

Re: Irish Times saying that New Age rubbish is awful and Christianity has better intellectual depth

The fact of the matter is that Christian thinkers found that the Bible wasn't terribly helpful in matters of ethics and intellectual depth. The Summa of St Thomas is not in the Bible. Newman said that the Bible was merely meant to give the faith some historical basis but not great as a teaching tool for doctrine and spirituality. For that you needed the wisdom of the Church. In reality what you have is the discoveries made by clever thinkers who identify as Christians that may or may not fit the real teaching of Jesus. They are put out there enough to make the whole system look smart and coherent. But is it really? The Bible makes terrible errors including offering horrendous evidence for the resurrection of Christ.

Scientists are said to be content with not knowing things. But scientists think that doubt is better than being certain about things that are in fact wrong. Christianity is inherently and in practice against this principle for it puts forward ideas that cannot be tested and it cannot make predictions about what to expect if theories are true. Even if a theory is not science science expects those who propose the theory to get fulfilled predictions out of it. Theories are about predictions for they have to be testable.

“If people can have their needs met without religion, they often will.” I would add that religion is a blockade to many who wish to openly live without it or without one or more of its biggest restrictions. If people fall away from religion and God easier and in bigger numbers the more their social and economic needs are looked after that is scary. It is because unmet social and economic needs can lead to aggression and war.

Secularism rejects faith in God and religion as political forces. Religion usually affirms them and that is why they are so dangerous. A country with secular voices is easier to run than one that is made up of religious voices. Catholicism only got to be so powerful because of its past and current marriage with politics. To become Catholic is to avail of that toxic relationship and insult all who suffered from it.

Religious beliefs that seem to help a person cope may not be helping at all. The content of the belief may do nothing but what you believe about it may help. Also people can mistake things that are not religious or to do with God for God so rather than lose faith they see more clearly

Helping a person to see through their faith respects them as a person who can make the right decisions and learn. It treats them as an adult. Now they are free from error and that is good for error leads to error in two ways. Error

As Lindsay puts it, “A stopped clock, they say is right twice a day, but a correctly functioning clock set to the wrong time is never right.” Being wrong for the right reasons is hugely superior to being right for the wrong reasons. Also if that happens it is easier to get out of the errors.

Lindsay recommends like Peter Boghossian that if you know somebody is in error with their faith you can ask them how they know what they claim to know for that makes them open to revising those beliefs. I would add that it is important to get them to see first that belief should be based on evidence and to ask them what evidence they have for their belief and why they think the evidence supports it. You could ask them to think of evidence that might uproot their faith.