### None Dare Call It Treason:
### Is an Inclusivist a Paul Revere or a Benedict Arnold?

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The question at hand is whether the corporate inclusivist is a Paul Revere heralding a revolution in the evangelical theology of religions, or if he is a Benedict Arnold betraying evangelicalism into the hands of its pluralist opponents. Is the corporate inclusivist a crier or a traitor? If corporate inclusivism is not a traitorous position, then at least it is a misguided and unacceptable option for evangelicals.

Catholic theologian and Vatican II architect Karl Rahner formulated corporate inclusivism as an attempt to hold off the advance of pluralism. He devised his version of inclusivism with the intention of safeguarding the integrity of a high Christology while taking an optimistic view towards the non-Christian religions, but in the process Rahner gave away the very non-negotiable he was trying to protect. This paper will argue that corporate inclusivism is an unacceptable option because it operates as a *de facto* pluralism. Advocating corporate inclusivism may not be an act of treason, but it is an act of appeasement.

The taxonomy used to describe the major views within the theology of religions of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism will be utilized in this paper in spite of the fact that it is

hard to find anyone who likes this system of classification.[1]  Several have attempted to provide

alternatives, but the threefold typology remains dominant.[2]

This paper also makes the important distinction between private and corporate

inclusivism.[3]  Private inclusivism contends that one who is accepted by God apart from the

preaching of the Gospel is saved in spite of whatever religion to which he may be an adherent.

His religious orientation plays no part in his salvation and in fact is a definite hindrance.  The

non-Christian's ignorant beliefs, if sincere, are inculpable but have no positive role in his

relationship with God.

Corporate inclusivism, in contrast, argues that the non-Christian religions mediate the

work of Christ.  Corporate inclusivists distinguish their position from pluralism by arguing that

even though they agree with pluralists that the world religions can be conduits of saving grace,

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[1]*Exclusivism* holds that an explicit response of repentance and faith to the preaching of the Gospel is necessary for salvation.  Until recently, this has been the dominant position of the church and still is the majority position in conservative evangelical circles.  *Pluralism* looks upon the non-Christian religions as alternative and valid venues for the salvific work of God.  Unlike the classic liberal of times past, the pluralist does not see the various religions as expressions of the same religious impulse, but as unique systems in their own right, believing there should be no attempt to reconcile or judge between the competing truth claims.  Offered by its proponents as a mediating position, *inclusivism* posits that even though the work of Christ is the only means of salvation, it does not follow that explicit knowledge of Christ is necessary in order for one to be saved.  In contrast to pluralism, inclusivism agrees with exclusivism in affirming the particularity of salvation in Jesus Christ.  But unlike exclusivism, inclusivism holds that an implicit faith response to general revelation can be salvific.  God expects from man a response proportional to the light given.  Saving faith is not characterized so much by its cognitive content as it is by its reverent quality.  Perhaps pluralists are the most fond of the threefold taxonomy since the terms cast them in the most positive light.  This should not be surprising since the pluralist Alan Race coined the terms.

[2]Okholm and Phillips attempt to replace the threefold typology with a twofold one: *particularism* and *pluralism*.  See Dennis L Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips,  "Introduction," in *More Than One Way?  Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World,* Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 16-17.

[3]Different authors use different labels to differentiate between the two types of inclusivism.  Carson distinguishes between "hard" and "soft" inclusivism.  See D. A. Carson, *Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 279-80.  Stan Grenz uses the terms "negative" and "positive" to describe the two types of inclusivism.  See Stanley Grenz, "Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religions," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 31, No. 1-2 (Winter-Spring 1994): 53.  Knitter calls the two types "private" and "communal" inclusivism.  See Paul Knitter, *No Other Name?* 126-27.  For the purposes of this paper  the terms "private" and "corporate" inclusivism will be used.  The terms "private" and "corporate" highlight the point of difference between the two positions.

they believe that this efficacious favor is provided by the work of Christ upon the cross.  This is why Rahner refers to the members of the world religions as "anonymous Christians."  Corporate inclusivism makes much bolder claims than does private inclusivism and until recently was not as widely accepted.  This paper examines the corporate form of inclusivism rather than the private version.

