

ARE FAITH SCHOOLS INDOCTRINATION FACTORIES?

Faith Schools - Indoctrination Factories?

Religion should not be taught to children in a way that seeks an unfair advantage.

Religion cannot force others to listen to its message except through the school system. Even parents cannot force a child to hear the gospel even if they try.

Faith schools lead to problems. Pentecostal faith schools damage children by making them believe God the Holy Spirit speaks through them and makes them speak in unknown languages. It urges that responsibility be handed over to God instead of yourself. Scientology schools will teach them that a dose of science fiction is true. Rastafarian Schools promote the taking of cannabis as a holy rite. Islamist Extremist schools will urge pupils to hate and to murder "outsiders".

Most Catholics today would agree, despite Church teaching, that faith in God and in the Church is only opinion not knowledge. Those that are consistent will see that schools are about imparting knowledge so it would be inappropriate for schools to be in any way religious.

Should religiously funded schools be forced to employ people against their ethos?

A teacher of religion can be secretly an Atheist. There is no reason to think that that person necessarily has to do things or say things that undermine the ethos.

Teachers and principals have been fired because they were living in a relationship against the rules of the Church eg a cohabiting couple. It is hard to reconcile this with the Church teaching that, "We are all sinners but we must urge others not to sin". The sinner who teaches in a Catholic school is not urging the pupils to sin merely by his showing bad example. It is up to each individual to have the sense not to do things just because other people do them.

Are faith schools better?

Some studies show that faith schools are better than non-religious schools.

But these studies cannot speak about all faith schools and all non-religious schools. It is hard to believe that a Mormon or Seventh-Day Adventist school which opposes science and truth could really be a good school. So what faith are we talking about? It is dishonest for people to say faith schools are the best when they actually mean say Catholic schools or Presbyterian schools.

The studies do not consider other variables. Faith schools might seem to be better than non-religious schools if the believers have more money and more support than the non-believers. It is money not faith that is making them better.

If faith schools are ever better than secular schools, the reason is not because they are faith schools. Being a faith school in itself does not indicate that it must be necessarily better. Even in faith schools, going to classes intended to put the faith into the child to be optional for the child. Religion cannot force people to listen to its message except through controlling schools - bear that in mind.

Many faith schools teach a watery form of religion that is pretty close to secularism. These schools are really almost faith schools in name only.

Faith schools shouldn't be better than secular schools. If they are, is it because the teachers and parent committees are too aware of the flaws of the faith school system and are over-compensating in other areas? If you run a school that wastes time teaching superstition you may feel that you should maximise the effectiveness of teaching other subjects to make up for this.

Faith schools promote superstition and by separating children of one faith from another you are tacitly endorsing sectarianism and fear and division. If faith schools exceed secular schools then this is in spite of their inherent badness and not because of it. Faith schools separate children according to a religious label from other children bearing a different one thus implying, "This school is good because we are us and we are not them. We are holy and have the best religion. That is

why we need a school with our religion's ethos."

Can a secular nation judge what a faith school is?

The state that recognises a school as a state school is saying the religion running it is really a religion.

Secularism may struggle to learn where religion begins and where religion ends. Yet it seems to many that it may need to try and know in order to take care that religion does not get privileges that non-religion doesn't have. Many argue that the state judging what is a religion and what isn't, opens the door for religious people to get favourable treatment under the law if the state regards them as comprising a real religion. The state assessing what is a religion will drag the state into theology and superstition. When members of one faith are recognised as a religion by the state and members of another are not, that is unfair and a violation of secularism. This principle forbids faith schools.

School is for teaching facts not faith and certainly not religious faith

School is for teaching established facts. Religion does not depend on established facts. It is not interested in scientific verification. Therefore religion should not be taught in school. Science comes first. Science stresses experimentation and questioning and getting the facts while religion opposes this approach though it pretends it does not. Science will help us not airy fairy tales. If you want to teach something in a school you should be able to prove its truth.

Even if the Virgin Mary appeared to you right now and said the Roman Catholic Church was the true Church you could not take her word for it for it might be a demon instead. Even the Church says that most revelations said to be from Heaven are dubious. What you would have to do first is make sure that the Catholic Church is the only right religion and not only that but the best. But, that is impossible for all religions make the same claim and sound convincing when you hear their side. To claim to be right in religion is sheer arrogance and wilful blindness. What is happening is the religionists make assumptions and they bend everything to fit them which is a barrier to understanding and sincere respect for other people.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

"If the law starts forbidding religion to recruit children in school and through school then the fundamentalists will get stronger in power for they will gain more followers who fear that the secular world is trying to phase religious faith out."

The fundamentalists themselves often are too cowardly to go out and fight for their beliefs. It is only a vocal minority that do the ranting and the interfering with politics. If we place enough temptation in the way of the fundamentalist, the fundamentalist will soften up.

The state should provide education against fundamentalist propaganda.

The argument if correct proves that moderate religion turns extremist when it meets suppression of any kind. The only answer would be to keep religion out of schools and work out a plan for handling or preventing the turning to extremism. Schools might have to debunk fundamentalism.

It is odd that Pope Francis who encourages fear of the Devil and sees his work everywhere is not classed as a fundamentalist. A person can be fundamentalist in one thing but not another. Too often people are called fundamentalist in an effort to discredit them. Is it really up to the state to decide who is a religious fundamentalist? No that is a religious matter.

"Parents have the obligation to raise their children according to their own religious faith."

They do not. At best they might have the right to decide but there is no obligation.

"Parents have the right to raise their children according to their own religious faith."

It depends. Do parents have the right to teach their children that the Battle of Hastings never happened and was a lie? No. Yet religion claims the right to put belief before fact in history and science. There is no need to raise children in your belief and when rights depend on needs the parents cannot have the right. A parent just needs to make suggestions and show by good example what the right thing to do is.

Another problem is this. Faith schools lead to segregation and sectarianism. If these schools vanish, faith will be taught in the home. This would seem to be even worse than teachers promoting the faith because the parents will often teach the faith poorly or in a bigoted way. This will have its dangers. People need to make up their own minds regarding this matter.

No country has the right to ban children being raised as members of a religion".

Every country has the right to take steps that at least don't encourage religion or its propagation. Indeed, it is a nation's duty to be neutral.

And the notion that a child of six or seven is a Muslim or a Catholic is absurd. It is a lie and dehumanises. Labels dehumanise. That is what they want to do and that is what would happen anyway as a result of them. They cut both ways. It is bad enough to do that to an adult but a child?

CONCLUSION

Religion must not be taught in a recruiting or indoctrinating fashion in schools funded by the state.

Religious indoctrination of children is child-abuse even when the indoctrination seems on the face of it to be pretty harmless. When a child is indoctrinated to accept as true a religion that says her or his parents will go to Hell if they die unrepentant for cohabiting then that is a clear proof that the child is being abused. Nobody has the right to do that to a child and criminal proceedings must be considered against the clergy whose teachings are responsible.

The statutes typically demand that self-esteem be facilitated in schools and educational establishments. Thus it makes no sense for schools to be Christian or Jewish or Islamic. It is against the law for they are about God not self-esteem.

