

# Universal Religion

By Svami Vivekananda

**“Universal religion, too, is already existing. If the priests and other people that have taken upon themselves the task of preaching different religions simply cease preaching for a few moments, we shall see it there.”**

~ Svami Vivekananda

**M**y idea, therefore, is that all these religions are different forces in the economy of God, working to the good of mankind, and that not one can become dead, not one can be killed. Just as you cannot kill any force in nature, so you cannot kill any one of these spiritual forces. You have seen that each religion is living. From time to time it may retrograde or go forward. At one time, it may be shorn of a good many of its trappings; at another time it may be covered with all sorts of trappings; but all the same, the soul is ever there, it can never be lost. The ideal which every religion represents is never lost, and so every religion is intelligently on the march.

And that universal religion about which philosophers and others have dreamed in every country already exists. It is here. As the universal brotherhood of man is already existing, so also is universal religion. Which of you, that have travelled far and wide, have not found brothers and sisters in every nation? I have found them all over the world. Brotherhood already exists; only there are numbers of persons who fail to see this and only upset it by trying for new brotherhoods. Universal religion, too, is already existing. If the priests and other people that have

taken upon themselves the task of preaching different religions simply cease preaching for a few moments, we shall see it there. They are disturbing it all the time, because it is in their interest. You see that priests in every country are very conservative. Why is it so? There are very few priests who lead the people; most of them are led by the people and are their slaves and servants. If you say it is dry, they say it is so; if you say it is black, they say it is black. If the people advance, the priests must advance. They cannot lag behind. So before blaming the priests — it is the fashion to blame the priest — you ought to blame yourselves. You only get what you deserve. What would be the fate of a priest who wants to give you new and advanced ideas and lead you forward? His children would probably starve, and he would be clad in rags. He is governed by the same worldly laws as you are. “If you go on,” he says, “let us march.” Of course, there are exceptional souls, not cowed down by public opinion. They see the truth, and truth alone they value. Truth has gotten a hold of them, has gotten possession of them, as it were, and they cannot but march ahead. They never look backward, and for them there are no people. God alone exists for them. He is the Light before them, and they are following that Light.