Are evangelical inclusivists open to a communal or corporate type of inclusivism that sees God mediating salvation through non-Christian belief systems?  So far, they have provided a variety of answers: "Sometimes," "Maybe," and "Yes."  Clark Pinnock says, "Sometimes."  He rejects Rahner's fulfillment paradigm in favor of what he calls a modal approach—i.e., that each of the world religions should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.[4]  He reasons that all religions, including Christianity, are a mixture of truth and error.  Some contain enough truth to mediate grace while others are so evil that they only lead astray.

John Sanders says, "Maybe." The viability of corporate inclusivism as an option for evangelicals is considered by him to be an unanswered question.  He states, "Regarding the question whether people are saved *through* or *in spite of* other religions, evangelical inclusivists are still sorting themselves out."[5]  However, one evangelical inclusivist, Stan Grenz, clearly says, "Yes."  He has no qualms with affirming corporate inclusivism.  Grenz states, "Just as in the biblical era, so also today, wherever people are drawn—even through other religions—to worship the most high God, there the true God is known."[6]

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[4]Clark Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," in *More Than One Way?  Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World.*  Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy  R. Phillips, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 99-100.

[5]John Sanders, "Evangelical Responses to Salvation Outside the Church," *Christian Scholar's Review* 24 (1994): 55.

[6]Grenz, "Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religions," 64.

**Strengths of Corporate Inclusivism**

Corporate inclusivism has a number of strengths that commends it to some evangelicals.

First, it has an optimistic outlook towards humanity and the world religions.  Exclusivists agree

both with Barth that all religions are expressions of unbelief and with Augustine that the moral

fruits of other religions are "splendid vices."[7]  All humanity is at war with God, according to

exclusivists, and the non-Christian religions are manifestations of that rebellion.  In contrast,

corporate inclusivists believe that, due to a prevenient work of grace, all people are orientated

toward God and all sincere religious activities and beliefs are groping searches for him.

In the corporate inclusivist scheme, Christianity is the apex of the world religions rather

than their adversary.  Christianity, or more specifically Christ, is the revelation of the God for

whom the adherents of the other religions are searching and as such is the fulfillment of the other

religions.  The world religions are completed by Christianity rather than replaced.  The non-

Christian is a fellow traveler with the Christian.

A second strength of corporate inclusivism is that it is consistent with a belief that God

has a universal salvific will.  David Clark claims that it is impossible to reconcile exclusivism

with faith in God's genuine desire for all to be saved.[8]  In fact, many exclusivists such as Loraine

Boettner and John Piper specifically deny any type of universal salvific intent on the part of the

Father.[9]  These Calvinists are consistent with Calvin himself, who states:

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[7]See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* 1/2 (New York: Scribner, 1955), 299-300; and Augustine, *City of God* (New York: Cambridge Press, 1998), XIX.25.

[8]David K. Clark, "Is Special Revelation Necessary For Salvation?" in *Through No Fault Of Their Own?* William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 45.

[9]Boettner presents those born in Mongolia as examples of those whom God does not want.  He states: "When God places people in such conditions we may be sure that He has no more intention that they shall be saved than He has that the soil of northern Siberia, which is frozen all the year round, shall produce crops of wheat." Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 117.  See also John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad!* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 137-40.

> Those, therefore, whom he has created for dishonor during life and destruction at death, that they may be vessels of wrath and examples of severity, in bringing to their doom, he at one time deprives of the means of hearing his word, at another by the preaching of it blinds and stupefies them the more. The examples of the former cases are innumerable, but let us select one of the most remarkable of all. Before the advent of Christ, about four thousand years passed away, during which he hid the light of saving doctrine from all nations . . . . The Supreme Disposer then makes way for his own predestination, when depriving those whom he has reprobated of the communication of his light, he leaves them in blindness.[10]

According to Calvin, the "Supreme Disposer" revealed His will to damn certain ones simply by having them born before Christ arrived.

