

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
مَحَمَّدٌ صَلَّيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

ازالہ دین عند اللہ اسلام

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

# AHMADIYYA GAZETTE

An Official Organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc. in America

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
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## Freedom of Faith & Conscience in Islam

Extracted from text of the sermons delivered by Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad Khalifutul Masih III on December 29, 1978 and January 12, 1979 at Rabwah.

Islam has announced in the plainest terms that so far as faith is concerned every individual is answerable to God Almighty. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was commanded to proclaim that he had not been appointed a Keeper over the people nor had he been made responsible for them. No man has been made responsible for another's faith. Everyone is responsible for himself. No one can be compelled to become a Muslim nor can anyone be expelled from Islam by compulsion. No one can be forced to perform the Salat nor can anyone be forcibly restrained from performing it. No one can be compelled to remember God or to refrain from doing so. No one can be stopped from repeating the name of Allah or from proclaiming His Greatness or from affirming the Credo: There is no god beside Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; no one can be restrained from supplicating the divine in the words taught by the Holy Quran.

There is no compulsion whatever in Islam. So far as the Holy Quran is concerned there is no text, no verse, not a single word that prescribes any worldly, political or administrative punishment for apostasy. There have, however, been in our history incidents in which a person became an apostate, murdered Muslims and was guilty of armed rebellion. All over the world a murderer forfeits his life, and armed rebellion is put down with the use of force. If a person or a group is guilty of apostasy, that is to say, voluntarily announces his or its repudiation of Islam, and voluntarily takes up the sword to kill the Muslims and voluntarily, without any compulsion, murders Muslims and is punished with death for murder or is suppressed by the sword, it does not at all mean that he or it is put to death because of his or its voluntary repudiation of Islam. The penalty for the offences committed by such people irrespective of their apostasy, is death. In such a case it cannot be said that they are punished for their apostasy. Their punishment would have been the same even if there had been no question of apostasy.

It is clear and acknowledged verity that the Holy Quran is a complete and perfect book. There is no shortcoming in it for the making up of which we have recourse to some historical event or to some uncertain hadees. There-

fore, the Ahmadiyya community believes that all the directions and admonitions of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, are illustrative of some direction or other of the Holy Quran and there is no direction of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, which is inconsistent with the Holy Quran.

In the Holy Quran it is expounded that God Almighty created man, bestowed upon him ears with which to hear, eyes with which to observe and ponder and sent down numberless bounties from heaven and thus demonstrated His greatness so that man should become obedient to Him; and this is followed up with: Yet, if they turn away, thy duty is only to convey the Message clearly (16:83). If having ears and eyes and heart, and despite numberless bounties, people should turn away, there would be no blame upon the Holy Prophet for his responsibility is to convey the Message clearly.

Again it is said: Tell them: Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. If you turn away, then he is responsible for that with which he is charged, and you are responsible for that, with which you are charged. If you obey him, you will be rightly guided. The Messenger is responsible only for conveying the Message clearly (24:55). In this verse the weak Muslims and the hypocrites are addressed and turning away comprehends both disobedience and apostacy. The responsibility of the Messenger is only to convey the Message clearly. The responsibility of those addressed is to believe, to declare their faith by word, to confirm it by their hearts and to illustrate it by their actions and conduct. If they obey and become true Muslims they would be rightly guided and would prosper both in this world and in the hereafter. The duty of the Messenger is only to convey the Message clearly.

Again it is said: If you reject that which I urge upon you, that is nothing new, for people before you also rejected the Truth. The Messenger's responsibility is only to convey the Message clearly (29:19). It is not his duty to compel you to believe.

At another place it is said: Harken to the Truth which the Prophet has brought to you

in the form of God's Word and God's Law, for it is God's design that you should believe and make progress and achieve the purpose of life. Then, if they should turn away, We have not sent thee as a guardian over them. Thy duty is only to convey the Message and no more (42:48, 49).

