

# The First Principle — Search After Truth

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The first principle of the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is: **The Search after Truth**

If a man would succeed in his search after truth, he must, in the first place, shut his eyes to all the traditional superstitions of the past.

The Jews have traditional superstitions, the Buddhists and the Zoroastrians are not free from them, neither are the Christians! All religions have gradually become bound by tradition and dogma.

All consider themselves, respectively, the only guardians of the truth, and that every other religion is composed of errors. They themselves are right, all others are wrong! The Jews believe that they are the only possessors of the truth and condemn all other religions. The Christians affirm that their religion is the only true one, that all others are false. Likewise the Buddhists and Muḥammadans; all limit themselves. If all condemn one another, where shall we search for truth? All contradicting one another, all cannot be true. If each believe his particular religion to be the only true one, he blinds his eyes to the truth in the others. If, for instance, a Jew is bound by the external practice of the religion of Israel, he does not permit himself to perceive that truth **can** exist in any other religion; it must be **all** contained in his own! [pg 136]

We should, therefore, detach ourselves from the external forms and practices of religion. We must realize that these forms and practices, however beautiful, are but garments clothing the warm heart and the living limbs of Divine truth. We must



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abandon the prejudices of tradition if we would succeed in finding the truth at the core of all religions. If a Zoroastrian believes that the Sun is God, how can he be united to other religions? While idolaters believe in their various idols, how can they understand the oneness of God?

It is, therefore, clear that in order to make any progress in the search after truth we must relinquish superstition. If all seekers would follow this principle they would obtain a clear vision of the truth.

If five people meet together to seek for truth, they must begin by cutting themselves free from all their own special conditions and renouncing all preconceived ideas. In order to find truth we must give up our prejudices, our own small trivial notions; an open receptive mind is essential. If our chalice is full of self, there is no room in it for the water of life. The fact that we imagine ourselves to be right and everybody else wrong is the greatest of all obstacles in the path towards unity, and unity is necessary if we would reach truth, for truth is **one**.

Therefore it is imperative that we should renounce our own particular prejudices and superstitions if we earnestly desire to seek the truth. Unless we make a distinction in our minds between dogma, superstition and prejudice on the one hand, and truth on the other, we cannot succeed. When we are in earnest in our[pg 137] search for anything we look for it everywhere. This principle we must carry out in our search for truth.

Science must be accepted. No one truth can contradict another truth. Light is good in whatsoever lamp it is burning! A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may bloom! A star has the same radiance if it shines from the East or from the West. Be free from prejudice, so will you love the Sun of Truth from whatsoever point in the horizon it may arise! You will realize that if the Divine light of truth shone in Jesus Christ it also shone in Moses and in Buddha. The earnest seeker will arrive at this truth. This is what is meant by the "Search after Truth."

It means, also, that we must be willing to clear away all that we have previously learned, all that would clog our steps on the way to truth; we must not shrink if necessary from beginning our education all over again. We must not allow our love for any one religion or any one personality to so blind our eyes that we become fettered by superstition! When we are freed from all these bonds, seeking with liberated minds, then shall we be able to arrive at our goal.

"Seek the truth, the truth shall make you free." So shall we see the truth in all religions, for truth is in all and truth is one![pg 138]

