

The Need for Litigation Against the Church, Sue the Church

The United Kingdom's, Fraud Act of 2006, decrees that making false representations in order to profit financially is a crime. Thus in principle if not in practice, there is a right to sue a fraudulent religion.

You can sue the Church yes. That is your right. But can you win? That is the most important question. If you are rich you may not care if you lose as long as you have made your point and gained media attention to highlight the issue and the lies told by the Church.

Even atheists who rail against religious or spiritual abuse worry about giving a person the right to sue those who harmed him or her. They hold that atheists may end up in court as well accused of these things. Many believers consider raising a child as atheist to be child abuse.

To protect against abuse, only a selection of cases should be allowed to go forward to avoid opening the floodgates.

And also, the allegation should be well supported by testimony and be of an unusually serious nature. For example, if a picture of Hell is put up in your bedroom to remind you that you must not question the Church despite the affect it has on you. Or if you are beaten up for not going to Mass. Or if the Church sells you a cure for cancer that turns out to be snake oil.

I suppose we need to think of suing as a right in principle if not in practice now.

Should the ex-religionist sue their faith on the basis that they gave it money to support it believing it to be the truth when it was not the truth? Should the Church be made to return the money? If yes then the reason would be that the religion is lies or at least cannot be proven to be the truth. It cannot be proven that a man who says he has painted your house with invisible paint that cannot be sensed is lying. But he can be sued successfully if he promised more than what he delivered. Religion gives you what it guarantees is the truth. Suppose that there is not enough evidence that it is the truth. Real truth stands up. Without sufficient evidence that it is the truth, it is clear that the religion is conning you.

The Plaintiff suing the Church would need to prove that:

- 1 The defendant made certain representations to the plaintiff, presenting them as facts
- 2 In so doing, the defendant intended the plaintiff to believe the representations
- 3 In so doing, the defendant intended the plaintiff to part with something of value
- 4 The representations made by the defendant were false
- 5 The defendant knew, at the time of making the representations, that they were false
- 6 The plaintiff, relying on those representations, parted with something of value
- 7 The plaintiff, in so relying, was acting reasonably
- 8 The plaintiff suffered damage as a result

1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 could be established by the plaintiff. There is some difficulty with 4, 5 and 7.

4 has a few difficulties. The Courts usually refuse to declare any religious belief to be true. Getting it to declare a religious belief to be false is near-impossible. But that will change as secularism grows more powerful and more regarded by society. The stance of the courts is unacceptable. The Christians produce many books on the resurrection claiming that the evidence for the resurrection would stand up in court. If they are so confident then they should campaign for change. For the Catholic, Mormonism is a counterfeit of Christianity. Would the Church not want the court to be able to prove that? If the Catholic Church is the true Church it has the copyright on Jesus. Then the Bible is its book and not the Protestants or the Mormons. The religions should be suing one another!

One seeming problem with the question of religious belief being true, is that you cannot put this question before a jury. The

jury would need to consist of philosophers and theologians for that to make sense. But if a jury can work out if an organisation is lying why should religion be exempt?

Some say another problem is that the suit is really an attack on religious beliefs. But why not see it not as an attack on religious beliefs but as standing up for the truth?

It is feared that Church lawyers might argue that you joined or accepted the religion not because of facts but because of its spiritual claims. If that happens and you can't prove them wrong then the court can do nothing. Spiritual stuff is very subjective.

It can be inferred from spiritual claims that the faith is unreasonable and fanciful and has no concern for facts. No faith can afford to make such an inference. Each faith wants to be seen as sensible and concerned with evidence for any faith that is not is plainly immoral and deceitful and causing unnecessary separation and division in society. Much religion teaches that spirituality is useless unless backed up by facts. Catholicism would say that baptism is worthless if Jesus never rose from the dead. Spirituality that comes from believing lies is held to be false spirituality. So even if the lawyers say the religion made religious and spiritual claims to you but not factual ones it shouldn't be a problem. They should lose for they are virtually saying the religion is false! A religion that makes hard demands on your intellect and emotions and life in general and has no evidence to support its claim to be divine revelation simply can't be true!

Religious claims is another term for spiritual claims.

5 is widely thought to be open to the problem that you can't prove that the people who converted you to the religion knew it was false and were lying to you. They won't admit it if they were lying. They would be lying to you if they suspected it was untrue as well.

