

Let your child make her or his own faith decisions

For a religion that claims to believe that the Holy Spirit is the only real evangelist and that preachers only bring people to God for they are tools of the Spirit or just the way he chooses to do it, Christianity has strange methods of trying to get and secure believers or at least getting people to act out the part of believers. It has created a link with the state and infected the schools. If it had to let go of all the schools things would be very different. Then people would have a free choice then. They would not be converted or semi-converted by osmosis or indoctrination. One thing for sure is that Christianity does not act like it really thinks God is in charge of attracting people to the faith. A genuinely lovely religion does not need to act the way it does.

Religions like Islam and Mormonism do not see God as evangelist. He does not give grace to guide people into Islam or Mormonism. It is up to man to do the work. Such religions are guaranteed to lead man to promote the religion even if only for cultural or political or contrarian or spiteful reasons.

Initiate your child into no religion. Let them hear about different religions in a way that edifies their own lives and which is irrelevant to them is better. Children will be taught not by word but example about being good. All this ensures that they can make their own decision later in life about faith when they are mature and better able to find out what faith or none suits them the best. Everybody is so different – this respects their freedom. It treats them as people not as objects, promotes thinking for themselves and helps prevent sectarian bigotry from getting a grip on them.

Religion often encourages the vice of credulity. For example, if the apostles satisfied themselves that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead that does not amount to much for they were ordinary men and were not expert psychologists, theologians and scientists. We will not believe them for it is more likely a mistake has been made and/or a lie has been told. If we are going to believe them then we will have to believe all zany tall tales if we are to be fair and consistent. We have seen thousands of examples of people who were more educated and scientifically sophisticated than them who made mistakes. And the first to admit this is the Roman Catholic Church which rejects or ignores the vast majority of apparition claims which educated people smarter than the apostles report and believe in.

There is a lot of harmful religion and harmful spirituality about. The philosophy with the least mysteries, eg how God could be one God in three persons, is the one that children are to be exposed to if any. The less mystery: the more credibility and security.

The view that children need to be entered into a religion instead of being left to do the hard work to find a religion or philosophy that suits them is invalid. It is learning to be good citizens that they need and that is simple. Children are to be encouraged to put people including themselves first and if they want a spirituality to keep it within those boundaries. Children are not being taught that. Any religion that doesn't teach that or stress that is unhealthy religion.

If religion should be at the heart of your life as the command of Christ suggested when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy strength and all thy mind" then it is wrong to discourage searching no matter how hard the searching will be.

Debate and integrity are vital but the problem with people of faith is that often they mistake the brainwashing they got as children and force of habit for faith. I think there are less people of faith in religion and among its leadership that you would realise. If faith is good then what passes largely for faith certainly is not. Real believers would see God as a God of evidence and respect evidence so much that if it led them to atheism or another religion they would comply. Belief should not be equated with closed mindedness. Religion concentrates so much on indoctrinating children that it seems that this is not really about instilling faith but making the children think they have faith and to keep them trapped for life.

Give your child freedom in faith - this affirms the greatness of the child.