

## CASE FOR HOLDING THAT DEVOTEES OF GOD ARE RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL EGOISTS

### CHURCH PRETENDS TO MAKE SACRIFICES

The Bible teaches that we are psychological egoists and naturally selfish until the Lord gives us a new birth that frees us from all that. Emil Brunner wrote, "One is compelled to say that, there is no one wholly good - there is a flaw in each person of which one must say, there he fails. But most people are in-between, a little more inclined to good, or a little more inclined to evil, according to their natures. This view of the matter is quite correct, it is indeed necessary. But the Bible speaks differently. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "For all have sinned". In that passage Paul does not imply that even the best have somewhere some little evil flaw. On the other hand, "all" means that fundamentally all are in the same condition, namely bad. For "a sinner" does not signify that there is something bad in him, as a splendid apple may have a little bad speck that can be removed with a twist of the paring knife, so that you can scarcely see that anything has been cut out. No, by a sinner the Bible means "bad at heart", infected with evil at the core. "All are sinners" does not mean that even the best are not quite saints. It means rather that the difference between so-called good and so-called bad no longer comes into consideration." How is this view to be reconciled with what we first characterised as correct? That is not hard to say. We have spoken of what holds true among men, and there it is true so far as human affairs go. But before God the matter is otherwise. Sin is a depravity that has laid hold on us all. It is a radical perversion from God, disloyalty to the Creator who has given us so much and remains so loyal, an insulting alienation from Him, in which all of us, without exception, have shared" (page 41,42, Our Faith, SCM Limited, London, 1956).

Many dispute the assertion that we are all self-centred and only help others when it benefits us in some way or fulfils us. I don't think they would dispute that the Bible teaches that we are certainly self-centred when it comes to God. They would agree then that we are selfish with God but kind with others at least sometimes. They believe in Religious Psychological Egoism.

Do you do good because it is good or because you want to help? There is a difference. Doing it because it is good implies you do because it fits your abstract idea of good. Doing it because you want to help is about the person. The two kinds of good are different. It is similar to the religious complaint that many people make idols of the truths about God but never really connect to him. They adore the truths and do not have a relationship with God. Same principle - the difference between good the abstract and good the good. Doing it because you want to help is an atheistic or humanistic value. It implies that God is irrelevant and that bringing God into it is bringing in clutter.

The Christian faith is clear that this rejection of God is grossly evil and sinful. Jesus said we must love God wholly and totally and that this is the main commandment. Jesus said that failing to do this means you are selfish. You deny God his rights by putting yourself on the divine throne. You are not allowed to intend to help people but to benefit the principle of good. This may benefit people but it is not what it is all about.

Does doing good because it is good imply you are being an egoist? What is good? To do good because it is good is to do it because of an abstract principle. As we have seen, that excludes doing it not because it is good but because it helps a person. It is therefore selfish.

To judge what is good is always egoistic for you must put what you know or think you know first. Therefore when you do good you are always being an egoist.

We never put anybody first. We always put our beliefs first. Suppose I help you. I have to believe I am not dreaming. I have to believe you are a person just like me and not some mirage or robot made of flesh that doesn't know its alive at all but just acts alive. I have to believe that I have an idea of how to help you.

Sin according to believers is the root of all evil and suffering. So they say we should never be happy about sin or unconcerned about it. We should hate it. Hate is not the opposite of love for indifference is. To hate sin is to love it a bit and a sin in itself. You have to love something or somebody enough to hate them. Hate is considered selfish. If so then even hating sin is selfish. Not caring about sin is also selfish - indifference is embraced and endorsed for the sake of a cushy peace. Egoism is verified.

If virtue is its own reward you will never know if your motive was unselfish or how unselfish. Then it should be assumed that you are selfish then. We don't assume people who are paid for their good work are altruists. So if a person may get a reward from God or think they will then assume that they are selfish.

The proper attitude is that when you help another, that it is great to be able to help them and be the kind of person that helps. This is the translation of what "virtue is its own reward" means. Belief in God is a block to the proper attitude.

Which one of the following is self-centred and is motivated about helping you and not others?

1 I want to give to feed the hungry. Many people would say this is selflessness.

2 I want to please myself by giving to feed the hungry. Everybody would agree that this is not selflessness so it must be selfishness. Selfishness can look like compassion and kindness. In this case, you help not because of the hungry people but because you want to please yourself.

2 would be better than 1 for it is more encouraging. It makes helping others its own reward.

When somebody is in danger, your helping them is more important than your motive for helping them. The Christian obsession with motives is actually selfish. It says, "My spiritual development and what is in my heart is more important than helping others." Christians say they do not teach that if you have an improper or bad motive for helping somebody that you should refrain from helping them. They say that not helping would make you a worse person not a better one. This is incoherent. If the heart comes first then it follows that hypothetically speaking at least, it is better not to help if your motive is bad.

Having good motives do not stop you being a bad person. Jack the Ripper may have had good motives in murdering prostitutes ie, to rid the street of women who were spreading killer venereal disease, women who were probably better off dead and gratifying an emotional need he couldn't control but he was still bad.

