

Paganism in the Church

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Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/BvLLZmPWISg>

This is a message for the Australian Church, and anyone of any skin colour giving honour and observance to the religious claims, ceremonies and rituals of traditional Aboriginal religion.

If you give honour to demons, false gods, you are not a person worth less, or any less a bearer of the Image of God than I or any other well formed Christian; but you are a poorer Christian if you mix false religion with the worship, teaching and knowledge of the One True God.

My objective this morning is to warn the people of God of the danger of mixing Christianity and traditional Aboriginal religion.

And given the prevalence and the level of normalisation of this mixing in Australian churches, it requires I use a large amount of Scripture and evidence to presume to be able to offer this correction, for many will cling to their idols and only God's Word can soften their hearts and open their eyes, if they are willing.

DEUTERONOMY 12:29 "When the Lord your God eliminates the nations from the place where you are headed and you dispossess them, you will settle down in their land. 30 After they have been destroyed from your presence, be careful not to be ensnared like they are; do not pursue their gods and say, "How do these nations serve their gods? I will do the same." 31 You must not worship the Lord your God the way they do! For everything that is abhorrent to him, everything he hates, they have done when worshiping their gods. They even burn up their sons and daughters before their gods! 32 You must be careful to do everything I am commanding you. Do not add to it or subtract from it!"

Critiques of false religions are not vilification or humiliation of the members of the ethnic groups from which such religions arise: Greek, Roman, Egyptian or Aboriginal.


There are other false religions which aren't named for the ethnic group which developed them, such as Druidism, Islamism and Buddhism, and critique of them is no more a slam or vilification of their typical ethnic group than bad maths.

Wrong answers to life's biggest questions must be confronted if Truth matters at all, and in the pursuit of safety, health, happiness, security, good philosophy and theology, prosperity, science, liberty and any useful quality of representative democracy, NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT than the universal constant of objective Truth.

Any argument against that bold claim can be simply refuted with the rhetorical question, is that true?

So, if an ethnic group proposed as their ancient knowledge that $2 + 2 = \text{blue cow}$, then it would be not be loving to tolerate or affirm or celebrate their truth claim. It would not be racist or colonialist or vilifying or hateful to critique or condemn those claims.

Mixing false religion with Christianity, on the other hand...



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Definitions

Paganism

Paganism (from classical Latin *pāgānus* “rural”, “rustic”, later “civilian”) is a term first used in the fourth century by early Christians for people in the Roman Empire who practiced polytheism, or ethnic religions other than Judaism. Alternative terms used in Christian texts were *hellene*, *gentile*, and *heathen*. During and after the Middle Ages, the term *paganism* was applied to any non-Christian religion, and the term presumed a belief in “false gods”.

Animism

Animism is the belief that everything has a soul or spirit, an anima in Latin, including animals, plants, rocks, mountains, rivers, and stars. Animists believe each anima is a powerful spirit that can help or hurt them and are to be worshiped or feared or in some way attended to. Animism is a primitive religion whose adherents have for thousands of years deified animals, stars, and idols of any kind, and practiced spiritism, witchcraft, divination, and astrology. They use magic, spells, enchantments, superstitions, amulets, talismans, charms, or anything that they believe will help to protect them from the evil spirits and placate the good spirits that are found everywhere in everything.

Syncretism

Syncretism is the process by which aspects of one religion are assimilated into, or blended with, another religion. This leads to fundamental changes in both religions.

In the Old Testament, God was deeply concerned with the pressure and temptation toward syncretism. As the people of God moved into the Promised Land they were confronted with pagan religions. The Canaanite gods, Baal and Asherah, became objects of Israelite devotion. Later, God's people worshiped the national gods of Assyria and Babylon. The law of God clearly warned Israel not only against abandoning Yahweh for other gods, but against worshipping other gods in addition to the true God. The prophets warned of coming judgments as the people modified their faith to accommodate foreign doctrines and practices.

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