But if you think about many religious doctrines such as the sin is hateful and the sinner is not you can see the faith is based on self-deception. To hate the sin and not the sinner is to pretend that the sin is an entity. It is not. Actions are not entities. The doer of the action is the entity. The sinner is the sin. It is just a language device that talks about the sin as if it were not the sinner. In so far as you hate the sin you hate the sinner.

Think about how people tend to imagine they believe in religion just because they were born into it. That shows faith to be self-deception. They mistake assumptions and things taken for granted for beliefs. There is a huge difference.

Another proof is how religionists hoard wealth despite religion being against it and saying that hoarding the wealth is starving the poor.

Another proof of the deceit of religion is how religion can make extreme and extraordinary claims without backing them up with proof. The more bizarre or extraordinary the claim is, the more extraordinary the quality and perhaps quantity of evidence you need to back it up.

Religion claims to be a form of love. This claim is easily disproven.

The self-deceiver who promotes his faith of self-deception lies to themselves and others.

If you accuse the religion of lying, is it up to the religion to prove it was not lying or up to you to prove that it was lying? It is up to you for you are the Plaintiff.

The court will often have defendants who lie but nobody can prove it. But they can still be found guilty of lying if their lies are absurd or very implausible. Then the court assumes they are lying even though it cannot prove it. Religion can be found guilty of lying on that basis.

With 7 there is the problem of how you can say the religion that converted you tricked you if you had access to books and the internet where you can discover refutations of its claims. In that case you were a fool and fooled yourself or let yourself be fooled. It can be said that the law was not intended to protect fools from their own stupidity. That is a valid point. It cannot be applied to children. It cannot be applied to people in poorer parts of the world who are the victims of religion. They can't get access to correct information about why the faith is wrong. You should be able to sue your religion for lying to you when you were a child when that lying did you harm. If you suffered from psychological problems or schizophrenia or bipolar disorder and religion got into your system you have a case for arguing that it took advantage of you. Very old people as well would have a good case for claiming to have been fooled by the Church.

If people are fooled by the Church and they can sue the Church, should spouses sue their husbands or wives for fooling them into marriage? Would people suing everybody not clog up the legal system? If they pay for the cases themselves the

legal system will make a profit and there will soon be courts everywhere. There are not enough court cases anyway in this anarchic society of ours. The legal system gives us all the right to sue for slander even if it means there will be a deluge of such suits. It is only fair. Suing religion for fraud will only be allowed up to a point. It is important for religion to be called to account for the sake of a principle. But as religious fraud is so common, the state has to be selective so that there are not too many court cases.

The Roman Catholic Church is one religion that says that if you do not pay money for the support of the Church you will suffer for it forever in Hell. One of the commandments of the Church is, "To contribute to the support of our pastors." The Church has its own set of commandments. To break them seriously is to commit a mortal sin. For example, if you give no money to the Church it's a serious sin and so deserves Hell.

So anyway it's either pay up or risk hellfire. Is this extortion?

Some say it is not. They might point to the example of an insurance seller who says to you that if you do not buy his policy your family could starve when you die.

But we need insurance. We do not need the Roman Catholic Church. Many spiritual people manage well without it.

We know the insurance seller is telling the truth. We cannot know that there is a Hell. Thus the insurance seller is not threatening us but informing us. The Church is threatening us not just as much as the insurance seller would be if he said he would return some day to burn out our car if we didn't purchase insurance from him. It is threatening us far more!

We would consider a Satanist to be extorting money if he said he was going to curse you if you didn't pay up. This would indeed be a crime! The Roman Catholic Church is doing worse. What worse extortion could there be than saying God might take your life and damn you to Hell forever for your sin of neglecting to pay the Church is so serious? If that is not extortion then what is?

It seems that you would need to convince the Court that it was reasonable for you to believe what the Church was saying about everlasting hell starting at death and that it is the fate of those who do not pay money to the Church.

If God really runs the Church, he can look after it. The Church can look after itself. There is just no excuse for any religion teaching that failing to pay it money is a serious sin that deserves Hell. It is vindictive never mind extortionate! So it is not reasonable for you. You have silenced your horse sense!

If we forget that, it would be impossible to prove that it is reasonable for you to believe for religion is not reasonable. The Christian religion claims to be reasonable. Suppose you want to sue it. It would be unable to tell its lawyers to try and defeat your case on the basis that you were behaving unreasonably by joining it or sticking with it if you were initiated as a child.

A child or poor person or person who is not very well educated can argue that they reasonably stuck with religion and believed its lies. They must be given the right to sue especially when they have been threatened by the religion with hellfire if they don't "contribute to the support of their pastors".

