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Kreeft's "Between one faith and another: Engaging conversations on the world's great religions" (

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Book Reviews



Kreeft, P. (2017). *Between one faith and another: Engaging conversations on the world's great religions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 213 pp. \$17.00. ISBN 9780830845101

Peter Kreeft, professor of philosophy at Boston College, presents a lively and thought-provoking conversation in this book about the compatibility or incompatibility of the major world religions. He uses a Socratic dialogue format to encourage readers to think critically about different religious beliefs. As he addresses the question of whether one religion is greater or truer than another, Kreeft offers the three different philosophies of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. This book is not an argument for one of these positions; rather, it is an exploration that acknowledges the problems of each position.

The format is a dialogue among three fictional characters, including Thomas Keptic, a nonreligious exclusivist; Bea Lever, an intuitive Christian inclusivist; and Professor Fesser, a neutral, objective pluralist. Thomas and Bea are students in Professor Fesser's course on world religions. Together they explore competing religious beliefs and argue for the philosophical position they have chosen. In the context of this book, pluralism means that we cannot know whether different religions contradict each other, exclusivism means that they do contradict each other and are incompatible, and inclusivism means that world religions are compatible.

The author makes the point that we need to know the content of different religions before we can understand how they are related. In their conversations, the characters look briefly at essential teachings of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. They compare the claims of each of the religions and debate the extent to which inclusivism, exclusivism, or pluralism aligns with those claims. However, the dialogue does not provide a lot of facts about each religion; instead, the book focuses on how the different religions compare to each other and whether they contradict each other.

Early in the course, the two students try and fail to find a universal definition of religion. Ultimately, they determine that every religion has three dimensions, specifically a creed, a moral code, and modes of worship and religious practice. They observe that religious creeds seem to be exclusive of each other while moral codes are inclusive, and modes of worship are different but not incompatible.

While not a scholarly work, this book presents issues in comparative religion in a way that will engage readers and prompt discussion. The author's use of dialogue and conversational style makes the subject matter interesting and accessible to general readers. The book will be appreciated by college students as well as anyone who has an interest in comparative religions.

Reviewer

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