

# Religious Confusion

Religious confusion abounds. Religious people are divided into hundreds of different groups, wearing different names, worshiping different ways, and teaching different doctrines. In this article we want to consider why there is so much confusion, disagreement, and division. Does God approve or disapprove of it?

There are some elements that should not be blamed for religious division and confusion. Sometimes people suggest invalid explanations, which are not the real sources of the problem. First, it is not because God's will is unrevealed or incomplete (John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:22-25). Second, it is not because the Bible contains errors or contradictions (Psalm 119:128; Mark 3:24-25; John 17:17; Romans 3:4; 1 Corinthians 1:13). Third, it is not because the Bible is impossible to understand (Mark 7:14; Acts 17:11). Fourth, it is not because God approves division (John 17:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 4:3-6). Obviously, there are several suggestions people offer to explain religious confusion and division. The problem with all these explanations is that they place the blame on God and the Bible. But God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). He, in no way, could be responsible for what lies before mankind. We must look elsewhere for the real causes of the problem.

There are many elements that cause confusion and disagreement. First, there is a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6; Matthew 22:24; Romans 10:1-3). There may be several reasons why someone is lacking in knowledge. They may simply have never had opportunity to learn the truth. Or they may not have studied their Bible diligently enough. These reasons do not excuse ignorance. Paul still did wrong, even though it was done in ignorance (1 Timothy 1:13). Second, there are human religious guides. Much division results because people follow doctrines invented by men, but not found in the Bible. Preachers, family, friends, creed books, church laws, traditions, consciences, and feelings can lead one astray. We must trust in God's word, not in human wisdom. Third, there are preconceived ideas, pride, or lack of love for truth (Matthew 13:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). If the love of the truth is not in the heart, no amount of study can help and bring that person to the light. Fourth, there are personal desires and self-will (Matthew 13:20-22; 2 Timothy 4:2-4). We do the Lord's will, not our own (Matthew 7:21).

Religious disagreement, division, and confusion are not caused by God or His word. They are caused by people who do not obey God's word diligently. Paul wrote, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Do you love the truth enough to follow it? If you do, commit to following it today.

Adapted From David E. Pratte