

Why then are people not turning with confidence to religion?



Recap from last week's discussion:

1. Disease and remedy

...that which hath streamed forth from the Most Exalted Pen is conducive to the glory, the advancement and education of all the peoples and kindreds of the earth. Indeed it is the sovereign remedy for every disease, could they but comprehend and perceive it.

Bahá'u'lláh

...

2. Religion and confidence

The enkindled souls ... **see the power that true religion possesses to transform hearts and overcome distrust**, and so, with confidence in what the future holds, they labour to cultivate the conditions in which progress can occur.

30 December 2021 message from the Universal House of
Justice

A question

If

- **The scriptures have not changed;**
- **The moral principles they contain have lost none of their validity;**
- **Sincere prayer still finds an answering voice;**
- **The heart is still touched by the words of Jesus or Buddha;**
- **Peace and justice are central to God's purpose; and**
- **The lives of heroes and saints are no less meaningful today...**

Then

- **Why are many religious people not turning with confidence to religion?**

That is the discussion question. You can find it, worded slightly differently, in a commentary titled "One Common Faith" in 2005. **The preceding paragraph gives context to the question:**

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Throughout history, the primary agents of spiritual development have been the great religions. For the majority of the earth's people, the scriptures of each of these systems of belief have served, in Bahá'u'lláh's words, as "the City of God", a source of a knowledge that totally embraces consciousness, one so compelling as to endow the sincere with "a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind". ... No other force in existence has been able to elicit from people comparable qualities of heroism, self-sacrifice and self-discipline. At the social level, the resulting moral principles have repeatedly translated themselves into universal codes of law, regulating and elevating human relationships. Viewed in perspective, the major religions emerge as the primary driving forces of the civilizing process.

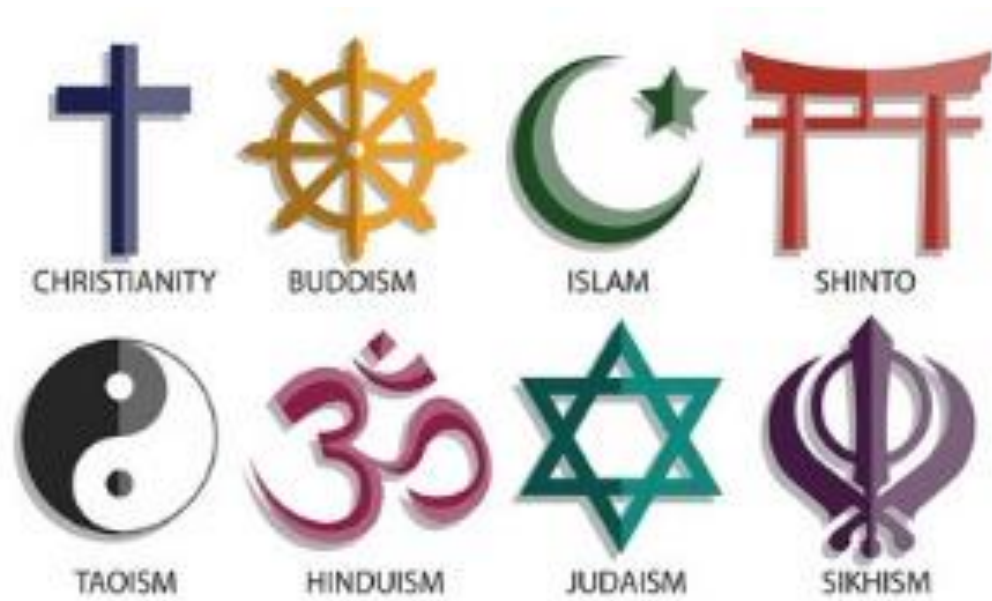
...

Why, then, does this immensely rich heritage not serve as the central stage for today's reawakening of spiritual quest?

One Common Faith, 2005, www.bahai.org/library

For many religious people, therefore, the most painful aspect of the current crisis of civilization is that the search for truth has not turned with confidence into religion's familiar avenues.

One Common Faith, 2005, www.bahai.org/library



Why is this? (Discussion for 5 minutes)

A key reason why religious people are losing confidence in religion.

Loss of faith in traditional religion has been an inevitable consequence of failure to discover in it the guidance required to live with modernity, successfully and with assurance.

... Although the received truths of the great faiths remain valid, the daily experience of an individual in the twenty-first century is unimaginably removed from the one that he or she would have known in any of those ages when this guidance was revealed.



Democratic decision-making has fundamentally altered the relationship of the individual to authority.



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With growing confidence and growing success, women justly insist on their right to full equality with men.



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Revolutions in science and technology change not only the functioning but the conception of society, indeed of existence itself.



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Universal education and an explosion of new fields of creativity open the way to insights that stimulate social mobility and integration, and create opportunities of which the rule of law encourages the citizen to take full advantage.



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Stem cell research, nuclear energy, sexual identity, ecological stress and the use of wealth raise, at the very least, social questions that have no precedent. These, and the countless other changes affecting every aspect of human life, have brought into being a new world of daily choices for both society and its members.



What has not changed is the inescapable requirement of making such choices, whether for better or worse. It is here that the spiritual nature of the contemporary crisis comes into sharpest focus because **most of the decisions called for are not merely practical but moral.**

In large part, therefore, **loss of faith in traditional religion has been an inevitable consequence of failure to discover in it the guidance required to live with modernity, successfully and with assurance.**

One Common Faith, 2005, www.bahai.org/library

Reasons for confidence:

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration.

[Bahá'u'lláh](#)



An urge towards unity, like a spiritual springtime, struggles to express itself...

[October 1985 – To the Peoples of the World](#)



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Presentation by Colin Dibdin

22 February 2024

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