

Why Leave your Religion?

If you are better than your religion you should not be in it. Its not being true to yourself.

Everybody who is in a bad or dodgy religion makes the excuse, "If I stay, I can maybe help improve it." Here is another excuse, "Nothing is perfect!" That is all these are - excuses. If you are sure your religion claims to teach the truth and it does not then you are defying God if you believe in him, you are defying honesty and defying truth by staying in it. Start the process of leaving.

People may say they are in a religion for it forms a community. But the huge majority of people are not big into religion. People meeting once a week for worship cannot be called a community. Your community is not a religious one but the one people of different religions and none are part of. And you do not really belong to a religion as a religion if it is only about social amenities for you. Community spirit is no reason to be in religion if the religion is inherently and potentially dangerous or anti-truth.

The Big Reasons

Culture always makes it easy for good people to enable evil and to do evil. People who share a culture and share values and that conditions and intimidates the individual to go along with the culture even if it means denying your fellow-feeling for those who culture targets for demonisation and victimisation. Religion is a form of culture and the strongest form for it pretends to be set up by God. At least if you think your culture is man-made you can campaign for change. Religion is culture in its most toxic form.

Religion is a set of principles - absolute rules or values. It claims that its values are facts not mere opinions and are true no matter who thinks they are wrong.

Religion makes its rules absolute - they are facts not interpretations etc. That is why you should not be in a religion of absolute truths and morals that is wrong. You need to get the values right. It is not about you but about truth.

It is for those principles so by default it is against principles that contradict them. For example, Protestantism claims the ultimate moral principle is realising that salvation is a pure gift from God while another religion will say you have to earn salvation. The principles are in opposition.

It is not the principles that a religion endorses and embodies that matter so much as what it permits. We should ask what a religion permits before we ask what it stands for.

If Catholicism stands for mostly good doctrines, what about the fact that it permits very nasty attacks on heresies, practices and ideas it does not like? It permits Catholics to harass women going into abortion clinics. It permits fake miracle workers to get a hold over people. It permits and approves many bigoted religious publications. I could go on for a month.

If you believe people have a right to their opinion, you have to hold that the reason is that they may think a lot of things that are true or partly true. But the danger of the right is that people might get stuck in nonsense and the opinions risk causing division and risk well-founded beliefs and truths being degraded by being seen as mere opinions. So the less we have to encourage use of the right the better. Religion is the worst culprit when it comes to creating a tyranny of opinion and conflicting opinions and arguments. If religion can be done without then we should do without.

Religion claims it has sacred truths and that religions that contradict these truths are wrong.

People buy its claim because they feel that you cannot research everything and so have to take a lot of stuff on authority, God's authority. When people are told that a heap of doctrine are from God, they are more likely to listen to them and believe them than if the person admits that the doctrines are human and not divine. God supposedly has given doctrinal truths to men to convey to us. This notion leads to a vicious circle - you end up filtering evidence through the eye of your faith so that you cannot absorb any evidence against the faith. You see only the evidence that you want to see because it suits your belief.

Circular reasoning is a sufficient reason not to take a religion seriously and to leave it. And even more so if the religion teaches insulting doctrines, endorses idolatry and is a fan of fake morality.

The notion of sacred truths that you must choose to believe on authority, makes religion a conversation-stopper in so far as you have these truths. Without conversation war is inevitable and cannot be sorted out. Religion leads to war by being a

threat to information and learning through its adherence to its sacred "truths". Religion may claim it has evidence for its claims to be a hospital for sinners and the source of wisdom. Claiming that when there is no evidence is actually better than using evidence selectively and dishonestly. The controversies between those who accept the evidence and those who do not prove that the faith is merely a matter of opinion

Religious people deny that in religion that they don't care about evidence. Yet they will have belief without it. Such belief is arrogance for it is claiming you know that there is evidence when you cannot.

As religion is about truth claims and principles,

-It does not matter how good the members are. If you are really good but your religion is rubbish then you are unwittingly a danger to the truth and those who endanger truth endanger people.

-The truth should make you good to an unusual degree.

-It does not matter how many members think the religion ought to be reformed and changed.

-It does not matter how many people outside the religion think it ought to change and reform.

-It does not matter how enjoyable the worship is.

-It does not matter if your family and friends think you should stay in the religion.

Then if you are sure or know the religion is wrong and that there are more correct religions out there then pack your bags. Be true to yourself and go. It is about truth and not you so go. Do nothing to encourage others to stay in the religion.