

Religion will never disappear from the earth but it can be drastically diminished in size and power

I hate the view that what views others have is nobody else's business in the sense that you have no right to give them the opportunity to think differently. Of course you do. I am not talking about persuading others - but inviting them to think for themselves. Christianity does claim that what others think is its business and that it has the right to persuade. If a Christian does not interfere with the beliefs of others, she still thinks that in principle she should. So atheists are entitled to enter into discussion with Christians and hope that they will abandon if not the faith then the more nasty aspects of that faith. I do wish Christians could find a way to excise the nasty books from the Bible.

Some people are better than their religion. Christianity needs to be judged not by them but by what its evil scriptures say. That is the bottom line. To ignore this is to promote the danger. If somebody like George Bush endorses war on religious grounds over the Bible then those who have been silent out of respect for Christianity share in what he has done. Challenge Christianity with gentleness and reason now and do not wait until something terrible happens.

Religion will never disappear from the earth. I would like to see potentially and actually dangerous forms of religion such as Catholicism which says a rapist with a condom on sins more than one that does not vanish and be replaced by more humanitarian faiths such as Lingayatism or Bahaism or Quakerism. I detest the doctrine of Hell which accuses us of being potentially bad enough to freely stay in Hell forever hating God and everybody else. Whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty? And there is the matter of how Jesus Christ is worshipped despite (allegedly) claiming to be the author of the Old Testament which commanded and threatened the Hebrews to murder people by stoning for sins that were relatively minor.

I don't think religion in the sense that all members agree with it and really and fully believe in it has ever existed. What you really have is people with their own private faith and beliefs coming together under an umbrella such as Catholicism. I think the religious power system can be destroyed by reason and truth and science and that will change religion into a safer and more individual thing. Then again there will always be religious fanatics whether religion becomes community based or private. You cannot get rid of the risks completely but there is no harm in trying. If a religion is man-made it deserves no more respect than any human idea does.

Ignoring the disease we call religion is a means of promoting it.

Knowing it cannot be totally eradicated does not mean we shouldn't try.