

Christocentric

Do you pray to Jesus, or ...?

Christocentric or Theocentric

If asked, some Christian people would say they direct their prayers and devotions to Jesus, others to God; we (and they) might say their faith is *Christocentric* or *Theocentric*. It is generally the case that those who consider themselves more as 'Liberal' Christians might be of the latter, having, as they would see it, a very firmly monotheistic religious understanding of ultimate reality, and thus, for some, seeing themselves somewhat (or perhaps very much) in sympathy with, or even allied to, other monotheistic faiths; some might go even further, and see Christianity are one, among several, ways of approaching this monotheistic god.

The 'orthodox'/traditional Christians might consider themselves Christocentric, in that they see the only way of achieving God's ultimate blessing, as being by way of the divine Son – as the Bible tells us. For these Christians, then, the fact of the Incarnation is central; Jesus as 'just an ordinary man' does not work, and is inconceivable.

Thus, we return to the subject referred to last month (December 2016), of the centrality of Incarnation, and its creation of the sharp division between Christianity and other faiths – unless you are reductionist, and choose to delete those parts of the Christian creed that have always been its backbone; and this means, of course, deleting much of the New Testament, with its insistence on the reality of Incarnation – the Word of God made flesh – and Christ's resurrection.

Of course, living with a religious tension between God as creator and sustainer, and God as source of redemption and deliverance is probably not easy, for many, and perhaps never has been. Perhaps another difference between Christianity and other faiths is its constant presentation, to us, of paradoxes.

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