The courts will see a person who was part of say a big Catholic community as acting reasonably when believing in and paying to the Church. It is not reasonable. It can't be reasonable to follow a Church or religion just because everybody else in your locality does. The Catholic Church claims to be a reasonable faith or a faith that makes sense. It cannot agree then that the Hindu is being sensible in following the Hindu religion just because his village does it. However, the courts will not blame a person for being fooled by the Church when they are part of it because everybody else is and they are copying their example.

Class Action

A class action means when a group of people with much the same complaint sue the defendant. This would be a good route to take when suing the Church. It is best to have a group bearing the legal costs rather than one person in case the suit will be lost.

The Church will fight hard if sued for causing distress, teaching misleading doctrine, extortion and fraud and can afford very good lawyers - better ones than the plaintiffs. But if the Church is sued where there is great hostility to religion the Church would be bound to lose. The best lawyers cannot save it if it is guilty and it can be proven. It could be easily proven in Court for example that the Bible is not infallible and that the Church is lying by calling it the word of God and the truth. It is just a matter of looking at the text.

A lot of people are damaged by the Church. The lawsuits would cripple the legal system so it is best to limit prosecutions to maybe five dissimilar and disturbing cases per year. The main purpose should be to highlight how dangerous religion is.

Proof that the Suit can be won!

The state cannot assume any religion to be true for the state is not about looking after religion but the people. Religion must be treated by civil law as a human creation. Religion had a lot of influence over the state in the past and there are some residues of that in the law. That is why religion can get special treatment.

Children or naive people or disturbed people who are damaged by the Roman Catholic should be able to sue the Church for damages.

People damaged by the lies of the Church are reluctant to take the Church to court as the Church can afford better lawyers than they can. Also they are afraid that their neighbours will think they are weird. In fact, the only reason the Church does not destroy more people is because many of its members who think they believe do not believe and haven't noticed. If the parish priest really thought you were going into grave danger of everlasting Hell say by taking a homosexual lover or joining the Jehovah's Witnesses he would at least go to your door and ask you if he could talk things over with you. Yet he claims to believe that you are going into such danger. The Bible commands the ministers of the Church to snatch the erring from the flames - see the Epistle of Jude. If the priest really believed in Hell - not just thought there was a Hell - he would be at your door begging and pleading with tears in his eyes. Most religious people mistake feelings for faith. Also, if you have evidence for something you may still only think it is true, assume it is true, not believe it is true. This makes it all the more confusing.

None of that absolves the Church when true believers come along and are destroyed by their faith.

Small sects can be sued and often are. But just because the Church is big and powerful doesn't give it an exemption! It is disturbing how Catholicism and Protestantism and Mormonism were strongest and most popular when they spat hatred and vengeance and worshipped at the throne of a shocking fundamentalism. When they calmed down they were deserted in droves and the remaining people had little fervour. Jesus was very scathing and sarcastic and threatened those who didn't please him with everlasting torment and all this, according to the gospels, didn't impair his popularity.

Freedom of religion should not mean that abusive religions should get away with it.

Freedom of speech should not mean that anything at all can be said with impunity. Say what you will but be aware that somebody has the right to sue you for saying it. It is not a crime to use or misuse freedom of speech but it can lead to you being sued for damages.

Criminal law and civil law are different. If you commit murder you will be subject to criminal law. If you libel somebody you have not committed a crime. The victim however can sue you for damages under civil law. We encourage people to take civil cases against the Church. That is the best way to expose the Church for what it really is.

By the Church we mean the priests and bishops and nuns who make and promote Catholic teaching.

The Church is totally arrogant. It does not say, "We are so sure of our rules and their goodness. Keep them and if they fail sue us!"

We suppose it can't afford to encourage people!

Finally

It is vital that religion, especially Christianity and Islam, be fought in the courts and brought to their knees. They will fight back viciously and even cause bloodshed but they are bullies. Being nice to them will not stop them being potential bullies. Leaving them alone and giving them rights they should not have only postpones the trouble. To placate bullies by giving them their own way only makes them more willing to trample on those who see through them. Give the religions no money, get your name off their membership records and sever yourself from their religious practices. Without money they will crumble. Take what you deserve off them and give them nothing.

Instead of religion we must have self-esteem. Anything that indicates that Jesus Christ was more special than us, ie that he is Son of God and/or God or that such and such is a saint and God does miracles through this person is offensive to those trying to benefit themselves and society by possessing self-esteem.