For some not so enamored with Calvin's soteriology, corporate inclusivism is an attractive alternative. It provides a way for the atonement of Christ to be genuinely universal in its provision. Without a general accessibility to salvation, an unlimited atonement does not make much sense.

A third strength of corporate inclusivism is its recognition that the volitional element in saving faith is at least as important as the cognitive element. Following the lead of early pluralist Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Clark Pinnock argues for what he calls "the faith principle," in which he distinguishes between faith and belief.[11] He understands faith to be a heart-orientation towards God and belief to be the cultural and religious content that informs that faith. This faith principle makes the saving work of Christ available to anyone anywhere who follows the light he has been given. Pinnock states, "We must not conclude, just because we know a person to be a Buddhist, that his or her heart is not seeking God. What God really cares about is faith and not theology, trust and not orthodoxy."[12]

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[10]John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* III, 21, 12, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 251.

[11]See Clark Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 110-12. In this way the ontological necessity of Christ's work is separated from the epistemological necessity of hearing the Gospel.

[12]Ibid.

Just as the confused woman with the issue of blood was healed by her superstitious belief in the touch of the hem of Jesus' garment (Matt. 9:20-22), so Christ honors the sincere faith of all, no matter how ill informed and misdirected their faith may be. Congar explains that the non-Christian manifests the faith principle when he demonstrates the "genuine desire" to serve God. This genuine desire, he states, is "to conform ourselves to his will. This desire is contained in love for him, and implicitly looks to all the positive elements of the divine will, even when circumstances prevent us from embracing them in actuality, or even from knowing them at all."[13]

A fourth strength of corporate inclusivism is that it is more consistent with the biblical mandate for missions than its opponents give it credit. Adversaries of corporate inclusivism ask why the arduous task of missions is necessary if salvation is already being communicated via the non-Christian religions. Piper says that inclusivism "would seem to cut a nerve of urgency from missions."[14] Corporate inclusivists respond by pointing out that the Gospel needs to be preached in Afghanistan for the same reason it continues to be necessary to preach it in Alabama; in spite of whatever light those regions have already received, many in both places are still lost. If the Gospel-saturated Bible-belt is populated with those outside the fold, then how much more so are those areas where the message is obscured? Corporate inclusivists are quick to point out that they are not universalists and they do not believe that someone is saved by ignorance.

They also point out that they are not the only ones with missiological problems. Substantial logical dilemmas also plague the soteriological scheme of exclusivists. Calvinism has had its share of critics who accuse it of impeding the cause of missions with its doctrine of unconditional election. Amos Yong is probably right when he observes that missiological

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[13]Yves Congar, *The Wide World My Parish: Salvation and Its Problems,* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961), 118.

[14]Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad!,* 119.

objections against corporate inclusivism are often more pragmatic than they are theological.[15]

John Piper and William Crockett seem to have a neurological disagreement because, in contrast

to Piper, Crockett argues that inclusivism does not "cut the nerve-cord of missions" but instead

provides a strong motivation to fulfill the Great Commission.[16]  He reasons that just as the

Calvinist missionary travels the world seeking the Lord's elect, so the inclusivist searches for the

anonymous Christian.  For both, the ultimate motives for missions are the same: obedience to the

call of God, the desire to advance the Kingdom of God, and the desire to see Christ glorified

among the nations.

## Critique of Corporate Inclusivism

In spite of its strengths, corporate inclusivism has even greater weaknesses that preclude

it from being a viable option for evangelicals.  In the first place, corporate inclusivism is not as

generous as it seems.  Gavin D'Costa is a leading proponent of corporate inclusivism,[17] and

along with Alan Race, is one of the architects of the threefold taxonomy of exclusivism,

inclusivism, and pluralism.[18]  In what he calls "an act of public humiliation," D'Costa repudiates

the threefold typology by pointing out that all three approaches to the theology of religions are

forms of exclusivism because all three make absolute and exclusive truth claims.[19]  He goes on

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[15]Amos Yong, "Discerning the Spirit(s) in the World of Religions: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions," in *No Other Gods Before Me? Evangelicals and The Challenge of World Religions.* ed. by John G. Stackhouse (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 57.