Then it is said: Believe in Allah and his Messenger and the light that we have sent down. Allah will remove the ills of those who believe in Allah and work righteousness, and will admit them to the garden of His love, but those who disbelieve will be driven into the Fire. . . . Allah will guide aright the heart of whoever truly believes in Him, that is to say, will bestow upon him true faith which will enter into his heart and bring about a great revolution in his life. You can be bestowed this bounty only if you obey Allah and His Messenger and offer Him all that belongs to you, but if you turn away, whether on account of hypocrisy or disobedience, or by way of apostacy, then remember that the Messenger has no responsibility for your misconduct, nor does any blame rest upon him or his followers for your apostacy. The only responsibility of Our Messenger is to convey the Message clearly (64:9-13).

Again it is said: Whether We bring to pass during thy life-time some of the chastisement that We have designed for them, or whether we cause thee to die before that happens, it will all be fulfilled and thou will come to know about it. Thy duty is only to convey Our Message. It is for Us to call them to account (13:41). Here God Almighty has clearly affirmed that the responsibility of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, is to convey the Message; the reckoning rests with God. Then who can claim that he has the authority to call anyone to account?

So this is the teaching the beauty of which had won the heart of the Arabs. Was it compulsion that won over those who had subjected the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, and his companions to the extreme of persecution over thirteen years? Was the announcement of the Holy Prophet on the day of the fall of Mecca No blame shall lie on you this day; an announcement of compulsion or of love and freedom? It



meant that he forgave them and thereby illustrated the verity that it is God who rewards and punishes and that he himself would exact no retribution from them. Those who had endured every type of persecution gave up all claim to recompense and left their properties in the hands of those who had taken possession of them. They went back to Medina without claiming a single brick.

These things cannot be achieved through compulsion, nor does Islam permit compulsion. The Holy Quran has clearly expounded that in its beautiful teaching no one is under compulsion, to adopt or to reject the ways that lead to God. He who adopts the ways that bear the footmarks of Muhammad, peace be on him, would arrive where he had arrived, that is to say, in the lap of his beneficent Lord, He who turns away from those ways and adopts the ways of Satan which God has forbidden, cannot be called to account by me or by anyone else, nor has this authority been committed, as is affirmed by the Holy Quran, to Muhammad, peace be on Him. God has said that this pertains to Him and He would do as He wills. You should continue to perform that which is committed to you.

### THE INSTITUTION OF KHILAFAT

BY HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR AHMAD  
(ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM)

Study of the Holy Quran and sacred history shows, that the object of a prophet's or an apostle's advent is not merely his coming and passing away after delivering his message; rather, at the advent of every prophet or apostle the Divine Will is to bring about a change and a revolution in the world, for the accomplishment of which in view of the necessity of material conditions and means, is required sustained and continued effort and an enduring organization; and as man's span of life is limited, God's custom is that He causes the prophet to accomplish only the "sowing of the seed", in order that the seed may grow to full fruition, God perfects the prophet's mission by setting up after his death competent men one after the other as his successors. These successors are called Khalifas in Islamic terminology, for, the word "Khalifa" means: one, coming after; or one, succeed another. From ancient times, every prophet has been having this succession of Khalifas after

him; for example, Moses had Joshua as his Khalifa: Jesus had Peter; and the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God) was succeeded by Hazrat Abu Bakr as the Khalifa: nay, after the Holy Prophet, the Khilafat was an institution greater and more glorious than any such institution set up after the death of any other Prophet. Apart from the necessity of perfecting the prophet's work, there is another object underlying the institution of Khilafat, and that object is, that the prophet's followers might be enabled to bear the shock -- which is no less than a terrible earthquake -- befalling the newly-born community of the prophet. It was, therefore, inevitable that after the Promised Messiah also this ancient divine custom should be fulfilled. The Promised Messiah says: —;

"The Word of God has revealed to me . . . that He would make this Movement flourish fully — in part at my hands, and in part after I have passed away. This is God's custom which He has been fulfilling ever since the creation of the world -- He helps His prophets and his Messengers . . . and He makes them only to sow the seed of the truth which they want to spread in the world but the full fruition of the seed and the perfection of their work is not affected by them; on the other hand, He causes them to die at a time when, apparently, it forebodes failure and disaster; and, then manifests His Power in another way. In short, He manifests His power through the prophet; and secondly, at a time when, after the prophet's death, difficulties are confronted God manifests His great Power a second time and supports the tottering community, He therefore, who is patient to the end, witnesses this divine miracle, as when the case in the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr, was the Holy Prophet's (peace and Blessings of God be upon him) death was regarded as an untimely death and many an ignorant dweller of the desert apostasised and the Companions were mad with grief — then did God raise Hazrat Abu Bakr and thereby gave proof of His power a second time . . . This happened in the time of Moses, as also in the time of Jesus . . . This dear ones, is the ancient divine custom . . . God would not abandon his ancient custom today I am a Manifestation of the Power of God; I am an embodiment of the divine Power, and, after me, there would be others who would be the Manifestations of the Second or the other Power (Al-Wasiyyat).

