



**Only Two Religions?
Introduction to Worldview Evangelism
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**Introduction and Section 1A
The Five Points of Pagan Oneism**

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The Five Points of Pagan Oneism

This course utilizes the terms Oneism and Twoism. Oneism is defined as the worship of creation where all is one when creation is worshipped and served as divine. In Oneism all distinctions are eliminated and through enlightenment Oneism proclaims that man *also* is divine. Twoism is defined as the worship of the divine Creator. All is two because we worship and serve the eternal, personal Creator of all things. In Twoism God *alone* is divine and is distinct from His creation; yet through His Son Jesus, God is in loving communion *with* His creation.

Welcome to truthXchange 100.

In this course, you will learn five basic differences between what the Christian faith believes and what *all other* religions believe. Now that sounds a little bold, to you, perhaps. How can all other religions have so much in common? Aren't they all different?

Well, yes, of course religions have different hymns, histories and heroes. But the Apostle Paul says something strikingly simple. We worship and serve *the Creator or something in creation*. He is saying that there are *only two religions*, only two ways of being "spiritual."

This course will show you five beliefs of Oneism (worship of creation) and then show you how Twoism (Christian worship of the Creator) is different in each area.

These five creation-worshiping beliefs are:

1. All Is One and One Is All
2. All Humanity Is One
3. All Religions Are One
4. There Is One Problem: We've forgotten that we are one!
5. There Is One Solution: Look inside yourself for salvation.

Intro and Section 1A

If you are already a Christian, we pray that the material you learn will help you to:

- Understand Jesus and his Word more deeply;
- Understand the way your non-Christian neighbors think;
- Speak the gospel in language your friends and neighbors understand;
- Recognize and avoid the errors that some “Christian” churches are teaching.

If you are not a Christian, we hope that you will see the end result of worshiping and serving the creation, and that you will come to see the beauty, love, power and mercy of the God who made you in his own image and who will forgive you if you come to him through the work of his Son, Jesus.

How the Course Works

There are five sections, each with an A and B portion. In each section we will study one of the points mentioned above. In the A portion, we will see what Oneism (worship of creation) teaches and in the B portion, we will see what Twoism (worship of the Creator) teaches.

After each section, there will be an assessment. The assessment questions are all multiple choice and true or false.

You will also find a section with Optional Exercises, containing suggested activities or research projects that you can do on your own or with a group of people doing the course together. Perhaps your small group or family would like to study this course. You could then discuss the activities and questions in the section. You will not be formally assessed on these suggested activities.

We have also included suggested reading materials for you, if you wish to go further. You will not be assessed on those materials.

At the end of the course, you will take a final exam that is a longer, more thorough evaluation of what you have learned. The exam is still in true or false and multiple choice formats.

Thank you so much for your interest in this course. At truthXchange we are always eager to hear how the course has helped you in your understanding of the Bible, the Christian faith and your Christian walk. We are also eager to hear ways in which we can improve the course.

Have fun and learn a lot!

Introduction

When the Apostle Paul arrived in the Greek city of Athens, he left his “backpack” in the hostel and went out to see the sights. A church-planter by profession, he naturally headed to the local worship center to analyze the spiritual condition of the culture. There he examined the statues on public display and found one with the inscription: “To the Unknown God.” For Paul, that statue represented the yearning of the Athenians to know the God who could do what their own gods were powerless to do.

A generation ago, the God of the Bible was not an “unknown god” to most Westerners, even if they were not Christian believers. In some countries, the Christian God still remains mainly an “unknown god.” Christians in the West used to be able to assume that their friends and neighbors knew the basics about the Christian faith. This is no longer the case. Losing interest in Christianity has not, however, made people **secular**,ⁱ as one might have expected. People these days gladly consider themselves to be “spiritual” as long as they have “faith” of any kind. The *object* of that faith doesn’t matter. In fact, anyone who tries to insist that faith must be placed in a particular God, rather than the crowd of gods worshiped in the culture, is breaking our society’s first commandment: “thou shalt not impose thy religion on me.” In fact, many Westerners have come to idealize the native religions, and many **indigenous religions**ⁱⁱ are becoming popular, as older and purer forms of spirituality. In Australia, it is aboriginal religion; in Central America, the Mayan religion; in Brazil, Candomblé and Umbanda (ancient African religions); in the UK, Celtic religion; in the USA, Native American Indian religion, and so on.

