

The Doctrine of Equivalency

Following are the first four items listed in the What We Believe section of the UCC website:

We believe in the triune God: Creator, resurrected Christ, the sole Head of the church, and the Holy Spirit, who guides and brings about the creative and redemptive work of God in the world.

We believe that each person is unique and valuable. It is the will of God that every person belong to a family of faith where they have a strong sense of being valued and loved.

We believe that each person is on a spiritual journey and that each of us is at a different stage of that journey.

We believe that the persistent search for God produces an authentic relationship with God, engendering love, strengthening faith, dissolving guilt, and giving life purpose and direction.

If the second statement is an assertion that any faith community is better than none at all and/or that they will all bring one to the same place in the end, then the statement should be soundly rejected. Surely it is good for people to feel valued and loved by their fellows, but it is a far better thing to know that you are valued and loved by God.

Progressive Christianity has been making the assertion that faith systems are more or less equivalent paths, any of which would lead a seeker to the God who all faiths worship. This is not the truth and the UCC does no one any favors by asserting that it is the truth. Certainly, it seems very tolerant and modern to suggest that all faiths are valid from the perspective of their adherents but to assert that they are all equivalently valid is simply pandering to multiculturalism, political correctness (whatever that means) and popular culture. The Christian church is here to lead not to acquiesce.

One cannot consider Christianity to be simply another ethical system of thought and action that, if practiced, would result in more correct behavior more of the time. It is much more than that. We do not have the option of saying that Jesus was just a great teacher or a good moral example. Given what He said about himself, He was either who He said He was (the Son of God) or someone who was trying to deceive people or a lunatic. Those are really the only options. If one cannot accept that Jesus is God, one must reject Christianity in its entirety as

being based on a flawed premise. So, there is no sense at all in considering Christianity as a valid system of ethics or moral principles alongside Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism or Judaism. That dog just won't hunt.

Christianity as a religion makes some unique claims as does Jesus; Christianity's central focus. Christianity is the only faith that makes a complete and rational explanation of man's situation, how we arrived at this situation and a plan to do something about it. God has a plan for how to deal with sin and when Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but through me", he was not just making that up on the spur of the moment. He was stating something that existed in the mind of God long before any of these other faiths existed.

The UCC assertion that it is God's will that everyone belong to some sort of community of faith is at best incomplete and at worst represents a heresy in the church. If they are referring to Hebrews 10:25 - *We should not stop gathering together with other believers, as some of you are doing. Instead, we must continue to encourage each other even more as we see the day of the Lord coming*, they are on the right track, if it means anything else, then it is a very foolish statement.

It is sometimes asserted by those who promote this 'Doctrine of Equivalency' that Christianity is a 'western' religion which we naturally accept, having been born into a 'western' culture. Their logic follows that had we been born somewhere else we might well believe something common to where we were born and God would like that just fine. Nonsense! Christianity is a Middle Eastern mystical faith which runs quite counter to our western culture. However, many millions of people from varied cultures across the globe have come to accept Christ as their ultimate reality often becoming pariahs in their own culture thereby.