Regarding the appointment and status of the Khalifas, Islam teaches that the office of the Khalifa is by no means hereditary: on the other hand, it is a sacred trust which, through election by the faithful, is entrusted with the most competent man in the community, and as, the office of successor to the prophet is an important and delicate spiritual office, Islam teaches that though apparently the Khalifa's election takes place through the vote of the people, the whole affair is supervised by God from the heavens, by His special intervention. He guides the people so as to cause their decision to agree with His pleasure. Thus though the Khalifa is appointed through the machinery of election, the election really is determined by the secret destiny of God. That is why the appointment of a Khalifa is attributed by God to Himself - - it is He Who sets up Khalifas, says God. The Khilafat is a delicate spiritual institution which it would be difficult for the common people perhaps to appreciate; and the truth is that, while on the one hand, the appointment of a Khalifa takes place through election by the faithful on the other, the appointment accords with the will of God - - the hidden Wires of God's destiny draw men's hearts and incline them towards the Favoured One of God. Then, when a Khalifa has been elected in fulfilment of the destiny of God, Islam requires all the faithful to render full obedience to him; and he, for himself, is enjoined to consult the faithful in all important affairs, and though he is not bound to follow the latter's advice rather, if he thinks it advisable he can reject such advice and can take his own decision - - nevertheless he is required to hold consultation and to acquaint himself with the people's views.

The reason for the Khalifa's not being bound to accept the people's advice is that he, in view of the spiritual character of his office is enjoined in all things to rely on and look towards God; he is required to rely only on God's assistance. If, however, he is held to be bound to follow the people's advice, the *Tawakkal* on placing one's reliance on God by reason of this obligation disappears like smoke into the air. That is why the Holy Quran mentions *Tawakkal* or reliance upon God in opposition to consultation, and directs that the Khalifas must consult the people, yet, they might make the final decision relying, upon the help of God; and this in order that they might take their stand on *Tawakkal*.

The Khilafat is a wonderful and an unmatched Islamic institution which, in current constitutional phraseology, cannot be described as agreeing fully with the constitutional structure of democracy; nor can it be compared with the present day Dictatorship. It is a different kind of organization, midway between these two. It is not a democracy as the president under a democratic constitution holds office for a time, but, in Islam the Khalifa is elected not for a time but for life. Secondly, under a democratic order, the president in many matters is bound by the advice of the people, but, in Islam, though the Khalifa is bound to consult the people, he is not bound to act upon the advice tendered to him, , he can, for reasons of public policy, reject such advice and act independently of it. Again the Khilafat is different also from Dictatorship, for, in the first place in dictatorship there is no question of a time-limit . . the Dictator may or may not be in power for a limited time only; secondly the Dictator generally is all powerful, so much so, that in case of need he can repeal an existing law and enforce a new law in its place, but under the Khilafat the Khalifa's powers are in any case limited by the Islamic Shariat and by the directions of the prophet whom he serves. And, again, the Dictator is not bound to consult the people but the Khalifa is enjoined to consult the faithful.

The Khilafat, in short, is a wonderful and a rare piece of organization, which in spirit approaches near democracy, but outwardly is nearer to dictatorship. But the fundamental difference which separates and distinguishes the Khilafat from all other constitutions of the World it is spiritual character. The Khalifa is not merely an administrative head, but, being the successor to a prophet's community; he has to act as an exemplar to the people; his Sunna (practice) is an example for others to follow. This aspect of the Khilafat distinguishes it from all other constitutions - - no, there can be no question of a time-limit in respect of a spiritual institution of this character.