The problem of good is: is this action good because God or the law or my boss or my conscience says it is good or is it good in itself? This problem comes up whether you believe in God or not. Religion says that evil is really just good that is in the wrong place. The knife is good but used incorrectly by the person who stabs you. Thus it follows that you are supposed to simply see good and then work out if it implies a God instead of working out that there is a God and then working out if good exists. We do see good as a brute fact and so we are naturally selfish in the eyes of God and towards God.

If a banker takes a big bonus we do not consider them to be altruistic in doing so. The bonus is a temporary reward for the bankers cannot take it with them when they die. Why then should we consider people who believe that God is watching them do good and will reward them as altruistic? In fact they are more suspect than the bankers. Jesus said that if you do good when you want others to see it then you are selfish and deserve no reward from God. Same idea!

From a humanistic or atheist point of view, looking after your father to get his money is fine if you performed your role as carer very well. They argue this on the basis that the result is more important than the motive.

Selfish does not necessarily mean bad. It doesn't matter if you are selfish or not. What matters is being good.

Altruism is selfish and unworkable for it demands that others disregard their own needs for others.

Not letting others be altruistic must be a sin if altruism is good and holy. Thus you should let others carry you about and act like slaves towards you. This is not selfish as long as it is motivated by your concern for their spiritual and altruistic development and evolution.

Can't choose altruism - therefore your selfishness counts as altruism

The fact that I would not go to the horrific torment for all eternity if God asked me so that two other people could be spared it shows that I am mainly selfish. Some think they might be able to do it. But it is easy to kid yourself when you know that it isn't going to happen. Indeed it is mockery to do it. Also, when you are that selfish that you would send others to everlasting torment how can you expect people to trust you when you say you do not wish that sinners will suffer in Hell forever?

Adults tend to believe that the worse the damage done the more responsible the person behind it was. For example, if you bump your car into another car it's a mistake but if you cause a pile-up and people end up in hospital you are responsible and indeed blameworthy.

If I see a house on fire and decide to run in and save a person trapped inside at grave risk to my own life and well-being am I altruistic? Suppose I have a gene that is making me prepared to run in. If I run in I am doing the wrong thing. I should be trying to live so that I can procreate and make a new generation that may carry the gene or pass it own to countless

generations.

The Church says that being selfish is bad. The Church advocates self-sacrifice.

If it is famine time and I give my last loaf away to a beggar, I am selfish if I do this to gratify my desire to help. It is the desire not the beggar I care about. People who believe that everybody is an egoist say that we all help just to gratify our wish to help.

Society holds that an action is good if the main motivation is unselfish. It says that you can have a mixture of motives for what you do some of which will be selfish and some of which will be unselfish.

This is arbitrary. If a motive is bad it is bad. The quantity makes no difference. If it does then you have to say that is okay to steal small amounts from your friend all the time. Suppose your main motive is to help another person. Suppose you have a lesser motive to maybe get that person into bed and exploit her or him. Then why should it matter that you want to help the person more than exploit the person? Wanting to help does not make it right to want to exploit the person.

The Catholic Church corrupts people. It is so difficult to be really sure that your actions were altruistic. It is difficult enough to be altruistic as it is without the Church coming along with doctrines about rewards in the afterlife. The carrot of heavenly rewards makes Catholics develop a selfish attachment to their faith. That is why when the faith is disproven before a priest the priest will still support the Church and teach the faith.

It is true that the believers could be doing good out of selflessness assuming selflessness really is possible. But their goodness should be more suspect than that of the atheist who expects no reward in the afterlife or much of a reward in this life. As self-centredness is more natural to us than selflessness it would be clear we should assume there is an ulterior motive when Catholics help us. Atheists who believe that there is no God to give them a reward for philanthropic actions are entitled to be considered to be more selfless than believers in God. We all know that we can believe we are doing something completely unselfish when there is actually a selfish motive behind it all. It can be so difficult to discern. Believing God will reward us makes it harder to. The motives of believers should be suspected more than the motives of unbelievers.

If virtue is its own reward then there is no need for a God to reward right and wrong and there is no need to look for it

All religious activity is egoism. Psychological egoism is disputed. But when people undertake religious functions such as prayer or good deeds for God and develop what they call their faith that is always egoism. We know RELIGIOUS Psychological Egoism is true.

The apostle wrote that he and his cronies never looked for any special honour from the people even though they could because they were apostles of Christ (1 Thessalonians .) This is saying that they have a right to special honour.

We all choose the jobs we choose so to feel more important in life. Priests feel important and claiming to be servants of the maker of the universe is the greatest self-glorification possible.

Clergy get a buzz from being obeyed. They promote irrational beliefs and they enjoy turning people into fools. The Church is to blame when an old person falls on ice going to Mass for the Church thrives on manipulating the vulnerable.

Jesus told the Pharisees and the scribes that they would go over land and sea to make a convert and he ends up twice as bad as themselves (). He fully realised that human nature is capable of seeming very holy and altruistic for bad reasons. It is a slap at the Catholic view that you can know if a person is holy and maybe declare them a saint.

Even if it is possible to practice morality based on conscience and reason mainly instead of having it mainly based on feelings and emotions, the fact remains that most of us base our moral opinions on our feelings more than on anything else. This betrays our hypocrisy. What hypocrites we are.

Some people are psychological egoists. They believe that all people who do good for others are doing it for themselves not others. I argue that once you accept believe in God or Christianity, you become an egoist. You are a Religious Psychological Egoist.