

Truth by Head-count

The BBC are advertising a new series in which they will ask one of those nebulous questions they delight in. This time it's "Is Britain still a Christian country?" The blurb adds another question, presumably dependent on how you answer the first: "Should Christianity still play a role in public life?" This is predicated on the statement that there are fewer people calling themselves Christians in this country than there used to be. In other words, the truth value of Christianity is not to be measured by attention to scripture, to historical investigations or theological and philosophical reasoning, but by counting heads. It's that shibboleth "democracy" again, the prevailing fantasy of our age.

They will not ask the one question that matters: Is it true? because to the modern mind there is no such thing as truth, only opinion. And every opinion is adjudged to be as good as every other, no matter how idiotic, incoherent and uneducated. In these conditions the only recourse left is to count heads and frame your policies on what the larger part of the mob. . . I was going to say "thinks", but the blundering mob doesn't think: it only feels, emotes and reacts.

As a matter of fact there are coherent philosophical and theological arguments for the truth of Christianity. The new programme will not even mention these. There is strong historical evidence for the reliability of the gospels. This will not be gone into. They will only ask petulantly what "right" have Christians got to a say in the public realm in this wonderfully progressed and superbly diverse society of ours.

Furthermore, the truth of Christianity is not a theoretical truth, but an existential, moral and eschatological truth. Specifically, we are all going to die and after death comes the judgement. It is vital that we prepare for this properly. Whosoever will be saved, it is necessary above all things that he hold the catholic faith. And the catholic faith is this: that God is Trinity in Unity; men are fallen, sinners, Christ died to save us; he rose again and ascended into heaven where he is even now preparing a place for us.

Tell you what though: the BBC would never dream of trying to establish the truth-value of the theory of evolution by counting heads. Just a thought.

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