

## THREE PREREQUISITES FOR WORLD PEACE

By Marty Schirn

Tucson, AZ

As I see it, there are three vital prerequisites for establishing a SOLID FOUNDATION for permanent world peace through world unity. As humanity embraces this SOLID FOUNDATION, unconditional love will spread its wings and embrace the human race. Establishing world peace is the responsibility of all of humanity, and to achieve this requires the abandonment of every kind of prejudice that allows people to consider themselves superior.

For the three prerequisites to be effective and for us to become true WORLD CITIZENS, there must be a TOTAL SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION of the entire human race. For inclusiveness to be widened, the wellbeing of any part of society must be intrinsically linked to the wellbeing of the whole. For unity to occur, justice must be undeviating and universal; love must be unconditional.

1. There is only one Creator, though He has been called different Names throughout history such as Brahma, Ahura Mazda, Adonai, Father, Allah, Great Spirit, God.

2. Humanity is one family. There is only ONE race -- the Human Race. We are all one human species, one beautiful human flower garden. As different as we are, we are all equal and the same: we all have the same human bodies, the same human emotions, the same human needs and aspirations, the same human dignity, the same God-given human rights. Our diversity is to be valued and appreciated, not condemned and destroyed. Although celebrating diversity and advocating co-existence are important, a shared identity based on the principle of the oneness of humanity is essential for lasting progress. Moreover, for humanity to thrive, women must be given equal rights with men. The equality of women and men is not merely a goal to be achieved, but a truth about human nature to be acknowledged and embraced. Women not only DESERVE equal rights, but the entire human race is being held back by women not being given equal rights.

3. Logically, one Creator can have only one religion. He is not in competition with Himself. However, I believe God, out of His infinite love for humanity, has revealed His one religion not once, but MANY times throughout history. God's Messengers have been the Founders of the major world religions: Abraham, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ, and Muhammad. Hence, I believe ALL the major world religions are Divine in origin, one in essence, equally true, equally important, equally valid, and all part of ONE progressive Divine process.

As I see it, a universal loving Creator does not play favorites by elevating one religion above all the others, but rather out of His infinite love for humanity He has always revealed His Will throughout history. God, through His Messengers, has ADAPTED His one religion to meet the needs of each age in which it has been revealed. Each age has had different social conditions and requirements. The major world religions are like equal chapters of one book. If a chapter were missing, the book would be incomplete.

I believe religion must agree with science and reason. As there is only one Creator, spiritual truth cannot conflict with scientific truth. If religion goes against science and reason, the religion degenerates into superstition. And science without religion leads to materialism.

Before I discovered this universal view of religion, I was obsessed with a profound question: Why does one God have so many religions? a) With so many religions and denominations claiming to be God's one true religion, this made no sense to me. I felt it was an illogical contradiction. b) Furthermore, I realized that usually a person's religion is determined by the country where they are born and how they are raised by their parents. Often, they are then taught that their religion is true and all others are false. They blindly accept this without question. This too made no sense to me. I felt the universal view of religion I just described was a totally logical answer to my question. Admittedly, this is extremely challenging!

This universal view goes against the current disjointed view of religion. How are the followers of the major world religions ever going to come together in lasting peace, true unity, and genuine love if they harbor in their hearts the belief that their religion is true and all others are false, that they are right and everyone else is wrong, that they are saved and everyone else is going to hell? For thousands of years this narrow view of religion has failed to bring people together. On the contrary, it has created destructive barriers resulting in disunity, self-righteousness, hatred, prejudice, fear, fanaticism, and wars fought in the name of religion.

I believe that permanent SPIRITUAL world peace through world unity is INEVITABLE! But how much suffering we must go through in order to reach this most glorious achievement is up to the human race. My beliefs come from the universal teachings of Baha'u'llah (1817-1892), Founder of the youngest of the major world religions, the Baha'i Faith. The three prerequisites I've shared with you -- the oneness of God, the oneness of humanity, the oneness of religion -- are the three principles taught by Baha'u'llah to be a SOLID FOUNDATION for bringing about lasting world peace through world unity. "The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens." -- Baha'u'llah God bless the Human Race, All Living Creatures and Vegetation, and Planet Earth!

I'm proud to be a World Citizen!