

FANATICS ARE OFTEN NOT THE PROBLEM SO MUCH AS THEIR ALLIES

Fanatics are too often thought to be the members of the troublesome group. But the nice politically correct activist who wants the problem ignored is a fanatic too and in some sense worse.

Is religion a good thing that can be abused?

Only something really good can be abused. It is not to blame. Something that has some flaw in it but seems okay if not perfect shares a portion of the blame. Can something terrible be abused? Not technically. But it is possible to use something that is 95 % bad to make it worse. In that sense, the answer is yes.

If a religion is not necessary and can be lived without then it is to blame for the evils done in its name. The abuse get out clause only applies to what is really needed.

The religion that claims to be the one that takes you to God is obviously denying that any other religion is necessary. Is it any wonder then if violence and discrimination emerge?

COLLUDING WITH DIVINE EVIL AND PRAISING IT

Anybody can collude with evil and do a good job at making it look good or understandable. When a person praises God who permits evil to happen, that is condoning evil. The person has to be proven innocent for she or he is guilty until proven innocent. That would involve proving that evil and God can co-exist. That cannot be proven. Not one of the reasons why God lets people suffer make any sense and each reason given is itself evil. When a person sweetly blames the child who is sexually abused and not the molester and says he does this for the sake of peace and healing the child and making the molester see that sexual abuse is to be avoided, that person has to be proven innocent too. God is more of a verb than a noun meaning that if the child molester's friend is a believer, he or she is partly at least doing it for God and to manifest God.

No believer can prove that evil can or should be condoned when permitted to happen by God or when God does evil. It makes no sense to say that God needs evil and thus permits it to happen and then to claim that he cannot do it directly. Those who tell us God never directly hurts and that is why we love him are hypocrites. They are playing on our selfish and arrogant and hypocritical tendency to favour the bystander over the person doing the evil directly. It is one thing in theory to say that there could be a God and his infinite love is compatible with the existence of evil. But it is still man's word you are taking for it that this theory is plausible and true. Anger against man's theology is not the same thing as anger against God. Even if there is a God, the God worshipped by people is their perception of God not God as he is. That is why we can rage against Christians condoning evil as God's will and still say it is not about anger against God. It is they we have the problem with for their God is in their heads and we are not talking about any real God even if there is one.

If there is a small chance that God is really just a man-made concept, then man is asking you to risk condoning evil for the sake of a man-made concept. Evil is so terrible that taking the small risk is NOT JUSTIFIED!

ESSENTIAL FANATICISM AND ESSENTIAL EXTREMISM

A fanatical outlook even if not acted upon is the first step to active and practical fanaticism. It is fanaticism in itself too. If you feel your religious community in its heart wants other religions eliminated by violence you will feel you have their support if you start murdering people in other religions. You will feel supported and sense the support even if they don't want to admit it. If they condemn you, it will fall on your deaf ears. They are in no position to complain.

Religion is based on alleged revelations from the divine. If those revelations which may take the form of scriptures, enable religious violence (eg by doing nothing about it to challenge it), condone the violence by praising those responsible, or command the violence in the name of God, then the religion is calling you to essential fanaticism or essential extremism. The extremism might be kept inside you but it is no less real. It is opening the door to accepting those in your religion who will murder and persecute others in the name of faith.

What makes it worse is that if God gives a revelation, it is only a revelation as far as those who receive the revelation are concerned. The revelation is given to a prophet. The prophet passes on a testimony that he got a revelation. It is not a revelation to anybody but the prophet. God gives a revelation to the prophet and the prophet gives a revelation that he got a revelation to you. It is his revelation he gives you not God's for God can only reveal directly. So it is the prophet you listen

to not God even if God really spoke to the prophet. You might say God has no other way to give the revelation to you but second-hand. If so, then why do no prophets really prove their credentials? The justification for listening to them is weak. The prophet makes hugely important claims and gives no evidence that he should be believed. That is sick when it involves commands allegedly from God to murder people. Even if God really gave the commands, it does not get around the problem that men claiming to speak for God are condoning evil or commanding it. Even if those men speak for God, it does not follow that going against them means intentionally going against God. No decent God would ever reveal a religion or faith that gets involved in war even a just war. It contradicts God's own rule that we must prefer God to human ideas.

Those who do not take up the weapons or who say, "The violence was right in the past but we don't have to do it now" are still complicit in and colluding with the evil. They are not extremists and fanatics in the sense that they go out and kill and murder. But they are still extremists and fanatics in their hearts.

Christian and Muslim extremists are more often just obedient. They should be called obedient not extremist. If scriptures and revelations can be read as pro-violence in any way it is wrong to just call all the violent religionists extremists. Some could be but not all are.

Terrorism is so like self-destructiveness that you would only engage in it if you thought the supernatural was going to guard you against your own destruction. Terrorism depends not necessarily on an explicit religious faith or outlook but on the feeling that something invisible and secret is guarding you. It is still religious. Actions speak louder than words and you can be a supernatural believer and not really realise it.

If scriptures allow for violent interpretations then those who promote those writings as God's word are responsible when some of their members take them at face value and kill. They refuse to take responsibility and this keeps problems prolonged.

The Roman Catholic Church says that if terrorists hold a gun to your head and tell you to say that Jesus was a fraud that you must not say it. Thus you are to risk your life for Roman dogma. What if the terrorists were holding the gun to your children? Roman Catholicism is a disgrace.

Those who are fanatics and extremists inside can and do lie that they are servants of peace.

People tend to call an essentially fanatical religion good when they see its good works. Good works are irrelevant unless the religion does not even slightly condone the divine role in human suffering, when it does not even slightly condone reverence for violent scriptures that command evil in the name of God or when it does not call any evil good which desensitises people to the evil. Catholicism says sin is the worst evil. You take the Church's word for that. A religion that claims the right to say such things about your sins should permit you to say, "Evil is so terrible that it should not be condoned. We should not even consider how it might agree with the love of God. Even if you solve the problem of evil, you cannot prove that your solution is right. It might be that God could allow people to do bad because he respects free will. But it does not follow that this is his actual reason."

Finally, if you enable any evil when you can avoid enabling it, you are potentially and actually worse than those who do the dirty work. For example, the person who lets child abuse happen and thus colludes in it is worse than the actual abuser. The colluder does not know and can't know how bad it is but lets it happen. There is a difference between an abuser fondling the child for a few minutes and the person who leaves them to it for rape could be taking place and she or he looks the other way.

Faith and religion are placebos for evil. They tell you that you are forgiven and right with God and that God sometimes uses evil to do good. Faith in God is putting a divine sanction on this placebo. It is putting God's approval on the corruption and its facilitation.