

The Root of Good

I have a friend who complains Christianity is divisive and offensively exclusive in its truth claims. The response to which is: Divisive? Yes: Mt 10: 34-36, Jn 14:6. Offensively exclusive? Yes, certainly and necessarily.

But what within us is so offended? My friend views all beliefs as equally valid – seeking to uphold the greatest moral good thereby – fairness, kindness, tolerance, open-mindedness. His view assumes that the root of Goodness, Wisdom and Justice springs from me and you. This is why he is so outraged by God's exclusive claim on truth. We, the people, own our own truth. And if, in fact, we do, then my friend is correct. God and the Bible are not positive supporters of modern sensibilities. They are dangerous hangovers from antiquity.

Like us Moderns, Jesus also claimed the root of Goodness, Wisdom and Justice sprang from him, but solely from him and crucially, not from us. And, in taking it from him, we fall into sin. Two radically different assertions, begging the question: where do we believe the root of Goodness to be? Do we acknowledge or reject Jesus as God? Do we acknowledge or reject his claim on the root of those God-qualities? Can we surrender control of truth, or do we insist on owning and expressing it – as individuals?

My friend's view demands Christianity give way to an advanced morality. But how can we ask Christianity to bow to modern views? To do so asks it to agree that the root of Goodness springs from us. In effect we ask Christianity to undo and disintegrate itself. We ask Jesus to surrender to us - (He already did that. It proved unsustainable). - acknowledging that the divisiveness of his claims is offensive to our evolved morality, of goodness, kindness, fairness and open-mindedness. What a tangle!

Ben Cornell

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