



Attitudes for Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation

A Protocol to Help Religious Workers Maintain Integrity and Work Effectively

The key to bringing a diversity of religious leaders together in harmony and cooperation lies in a strategy that emphasizes personal religious integrity coupled with a few simple rules. This religious protocol, or code of conduct, invites four keystone attitudes from each participant:

First, each person represents the fullness of his or her religious tradition and its understanding about responsibility to God and creation without compromise. This principle of integrity allows each person to participate with the full strength of the religious tradition which he or she represents.

Second, each person honors and respects the responsibility of every other participant to represent their own understanding of integrity. This principle of respect is the necessary corollary to the first principle of integrity. Therefore we acknowledge the responsibility of every person to hold sacred the beliefs and behaviors which characterize his or her understanding of God and right behavior. This implies that no person imposes or asks others to enter into the practice of their religious tradition.

Third, we are joined by a common striving to develop and address a right caring for the earth. This is the biblically mandated principle of creation care. There is one cosmic reality and there is only one earth. We seek therefore a unity in developing public policy for the care and keeping of God's good earth. The essential corollary to creation care is that we maintain our focus on the environment and refrain from extraneous issues of world politics, social issues, or the rationale for various faith traditions.

Fourth, we avoid negativity. Rather we seek to actualize a vision of the goodness of God latent within each person, and especially within each participant in our programs. This principle of positive attitude enables us to find common inspiration, easy cooperation, and a sense of shared responsibility so that we may develop a unity of purpose and commitment to a larger ideal of earth care. The corollary is that we refrain

from criticisms of one another, from sarcasms or from derogatory comments about others.

These four principles, characterized as attitudinal qualities, empower us across faith traditions into a unity of vision and purpose that brings us into one voice and one action on those issues that we address. Through fidelity to this principled discipline in our thinking and behavior, the NRCCC has forged a unity of mind and action that allows us to work smoothly and without disagreements across what have previously been considered doctrinal barriers.

We invite those of you who are new to the NRCCC to examine these principles and embrace them in our interfaith engagements with the issues that lie before us.