

Are All Names for God Legitimate?

Pluralism embraces the idea that all paths to God are legitimate—no one worldview provides a full picture of absolute reality. Because of that, some pluralistic thinkers propose any name assigned to God in any religion is legitimate and appropriate. Is that true? Or is there a correct revelation of the divine name that uniquely and powerfully grants access into a personal relationship with Him?

I believe if God were to accept, and respond to, all of the names assigned to Him in various worldviews, He would be making a confusing and contradictory statement about His own character.

For instance, if God responded to the name Zeus, He would automatically be indicating divine approval of the pantheon of gods promoted in Greek mythology.

If the Hindu name Brahman brought a response from above, it would be an immediate disclosure that the ultimate source of all things is an impersonal cosmic energy, a force that pervades the universe.

If the name Krishna legitimately connected a devotee with God, God would simultaneously be acknowledging that He had 16,108 literal wives while on earth, which is the myth surrounding Krishna—also that he had 10 children by each one of those wives.

If he responded to the name Allah, God would automatically be characterizing himself as an omnipresent, omnipotent Spirit who has no Son (a basic Islamic doctrine) and that “there is no God but Allah” (a primary Islamic confession of faith).

However, if God responds to the name Yahweh (the Old Testament

revealed name) or Jesus (Heb. *Yeshua*, the New Testament revealed name), then He is indicating that only in the Bible can His true names and titles be found. It also shows approval of Christianity's claims: He is a triune being, comprised of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; that He is a personal God who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, transcendent and perfect in all his ways and accessible only through the redemptive work of the cross.

There are many ways this "connection" between God and man has been conceptualized, but only one way it can be actualized. The Bible explains that the "Lord Jesus Christ" is a name "above every name" and there is "no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (see Phil. 2:9, Acts 4:12). It is the triune name of the Triune God (the Lord, Father; Jesus, the Son; Christ, meaning anointed one, a reference to the anointing of the Holy Spirit). God honors this name because it identifies His true character and His present mode of working in this world. This is an essential point.

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