[16]William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos,  "Are the Heathen Really Lost?" in *Through No Fault Of Their Own?*  William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos,eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 260-61.

[17]See Gavin D'Costa, "Karl Rahner's Anonymous Christian: A Reappraisal," *Modern Theology* 1 (1985): 131-148.

[18]See Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982).

[19]Gavin D'Costa, "The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions," *Religious Studies* 32, (1996): 223.

to demonstrate that the threefold typology is misleading about the very point it is intended to highlight—the soteriological status of the adherents of the non-Christian religions. D'Costa illustrates his case by observing that there are proponents within all three camps who hold to some form of universalism.[20] What is really being distinguished by the threefold typology is a difference in belief as to what constitutes normative truth.

It is at this question of normative truth that corporate inclusivism has serious problems. If faith is separated from belief like inclusivists claim that it is, then what is the value of truth? Pinnock uses a passage from C. S. Lewis's *The Last Battle* of the Narnia chronicles to illustrate how the faith principle might work. However, the text highlights the problems with his position as much as its strengths. Emeth, a servant of the evil Tash stands before Lord Aslan, the allegorical Christ figure. Emeth expects to be judged and executed by Lord Aslan, but to his surprise and relief he is received instead. Lord Aslan explains, "Child, all the service thou hast done to Tash, I account as service done to me."[21]

Pinnock's example raises a serious question: in the corporate inclusivist scheme, when does error become evil? By all appearances, the September 11th terrorists were sincere in their belief that their actions were advancing righteousness, doing God's will, and would immediately usher them into (a very sensuous) heaven. Do corporate inclusivists believe that the genuine but erroneous faith of the terrorists was accepted? If not, does not the faith principle, so crucial to the corporate inclusivist argument, fall apart?

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[20]Examples of universalists of all three perspectives as not hard to find. Jan Bonda held to an exclusivist form of universalism, as did Karl Barth, though he never felt comfortable with it. Clark Pinnock rejects the label of universalist, but to his adherence of inclusivism he adds belief in a post-mortem encounter and annihilationism. This achieves a universalism of sorts: though not everyone is saved, the saved will be everyone. John Hick advocates both pluralism and universalism.

[21]Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, 97-98; and C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (London: Penguin, 1956), 149.

A second serious weakness to corporate inclusivism is that it makes missiological claims that are difficult to support biblically.  The corporate inclusivist view implicitly holds that the world religions are more salvifically effective than the preaching of the Gospel.  In order for corporate inclusivism to work, the non-Christian religions must be conduits of grace.  The wider hope position, if true, requires that not only will non-Christians be in heaven, but that they will be in the majority.  The non-Christian religions will have been more effective in conveying the benefits of the Gospel than the preaching of the Gospel itself.

Corporate inclusivism seems to have been borne out of an unwarranted desperation brought about by the perceived failure of the church to accomplish its mandated mission.  Rahner developed corporate inclusivism in the 1950's and 60's at a time when secular ideologies such as communism were making great strides while the organized Church appeared to be in full retreat.[22]  He did not foresee the remarkable missiological gains in the Third World of the last twenty-five years.  One can detect a strain of pessimism in the writings both of Rahner and of Küng during this period.[23]

A third criticism against corporate inclusivism is that inclusivists find elements in the non-Christian religions that they want to find rather than seeing what actually is there.  At times, inclusivists cite examples of the teachings within some religions that they say are similar to the biblical understanding of grace and forgiveness.[24]  Others have examined the very same

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[22]Maurice Boutin, "Anonymous Christianity: A Paradigm for Interreligious Encounter?" *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 20 (1983): 613-19.

[23]See Karl Rahner, "Anonymous Christians," in *Theological Investigations* Vol. 6 (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1969): 390; and Hans Küng, *The Council in Action: Theological Reflections on the Second Vatican Council* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963): 252-53.