### Pronouncements of the Promised Messiah

#### Reality of the Graces of Paradise

The Holy Quran says that there is glad tidings for those who believed and acted righteously that



they will inherit the gardens bedecked with streams. In this verse, faith has an analogy with garden and the right acts have the type of relationship with the streams what the faith has with the righteous acts. Therefore, as no garden can be lively and fruitful without water, similarly no faith is of use that is not accompanied by righteous acts. Therefore, paradise is but personification of faith and righteous acts. Like hell it is not an external object, rather it emanates from within man himself. Remember that the amenities of life here foreshadow the pure body of this world. Right and pure faith resembles a plant; righteous acts are like streams for the nourishment for that plant, which maintain its greenery. In this world, they seem as if dreamed of but in that world they will be felt and seen.

That is the reason that when the people of paradise will be awarded, they will say . . .

هَذَا الَّذِي نُرْتَقِبُ قَبْلَ

It does not mean that the milk, honey, grapes, etc., that we eat in this world will be given to us there. No. Those things by way of their kind and state will be different. Only name is common. Although an outline of those rewards is physically given, but simultaneously it is mentioned that those things illuminate the soul and create a sense of gnosis of God. Soul and righteousness are their fountainhead.

نُرْتَقِبُ قَبْلَ

does not mean that those are worldly physical awards. This is absolutely wrong. Instead, Allah's intent in this verse is that the people with righteous acts had by their own hands made a paradise the fruit of which they will enjoy in the world hereafter. And since they would have eaten that fruit spiritually in this world, therefore, they will recognize it in the world hereafter, and will say that these look like the previous ones. And these are the spiritual developments in this world which enable the pious and righteous to recognize those

Al-Hakm, Jan. 10, 1902

### The Promised Messiah's Teachings on Smoking

A man advertised on the numerous ills of smoking, Hazrat Sahib responded:

"As a matter of fact we pay attention to it because many adolescents and educated young

persons get entangled with it just for the sake of fashion. We want them to listen so that they may avoid the hazards of these things."

He said, "Actually the tobacco is a smoke injurious to internal organs. Islam prohibits indulgence into these kinds of activities which are harmful. Therefore, it is better to avoid these." "It is not like wine that it drives man towards sin. Nevertheless, piety is in abstaining from it. It causes bad smell and man looks ridiculous in inhaling and exhaling the smoke. If it would have been at the time of our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) he would have disallowed. It is a futile activity. However, if used as a kind of treatment, it is not forbidden. Otherwise it is sheer waste of money. Healthy person is one who lives without such dependence. Britons too want to get rid of it."

(It may be mentioned that after careful research, the United States Surgeon General has made it binding for cigarette manufacturers to print this warning on every pack of cigarettes sold in the United States: 'Warning: The Surgeon General has determined that cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health'.)

### MAJLIS MUSHAWARAT, 1979

I am extending my heartfelt gratitude to each Jamaat president for affording me the opportunity of representing America at the 1979 Majlis Mushawat. This was a blessing and honor I shall remember through out my life. I shall always give thanks to God Almighty for allowing me to be selected to attend this blessed event.

There were in attendance representatives from our foreign Jamaats either the national presidents or the missionaries in charge of the foreign Jamaats. Some of the representatives in attendance were, Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam who also received the title Paramount Missionary from Huzur, Mr. Imani of Indonesia, Paramount chief Ve Ve Kalon of Sierra Leone. Each of the aforementioned and myself were assigned to a sub-committee, I was assigned along with Mr. Imani to the Tarik-i-Jadid and Waqfi Judid Budget Committee.

The participation in this affair has given me insight into workings of Khalifat. To watch our beloved Hazrat Amirul Momineen conduct Mushawarat is an experience that every world leader could learn much from; the patience, that Huzar revealed in listening to the comments by delegates to Mushawarat was unbelievable. What is, remarkable is that, our Khalifa is the chosen leader of our time by Allah. What can we tell him when he has contact with the Source of all knowledge. Huzur with this great position still treats everyone with the upmost respect and patience. Huzur would listen very attentively to whatever proposal was presented by the delegates. This reveals to us that he indeed acts in the mode established by the Holy Quran when it states that the Prophet (S.A.W.S.) should take counsel.

