

### What is the Most Important Religion?

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**By Rev. Joseph G. Healey, M.M.**

One day the leaders of all the great world religions met to discuss and decide this question, "What is the most important religion?" Each leader mentioned his or her own religion and then these influential people began to argue among themselves. Finally they said, "We have failed to decide. Now what shall we do?"

One leader said, "I suggest this. We should choose the wisest person in the world. Then *he* will decide this question." Now the leaders heard that there was a famous prophet called Nabii who lived on the top of the tallest mountain in East Africa (the region of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda). He had great experience and knowledge about religion and everything in life. Therefore the leaders went to ask him, "What is the most important religion?" This revered prophet Nabii did not say a word. Immediately he went into his cave to pray and fast for three days. All the leaders waited for him outside.

Then Nabii returned to the group of leaders of the great world religions and said, "I don't want to decide your question right now; but I ask each leader to return to his or her home and talk with your advisors. Then after one week come back here again. In front of me and all the other leaders you will state *one word* that explains the heart or center or foundation of your religion. Then I will compare all your answers and decide which is the *most important* religion. Immediately all the leaders of the great world religions returned to their homes to discuss with their advisors the very heart or center of their religions.

Then they climbed to the top of the great East African mountain again. There were leaders from the great world religions of African Religion, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and so on. In front of Nabii they stated the one word that explained the deepest meaning of their religions.

When they had all finished, Nabii said, "Very good. You have *all* answered well. All your religions have deep meaning and great importance. We have heard the heart of these world religions to be these key words:

1. Ancestors

2. Community
3. Contemplation
4. Equality
5. Faith
6. Forgiveness
7. Joy
8. Justice
9. Life
10. Love
11. Nothingness
12. Oneness
13. Peace
14. Praise
15. Prayer
16. Relationships
17. Self-emptying
18. Self-sacrifice
19. Service
20. Silence
21. Spirits

Nabii continued: "Among yourselves, various leaders said **LOVE** is the heart of your religions. You have answered *especially* well. On the basis of your answers the religion that stands out is Christianity. For the heart of Christianity is not just love but **FORGIVING LOVE**. Merciful love is better."

The famous prophet Nabii went on: "Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, did a very surprising thing while he was hanging on the cross. The Jews arrested him and crucified him. But before his death he said, "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (*Luke* 23:34). This is a unique example of love, of forgiving love. Jesus also said. "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." (*John* 13:34). He taught the importance of love, forgiveness and mercy." "In the prayer the *Our Father* Christians pray, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.'"

Finally standing on the top of the tallest mountain in Africa the revered prophet Nabii said to all the leaders who had assembled together: "Now you have heard. Go and do deeds of **FORGIVING LOVE**

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