

‘House of One’: World’s First Church-Mosque-Synagogue in One?

Berlin is no stranger to division. Yet it’s in this German city that the three monotheistic faiths of the world will gather together in one building, perhaps for the first time ever.

The “House of One,” winner of an architectural contest, is planned to house three worship centers—one for Christians, one for Muslims and one for Jews, according to BBC.

The combined church-mosque-synagogue will be comprised of three distinct houses of worship, unique in shape, yet equal in size.

Most interesting is the fact that, of the three clerics spearheading the project, it was the Christian pastor’s idea.

Pastor Gregor Hohberg, a Protestant, chose for the ‘House of One’ the former location of St. Peter’s church, Berlin’s first church (dating back to the 12th century), which was destroyed after sustaining heavy damage during World War 2.

“Under one roof: one synagogue, one mosque, one church. We want to use these rooms for our own traditions and prayers. And together we want to use the room in the middle for dialogue and discussion and also for people without faith,” Hohberg told BBC.

“We can [get along with each other],” the Jewish leader involved, Rabbi Tovia Ben Chorin, said. “That there are people within each group who can’t is our problem, but you have to start somewhere, and that’s what we are doing.”

The imam involved, Kadir Sanci, commented that the project was a testimony to the peacefulness of nonviolence of the Muslim community.

While the house of worship is a great showing of tolerance, is it biblically sound?

Though the potential for mission opportunity may about from the Christian perspective, other biblical principles may conflict with any foreseeable evangelistic benefits.

In a passage of striking relevance, the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18:

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Therefore,

“Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

And,

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

While the God of the Bible is not held in temples made of human hands (Acts 17:24), his true temples—Christ’s followers in whom the Holy Spirit dwells—must be kept just as pure as the holy places of ages past.

Is the "House of One" a violation of scriptural commandments or just a healthy opportunity for interfaith dialogue? Share your thoughts in the comments below.