Huzar as our Khalifa has shown each of us, who have leadership role how we should conduct ourselves. There were several important decisions made concerning Wasiyat and 'Musihyat' that will have an impact upon American Ahmadies. When these Decisions are forwarded to our Missionary in charge we should do all in our power to carry them out. In addition to the attendance of Mushawarat I was blessed with meeting Hazrat Amirul Momineen twice.

The result of these meetings and some of the events of Mushawarat will be the subject of future discussions at our Board of Directors and President meetings.

Our Missionary college gave me the honor of passing out awards to some of our future missionaries. I was deeply moved by this event, to see these young men who have dedicated their lives to the spread of Islam through-out the world, give speeches in Arabic. The role of these future missionaries who are from many foreign countries was very impressive.

This event; brought, home to me the fact that we have no American representative at Jamia, Brothers I did commit on your behalf, America, to the selection and the sending of an American student to the Hafiz and/or the missionary school. I pray that we will accomplish this urgent task.

Brothers, there were so many excellent events to take place during my attendance at Mushawarat that I cannot repeat them in the course of this

small article. Perhaps during our National Convention, I will be able to relate in detail all of the events that took place at Mushawarat and my stay in Rabwah.

Muzaffar Ahmad Zafar  
(National President)

## NEWS AND NOTES

1. News emanating from Rabwah suggests that our beloved Spiritual Leader Hazrat Khalifutul Maseh III is, by Allah's grace, in good health and cheer. Members, of course, will keep on praying constantly for his perfect health and achievement of his goals.
2. The Editor fell seriously ill with flu and was virtually confined to bed for about a fortnight. By Allah's grace, he is now back to work. Alhamdulillah.
- Major Abdul Hamid Sahib, Missionary East Coast had likewise a severe attack of flu recently and we hope and pray he has also recovered, by now.
- Mir Mahmud Ahmad Nasir, our Missionary Incharge, despite his chronic ailments, is, by Allah's grace, discharging his duties with characteristic alertness and zeal. May Allah enable him to continue unabated and unaffected by the deterring elements to his normal health.
3. Maulana A. U. Kaleem has assumed charge of his duties as Missionary of the East Coast region. He reached the scene of his activities on April 16, 1979 and has set up his mission at 3336 Maybelle Way, Oakland, California, 94619. His telephone number is 415-261-9481.
4. Dr. Hussain M. Sajid, formerly President in Portland, Oregon, has now shifted to Ohio, his present address being 11, Braircliff Dr. Chillicothe, Ohio 45601.

5. "The Victory of Islam," one of the most fundamental and earliest books of the Promised Messiah is now available at the Washington D.C. headquarters both in English and Urdu script. It has been prescribed as a course of study by the Missionary Incharge, as an integral part of our educational training. All members of the Jamaat, without exception, are required to master the contents of the book thoroughly in a couple of months. Obtain your copy and study in right earnest.



6. On principle, we do not celebrate birth and death anniversaries. The Promised Messiah, blessings and peace on him, breathed his last on May 26, 1908 and the jamaat elected his successor (Khalifa) on May 27, and thus originated the institution of Khilafat in Ahmadiyyat, the blessings of which we enjoy today and shall continue to enjoy, Allah willing, forever. Jamaats are required to observe the Khilafat Day on May 27, in an appropriate manner and express their gratitude to Allah for the blessings He has bestowed on us. An illuminating article on Khilafat written by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib M.A. (of Blessed memory) adorn the pages of the Gazette. Intending speakers may center their speeches around the material treasured therein.

7. The editor regrets the apathy of the Jamaats towards sending their monthly activity reports. Likewise, newsworthy personal notes are not pouring in. Let us all contribute our individual share to the service and progress of our national organ.

#### CHICAGO JAMAAT REPORT, March 1979

The Chicago Jamaat held its regular meetings on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and Juma on Fridays at 1:30 p.m. The average attendance to the Sunday meetings is about 13 and the average attendance for Juma is about 9.

The Chicago jamaat celebrated Musleh Maood Day on March 25th. along with Region 3. Speakers from all jamaats gave very informative talks on some aspects of the Promised Messiah's life (pboh). The gathering was held in North Chicago and many members came.

Classes are being conducted by the President on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. which consists of the prayers, and yassarnal Quran and general knowledge about Islam.

