

CONTENTS

1 Introduction	3
2 Examples: Six experiences of Interfaith Worship	4
Some Basic Distinctions	
Some Questions	
3 Issues:	8
Theological Issues—What is Worship?	
What does the Bible say about the Worship of Other Faiths? (idolatry; the demonic; Christian worship; acceptable but sub-Christian worship)	
What are Possible Motives for 'Interfaith Worship'?	
Practical Issues—How do Other Faiths Worship?	
What about the New Age Movement?	
Should Christian Buildings be used?	
What about Images?	
What about 'Food Offered to Idols'?	
Pastoral Issues	
A Special Case—What about Worship in Schools?	
4 Concluding Guidelines	22
5 Resources	24

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1. INTRODUCTION

Interfaith Worship is both highly topical and highly controversial. Some Christians organize petitions against it, and others open their churches and cathedrals to it. To some, it conjures up images of Christian uniqueness under threat, whilst to others it is a sign of a new community of faiths, a 'new ecumenism'.

This booklet is for anybody prepared to think through the issues. It is not only for people in a multi-faith context, or for experts, but for those who are concerned, who perhaps are asked for their opinions or their signatures, or who simply have friends of other faiths and wonder how much they can share together. As author I do not have all the answers, and indeed I hope that the debate will move beyond the inevitably sketchy conclusions of a booklet like this. I simply ask fellow Christians to read with an open as well as a discerning mind, and not to reject the conclusions until they have followed the path that led to them.

There are three basic questions about interfaith worship which I have tried to keep in mind throughout :

1. Does not 'interfaith worship' mean worship of other gods, or idolatry?
2. Does not 'interfaith worship' inevitably compromise the uniqueness of Jesus?
3. Does not 'interfaith worship' open people to demonic spiritual forces?

I believe that if the answer is always 'yes' to these questions, then Christians should take no part in 'interfaith worship'. However, I do not believe it is that simple. 'Interfaith worship' can mean many different things, and raises many complex questions (as Section 2 will show). It certainly can be 'idolatrous, confusing and compromising, but it is not always or inevitably so. We need to look a bit closer at the issues raised by different types of 'interfaith worship' . . .