[24]See Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, 69-74, 100.

teachings and have concluded that the inclusivists have discovered only what they were looking for.[25]  In other words, corporate inclusivism may be a bad case of wishful thinking.[26]

Exclusivists and pluralists alike point out that corporate inclusivists claim to know non-Christians better than they know themselves.  Corporate inclusivists believe that non-Christians are trusting Christ but do not realize it.  Many non-Christians who are familiar with Rahner's concept of the anonymous Christian respond by pointing out that they know very well who they are or are not trusting.  What is certainly true is that many adherents of the world religions find corporate inclusivism offensive.[27]

In order to maintain the optimistic view of a wider hope, corporate inclusivists have found it necessary to file down the rough edges of the teachings of the world religions.  In a remarkable chapter in his book *Ecumenical Jihad*, Peter Kreeft gives a fanciful account of meeting Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammad in heaven, with each one fervently and faithfully serving the Lord.[28]  Each religious leader explains to Kreeft that Christ was the one to whom the leader was really pointing.  Mohammad drops to the ground in obeisance at the mere mention of the name of Jesus.  Never mind that during his earthly ministry he explicitly rejected both the

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[25]Corduan examines each example cited by Pinnock and concludes "none of these four cases is as helpful as Pinnock would like them to be."  See Winfried Corduan, "Buddha, Shiva, and Muhammad: Theistic Faith in Other Religions?" *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 2:2 (Summer, 1998): 40-49.

[26]Pinnock admits this.  He states, "Control beliefs are at work.  The presupposition about God's universal salvific will biases me toward favoring inclusivist arguments.  Maybe it makes me think better of them than I should, because I want them or something like them to be true."  Clark Pinnock, "Overcoming Misgivings about Evangelical Inclusivism," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 2:2 (Summer, 1998): 35.

[27]A former colleague, Bill Ratliff, tells of an exchange he observed at a seminar that he attended that was chaired by John Hick.  Hick is perhaps the leading proponent of pluralism and considers Rahner's corporate inclusivism to be patronizing to the other religions.  The seminar was composed of students from a variety of faiths.  One student, a Muslim, asked the others if they loved God and desired to do his will.  All replied in the affirmative.  "Congratulations!" he exclaimed, "You are all anonymous Muslims!"  Ratliff reported that Hick simply grinned broadly. (Personal conversation, February 2000, used with permission.)

[28]Peter Kreeft, *Ecumenical Jihad: Ecumenism and the Culture War*  (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 79-109.

incarnation and the crucifixion of Christ.[29]  For critics like Fredericks, Kreeft is a classic

example of a corporate inclusivist who is living in denial.[30]

Corporate inclusivism displays an optimism about the other religions that is at least

absent from the Bible and is perhaps alien to it.  The Scriptures do not present the pagan

religions as covert salvific vehicles.  Even the most optimistic reading of the "holy pagan"

tradition found in Scripture (Melchizedek, the Queen of Sheba, the Magi, etc.) cannot be

stretched to provide cover for corporate inclusivism.  As Edward Rommen points out, "Scripture

never acknowledges salvific potential in other religions, i.e., none of the other religions is

described as being able to lead an individual to a 'from-sin-liberating' knowledge of the one true

God."[31]  Even Maurice Boutin, an ardent supporter of corporate inclusivism, admits that "[y]et,

there is no evidence at all that the idea of an anonymous Christianity can be based on

Scripture."[32]  Most evangelicals would consider this a fatal flaw for the corporate inclusivist

position.

A fourth criticism against corporate inclusivism is that in many ways it functions as a *de

facto* pluralism.  In spite of their best intentions, the doctrine of the Incarnation suffers the same

fate with corporate inclusivism as it does with pluralism in at least two ways.  The first way is

when corporate inclusivists consider a functional Christology to be potentially salvific, and the

second is when they use a Logos Christology to explain the presence of Christ in the other

religions.

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[29]*The Quran* 4:157

[30]James L. Fredericks, *Faith Among Faiths* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 22-32.

[31]Edward Rommen, "Synthesis," in *Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions*, Edward Rommen and Harold Netland, eds.  (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1995): 250.

[32]Boutin, "Anonymous Christianity: A Paradigm for Interreligious Encounter?" 608-10.

Pluralists often argue for a functional Christology which rejects the view that Jesus of Nazareth is God incarnate in favor of understanding his messiahship in terms of what he did.[33] They see the title "Son of God" describing the role Jesus fulfilled rather than telling who he is.