After the long bitter winter that we experienced here in Chicago the mosque suffered some major damages such as pipes bursting in the walls and leaking roofs which was corrected by the Khuddam by the Grace of Allah. We are continuing our renovation that was started prior to these mishaps.

Abdul Karim, Sec.

#### REGIONAL KHUDDAM RALLY

Representatives of region three and four of Majlis Khuddam-ul Ahmadiyya convened in Dayton, Ohio, April 27 - 29.

The theme of this regional rally was, "The Renaissance of Islam" Highlighted were Khuddam and Atfal activities and included faith. Inspiring speeches delivered by Hajji Mazafar Ahmad Zafr, National President Jamat Ahmadiyya Doctor Sajid of Chillicothe, Ohio and M. M. Ibrahim, Regional Missionary respectively.

The week-end event adjourned Sunday with lunch and Asr Salat.

Haheeb Shafeek  
General Secretary

#### FROM THE PRESS

(without comment)

#### Early Tests of Holy Shroud Seems to Rule Out a Hoax.

Los Alamos, N.M. April 16 (UPI) —

A member of a scientific team that examined the Holy Shroud of Turin last October say initial analysis of evidence gathered in the four-day study seems to rule out a hoax.

"I was really about 50 percent sure we'd walk in, spend 30 minutes looking at it and decide it was hoaxed - not worth doing our tests on". said Raymond Rogers, a Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory microchemist. "Now I believe the burden of proof is on the skeptic."

Mr. Rogers was one of 27 American scientists who examined the shroud in Italy and conducted an extensive series of tests on the cloth, said to have covered Jesus at his burial. The shroud has the image of a man who many believe was Jesus.

(New York Times)

## RELIGION WRITER LEVELS 'CON GAME' CHARGE AGAINST SOME CHURCHES

Cleveland (UPI) — Some churches are "Operating the biggest con game in the country", George R. Plagenz, religion writer for Scripps-Howard Newspapers and United Features Syndicate, has charged.

In a weekend article titled, "What Your Pastor Knows but Won't Tell You", Plagenz argued, "Many church-goers would be shocked to learn that their ministers don't believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus, or look upon Jesus' miracles — such as feeding the 5,000 and walking on the water — as myths."

Plagenz, an ordained minister and religion editor of the Cleveland Press, noted recent reports that most Biblical scholars don't believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus.

"Because most ministers learn their theology in the seminaries where these scholars teach, it is easy to see why few ministers - at least in the large liberal, mainline denominations — believe that Jesus rose from the dead physically", Plagenz said.

While the religion writer's criticism was targeted principally at liberal churches, he added, "Some evangelicals have their own version of the con game."

"Radio and TV evangelists, who fill the airwaves across the country on Sunday mornings, raise \$500 million a year through donations sent in by their listeners," he wrote; "Has bilking the believer too often become the name of the game for some evangelicals?"

The columnist commented, "It appears to be obvious that what is confronting both the liberals and the evangelicals is the average church-goer's strong desire to believe the simple truths of the Christian faith."

"While the evangelicals exploit this, the liberals play coverup and make-believe, giving their people the impression they believe, when they don't. Any way you look at it, it's a con game", Plagenz concluded.

(Dayton Daily News)

## TRINITY ADDED LATER

My letter is in reply to a comment made by a recent letter which suggested that any organization which identified itself as Christian but does not teach the Trinity is potentially dangerous. I am not affiliated with the Way organization nor do I support their activities, but I have done considerable research concerning the Trinity.

The term Trinity is not found in the Bible nor was it used by the first-century Christians. Though the triune god idea had been worshipped for centuries by pagan nations, it was not adopted by Christendom until about three centuries after Christ left the earth.

This formal adoption of the Trinity to Christianity took place under Emperor Constantine who himself was a pagan until baptized on his deathbed. Constantine saw many political and personal advantages in the intermingling of paganism and Christianity. The Trinity also emphasizes the co-equality of its three persons. Christ stated that the Father is greater. The Father is also stated as being the "head" of Christ.

I see as a greater danger the panicky labeling of groups. Even Christ Himself was labeled a cultist or sect leader by his contemporaries.

Wayne Township — Marianne Griffith  
Dayton Daily News

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Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc.  
637 Randolph Street  
Dayton, Ohio 45408

