

Student Organizer 2

DISCUSSION: Religious Diversity

The quotations on this sheet refer to a U.S. News and World report poll. They are from are taken from the following Religious and Ethics program:

SPECIAL REPORT: Exploring Religious America, Part Five: Comments and Analysis, May 24, 2002
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week538/specialreport.html#right>

Bob Abernethy comments: One of the things that some polls have indicated is that we can, at the same time, hold the belief that our religion is true and that there is truth in all religions -- that we do this -- that we don't seem to find any conflict with that.

Discussion Question 1

Do you think it is possible for a person to believe his or her religion is true and still respect the truth of other religions? Is there a conflict in this, or not?

Dr. John Green comments: One of the most interesting things was an apparent disjunction between the great deal of tolerance that individuals in all the religious traditions expressed towards other faiths, but at the same time, a real ignorance of other faiths -- many people admitting that they didn't understand the beliefs of other groups and had never even met another member of that group.

Discussion Question 2

Is it easier to be tolerant of a religion you don't understand and whose followers you don't know?

Discussion Instructions:

1. All students read and think about the discussion question.
2. Each student takes a turn to speak, uninterrupted, for about a minute, while the other students just listen.
3. When everyone has had a turn to speak in this way, the group has a discussion for about 5 minutes.
4. Each group selects a reporter who describes the group's discussion to the entire class, without telling any one person's opinions.

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