Pinnock effectively and rightly denounces pluralists for substituting a functional Christology for an ontological one. But unfortunately he goes on to conclude that faith in a functional Christ can be salvific.[34] If belief in a functional Christology will take a person to heaven, then how can it be so bad?

Corporate inclusivism also operates as a *de facto* pluralism in the way it utilizes a Logos Christology. Based on John 1:9 which describes Christ as "the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world," Logos Christology argues that the Spirit of Christ is universally present throughout the world in a potentially salvific way.

However John 1:9 is meant to be understood, a Logos Christology must not be used in such a way that the person and work of the historical Jesus is obscured. This seems to be the unfortunate outcome of the corporate inclusivism of Karl Rahner. In his twenty volume set of *Theological Investigations* one can find chapters devoted to the cosmic Christ but practically nothing about the Incarnation. Harvie Conn observes that in Rahner's scheme "the particularity of Jesus of Nazareth evaporates and Christ remains only as a universal Absolute, a spiritual experience of some ultimate Mysterion of common values."[35] Bradley bluntly describes the inclusivist formulation of Logos Christology as "theological acid" that eats away the connection

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[33]See John Hick and Paul Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religion,* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988). Knitter sees the claims of Jesus' deity by the New Testament writers as hyperbolic statements of affection that they never intended to be taken literally.

[34]Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, 58-59, 60.

[35]Harvie M. Conn, "Do Other Religions Save?" in *Through No Fault Of Their Own?* William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos, eds. (Grand Rapid: Baker, 1991), 200.

between salvation and the historical revelation of Jesus Christ.[36]  Corporate inclusivism is intended to combat the effects of pluralism on Christology, but this may be an example of the medicine being as bad as the disease.

Gavin D'Costa's discussion on Christian involvement in interreligious meetings reveals how corporate inclusivism slides into a *de facto* pluralism.  He determines that it is proper for a Christian to take part in interreligious prayer services.  Since the Spirit of the cosmic Christ is already present in the non-Christian religions, he sees interreligious prayer as a disciple-making activity.[37]  D'Costa's inclusivism has him involved in projects that pluralists applaud but most exclusivists could not do in good conscience.

## Conclusion

Corporate inclusivists are to be commended for their desire to account for the moral good found in the non-Christian religions, their desire to emphasize God's will for the salvation of all men, their emphasis on the volitional element to saving faith, and their commitment to proper motives in missions.

However, evangelicals must reject corporate inclusivism because it fails to maintain fidelity to the concept of truth, to deal with the non-Christian religions as they really are, to stay true to the biblical witness, and to protect a high Christology.

The corporate inclusivist cannot be considered a revolutionary herald like Paul Revere because the direction to which he points leads to theological disaster. So is the corporate inclusivist a Benedict Arnold?  No, he is not a Quisling, because there is no indication of malice.

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[36]James E. Bradley, "*Logos* Christology and Religious Pluralism: A New Evangelical Proposal," in *Proceedings of the Wheaton Theology Conference: The Challenge of Religious Pluralism: An Evangelical Analysis and Response* (Wheaton: Wheaton Theology Conference, 1992): 202.  He goes on to say, "It is well to remember that the concept is useful in idealism and process theology because it is so malleable: *Logos* Christology has a wax nose."

Perhaps a more appropriate analogy would be Neville Chamberlain.  Consider Rahner's

assessment of the spiritual disposition of the religious others:

> God's little flock does not live surrounded by ravening wolves but among sheep who may
> have gone astray and not yet found their way home, who may look like wolves from the
> outside but who may already have been or could be transformed inwardly, through God's
> grace into gentle creatures of God.[38]

The best that can be said about the above statement is that it is naïve.  Their desire for peace has

clouded their ability to see clearly how they give away the very truths they wish to protect.

Perhaps to characterize corporate inclusivists as traitors is too harsh, but to liken them to

appeasers is not.

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[37]See Gavin D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2001): 49.

[38]Karl Rahner, *Belief Today* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1973), 86.