

Contents

Preface **xi**

Abbreviations **xv**

Introduction:

Christianity and Other Religions: Problem and Promise **1**

The Many Religions: A Newly Experienced Reality 5
Plurality: A Significant Fact of Religious and Cosmic Life 7
A Community of Communities? 8
Further Readings 13
Further Readings on Biblical/Patristic Foundations for a Theology
of Religions 14

Part I
THE REPLACEMENT MODEL
“Only One True Religion”

1. Total Replacement **19**

Fundamentalist/Evangelical Christians 20
Variety in the Same Family, 20 • How Many? 22
Total Replacement: No Value in Other Religions 23
Karl Barth: “Let God Be God — in Jesus Christ!” 23 • “Religion Is
Unbelief!” 25 • Christianity as the True Religion, 26 • Taking the New
Testament and Jesus Seriously, 27 • “One Way” Makes Sense, 29
Further Readings 32

2. Partial Replacement **33**

God Present in Other Religions? Yes and No 33
Revelation: Yes! 33 • Salvation: No! 36 • Christianity’s Relationship
with Other Religions, 40 • The World Council of Churches: Dialogue,
Yes! — Theology, No! 42
Are the Other Believers “Lost”? 44
Further Readings 48

3. The Replacement Model: Insights and Questions	50
Insights	50
The Centrality of Scripture in Christian Life, 50 • The Reality of Evil and the Need for Help, 51 • Jesus as the One and Only, 53 • Beware of Religion, 55	
Questions	56
Sources for a Christian Theology of Religions? 56 • Jesus the One-and-Only? 57	

Part II

THE FULFILLMENT MODEL

“The One Fulfills the Many”

4. The Breakthrough at the Second Vatican Council	63
Looking Back: A Historical Review	64
A Theological Pioneer: Karl Rahner	68
Nature Is Graced, 68 • Religions Are “Ways of Salvation,” 70 • Anonymous Christians, 72 • Limits for the Church and for the Religions, 74	
Vatican II: A Milestone	75
“Precious Things Both Religious and Human,” 75 • Are “Rays of Truth” “Ways of Salvation”? 76 • “Preparation for the Gospel,” 78	
Further Readings	79
5. Greater Openness and Dialogue	80
Three Steps Forward	81
A Necessary Balance	84
Expanding the Dialogue	86
A Turn to the Spirit: Gavin D’Costa, 87 • Beyond Fulfillment: Jacques Dupuis, 89 • Other Catholic Views, 93 • Uneasy Voices from Asia, 96	
Further Readings	98
6. The Fulfillment Model: Insights and Questions	100
Insights	100
Truth and Grace in the Religions, 100 • Dialogue Essential to Christian Life, 101 • Nonnegotiables in All Religions, 102	
Questions	103
Does the Fulfillment Model Really Allow Dialogue? 103 • Does Commitment Require Certitude? 104 • How Does Jesus Save? 105	

Part III
THE MUTUALITY MODEL
“Many True Religions Called to Dialogue”

7. The Philosophical Bridge	109
Three Questions	109
Three Bridges	112
The Philosophical-Historical Bridge	113
A New Map of Religions, 114 • One Real, Many Cultural Expressions, 115 • Avoiding the Slippery Slopes of Relativism, 117 • What about Jesus? 119	
Further Readings	123
8. The Mystical and the Prophetic Bridges	125
The Religious-Mystical Bridge	125
A Divine-Human-Cosmic Unity, 126 • One AND Many, 128 • Mutual Fecundation, 130 • What about Jesus? 131	
The Ethical-Practical Bridge	134
By Their Fruits You Will Know Them, 135 • Common Problems = Common Ground, 136 • Talking after Acting Is Better Talking, 139 • Jesus the Liberator, 142 • The Uniqueness of Jesus Rediscovered, 146	
Further Readings	148
9. The Mutuality Model: Insights and Questions	150
Insights	150
The Need for New Answers, 150 • Jesus as Sacrament, 152 • A Spirit Christology, 154 • A Christology of Mutuality, 156	
Questions	157
Creeping Imperialism? 157 • Creeping Relativism? 162 • Is It Really Christian? 164	

Part IV
THE ACCEPTANCE MODEL
“Many True Religions: So Be It”

10. Making Peace with Radical Difference	173
The Context: Our Postmodern World	173
Postliberal Foundations	178
Religion: Words before Experience, 178 • No Common Ground, 181 • Dialogue: A Good Neighbor Policy, 183 • Apology for Apologetics, 185 • The Place of Christ, 187	
Further Readings	190

11. Real Differences Make for Real Dialogue 192

 Many Religions, Many Salvations 192

 Different Ends, Not Just Different Means, 192 • Differences of Religions Because of Differences in God, 194 • Many Salvations Make for Better Dialogue, 197 • The Place of Christ, 201

 Comparative Theology 202

 A Moratorium on Theologies of Religion! 203 • Understanding Oneself through Comparing with Others, 205 • How to Do It? 207 • The Importance of Friendship, 210 • The Role of Jesus? 211

 Further Readings 214

12. The Acceptance Model: Insights and Questions 216

 Insights 216

 We Are All Inclusivists, 216 • The Value of Differences, 219 • Dialogue Has the Right-of-Way to Theology, 222

 Questions 224

 Is Language a Prism or a Prison? 224 • Can Many Salvations Save Our World? 229 • Many Absolutes = No Absolute? 232 • Can Comparative Theology Be “Theology-Free”? 235

An Inconclusive Conclusion 238

 The Need for Inter-Christian Dialogue 238

 The Need for Interreligious Cooperation 243

Index 247