossoms into youth and early manhood and then almost every individual of the race on this globe will unite in that glad hosanna,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name"!

But let Christianity still work on through the centuries for at least a million years, and we may reasonably conclude that the vast majority of Adam's race will have complied with the terms of citizenship and have secured the infinite blessings of this Divine Kingdom. The prisoners in our jails and penitentiaries do not hinder or detract very much from the authority of the government. So those whose life has been such as to justify their being shut up in the prison of the universe forever will not

perceptibly lessen the universal triumph of Christ's Kingdom or for a moment cloud the glory of God.

This world, then, as a distant and rebellious province will finally through our Lord Jesus Christ be brought back into harmony and loyalty with the rest of God's moral government; so "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

A. F. Hoyt

This is merely a condensation of my
thesis to bring it within the limits of an
oration of six minutes' length.