Whether Christians are new to understanding this admiration of pagan religions or have lived side by side with them for centuries, they find it hard to explain the gospel of Jesus Christ when all the words they use are either unfamiliar to their listeners or have been given new meanings. In North America, words that used to be familiar, such as “sin,” “salvation” and “prayer” have become “false self,” “hope for the planet” and “good thoughts.” The good things we experience in life are due to our “karma,” and people speak naturally about getting things right in their next **reincarnation**ⁱⁱⁱ. In this Western context, it is hard to explain even the basic Christian notions, let alone the richer doctrines of the Christian faith.

This course is applicable to all cultures and all situations, because whatever form of paganism you see around you is described in the Bible as the worship of creation. The material you study will help you understand the basic principles of that system. You will see different expressions of it, depending on where you live, but understanding the five points of pagan Oneism will help you live and speak the gospel of Jesus, no matter what your situation.

ⁱ **Secular:** not pertaining to or connected with religion

ⁱⁱ **Indigenous Religions:** In this context we mean the “natural” religions that many countries had before Christianity or other major religions arrived.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Reincarnation:** The belief that when people die, they come back to life in the form of another person or animal. Usually the belief includes an aspect of deserving a better or a worse life than the previous life.

Section 1A

All Is One (Oneism)

To understand the spiritual belief that “All Is One,” we only need to “tour the marketplace,” as Paul did. Notice the “All-is-One” theme that surrounds you in your everyday life. The movie *Avatar*, for example, implies that the only unspoiled, innocent world is the one that draws its power from the earth. The *na’avi* people, so innocent and pure, ask creation itself to come to their aid when they are attacked by the spoilers from the human planet, Earth. Through their magical pony tails, the innocents draw creation power from a tree into their connected circle. *Avatar* is an excellent example of an “All-is-One,” earth-worshipping religious philosophy. Various notions of **spiritual evolution**^{iv} depend on an all-knowing earth that creates itself and knows how to progress to perfection.

You see the same theme in the classic Disney movie, *Lion King*. Though it seems to have Christian ideas (Mufasa sacrifices himself for Simba, for example), the real message of *Lion King* is that wisdom and knowledge are found within the circle of life. Rafiki, the witch doctor, brings wisdom from ancient traditions and ancestors pass their wisdom to the next generation. Simba’s dead father appears to his son from the sky and says, “Simba, you have forgotten who you are, and so forgotten me. Look inside yourself, Simba. You are more than what you have become. You must take your place in the Circle of Life.”

In film and literature today, a God who stands outside creation and holds authority over it is often associated with a tyrannical church (as in the *Da Vinci Code*) or an oppressive political structure that depends on a Christian notion of God as Lord, as in the 1995 Disney version of *Pocahontas*. That film took the liberty of entirely rewriting history. In the true story, the Indian girl Pocahontas benefitted from the Christian religion, but the movie pictured the Englishman, John Smith as learning the native religion from her. That religion was a form of nature worship. In the movie, Pocahontas sings:

The rainstorm and the river are my brothers.
The heron and the otter are my friends,
And we are all connected to each other
In a circle, in a hoop that never ends.

^{iv} **Spiritual Evolution.** Just as some people believe that evolution brought into existence the world, animals etc. and that it “knows” how to make the world better and better, so some people believe that there is a kind of “spiritual” evolution, by which somehow the world will gradually become a happier and more moral place until one day, all the problems will be solved.

