

Beyond Belief – Session 6

“Beyond Belief”

Marianne

Aware of the presence of The Sacred

Marcus

First half of life about experience (and “ego”), second half of life about longing for something more (connection)

A wide variety of beliefs can live side by side; they need not become an obstacle

Significance of a Christian life: to take seriously what Jesus took seriously

Relational way of being Christian (as opposed to a believing way)

Christian life centred in compassion and justice

Chapter 2

“We, in the mainline church, need to recover a robust sense of the reality of God”

Reflective on Buddhism: a profoundly developed sense of the Sacred

God is no thing - not a separate thing

Non-material ground of everything that is

“Tell me about the God you don’t believe in”

“Most of modern atheism is rejection of the God of supernatural theism”

“The word ‘God’ means something else [than a supernatural being out there]”

“Suppose that you were able to design the afterlife to your own specifications; would you want people to retain their personal identity?”

Marianne

Continuing the conversation that Marcus engaged: MarcusJBorg.org

Marcus

“Being a Christian is about a relationship with God and the transformation of our lives and the present into more and more compassionate beings....about our transformation, here and now”

“What happens after death - that’s up to God”

“Bonus” Marcus Borg in Kelowna

What Jesus is most centrally about: the Kingdom of God

It’s for the earth

A transformation of the humanly-created societies and domination systems

Shouldn’t come as a surprise - it’s in the Lord’s Prayer “your kingdom come on earth...”

“Heaven’s in great shape; earth is where the problems are” (quoting Crossan)

“Kingdom” - a political term in the first century

Jesus could have spoken about the “family” or “people” or “community” of God to avoid political connotations

Do not confuse this with a theocracy!

“Render unto Caesar” passage

The question put to Jesus: “is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” ...a trap!

Those asking the question are carrying a coin with a graven image, and idolatrous language

Substitutionary Atonement - a wrong understanding of sacrifice

Most generally, animal sacrifice was about offering a gift to God

Some of the animal goes up to God as smoke, and the rest comes back to the people as a meal - a meal with God

About Communion with God

You make something sacred by offering it up to God

A social democracy

Values the whole of community

Contrasted by an individualistic democracy

“Freedom” has become associated with a radically individualistic democracy - anti-Christian

A blessing

“You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the world”

Go and be light! Go and be salt! Participate in God’s passion for transformation!

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