

Limitations and Critiques of Liberal Religion



The central problem of liberalism... is that the liberal conception of community is based too much on fear and too little on love. It is fear of the “other” that generates in liberal thought the fundamental paradox of liberal theory. The liberal subject both desires and fears, needs and is threatened by community.

-Anthony E. Cook, professor of law

What if the individual – and individualism – is part of the problem? It makes a difference to understand ourselves as living in a world in which we are fundamentally dependent on others, on institutions, on the Earth, and to see that this life depends on a sustaining organization for various forms of life. If no one escapes that interdependency, then we are equal in a different sense. We are equally dependent, that is, equally social and ecological, and that means we cease to understand ourselves only as demarcated individuals.

-Judith Butler, philosopher and gender theorist



Liberals want to create a strong and inclusive community, but we often want to do it without giving up anything, without letting down the barriers we erect around ourselves in the name of individual autonomy.

-Paul Rasor, UU minister

It's challenging to mediate between traditional religiosity and secular culture. For example, in liberal circles, the secular aspects of holidays are often embraced while the traditional stories are less familiar or outright rejected. As we look at the images, pay attention to what you notice and feel, and why.

Which image *most* reminds you of...

Easter?



Passover?



Christmas?