A Common Longing

People who believe that the world knows how to perfect itself should be satisfied with the way things are. But they're not. Somewhere underneath, they know that things are not as they should be, so they want to help the world progress and evolve in the right direction. The best way to do that in a Oneist world is by believing in the unity of all things, which seems better than clinging selfishly to identity and power. For this reason, Oneists are often kind, and eager to make the world a better place. This confuses Christians, who sometimes think they should have a monopoly on kindness. However, we must decide whether there is a Creator God, outside creation, who has structured the universe in a particular way. Oneists do not believe in such a God. If there *is* such a God, however, then each human being is answerable to him and deserves to know and understand his nature and his word, since such knowledge affects all that we think, say and do.

Believing that All Is One means that there is no distinction between God and the world. God *is* the world. Once this most important distinction disappears, all the others must go as well. Oneists get into many difficult and illogical problems by destroying the distinction between the Creator and the creation. If All is One, then there are ultimately *no distinctions*, which means, among other things, that:

- Words and speech are meaningless. (Why should one word sound and mean something different than another?)
- Music is impossible. (If there is no distinction of sounds, then tune and harmony disappear.)
- Prayer can't exist. (We can only meditate or look within, which is, if we are honest, downright depressing!)
- Person-ness disappears. (If we are one with all things, we lose personal identity and value.)
- We can't have a personal relationship with God. (The god we are trying to experience through **meditation**^v ends up being everywhere and/or nowhere, which leaves us without hope for a relationship.)
- There's no good and evil. (Good and evil are relative, defined by each person. The best one can come up with is a "balancing" of good and evil—as in the good and bad side of the Force in the *Star Wars* story.)

There is no God "out there" to rescue us. (We rely on human attempts at **utopia**,^{vi} which have always become cruel and unbearable nightmares.)

^v **Meditation:** There is nothing wrong with meditation, but it depends on what meaning you give it. Biblical meditation is reflecting on God's Word, learning it by heart and asking God to show you how to live it out. Pagan meditation means turning inward, leaving your mind behind and trying to become "one" with the "all." It often involves trance-like experiences.

^{vi} **Utopia:** The word "utopia," actually means "no place," but in common use of English it has come to mean an ideal society. It is used in this way in this lesson. If we are talking about God's ideal society, which he will create when Jesus returns to judge the world, then we should really call it a "eu-topia," since the "eu" in Greek, from which the word "utopia" is taken, means "good." A "eu-topia" would be a "good place."

Intro and Section 1A

As you think about the All-is-One principle and examine aspects of the culture in which you live, you will see the Oneist influence in children's literature, movies, healthcare, education, sexuality and in many other areas. It is important, as well, to remember that Oneism can be either atheistic (God is nothing and nowhere), or pantheistic (God is everything and everywhere).

At the end of this Section you will find some exercises and ideas for training your eyes and ears to see and hear the Oneist message and for training your mind to know how to give a Twoist answer in response.

Optional Exercises

Section 1A

Marketplace Research

Start an analysis of your culture:

1. After completing Section 1A, buy a popular magazine. (Pick from any field: Health, Sports, Family, Yoga, etc.) Browse through the magazine with a yellow highlighter in hand and mark every mention you can find of one of the five Oneist principles. You will be surprised to see how much you understand about Oneism and you may feel your eyes opening to a completely new way of seeing your culture. Here are the principles to remind you:
 - All Is One and One Is All
 - All Humanity Is One
 - All Religions Are One
 - There Is One Problem: We've forgotten that we are one!
 - There Is One Solution: Look inside yourself for salvation.
2. If you are going through this booklet as a group, assign an area of thought or a profession to someone who works or has a particular interest in it. Look for the influence of Oneist principles in that field. For example, a kindergarten teacher might look at the children's books available in the public library; a doctor might examine the pamphlets handed out to new patients, explaining the hospital's healing philosophy. You may find group members with expertise in literature, the media, counseling, music and the arts, healthcare, education, sexuality, and many more. Share your discoveries with others in your group.

Challenge Question

Think of five areas of life for which Oneism becomes illogical and impossible. Use the list in this section as a starting point.