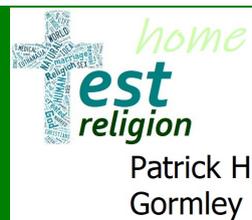




Does challenging superstition or faith protect people?
 Is it mistaken to support organised religion in membership or donations?

If people do good because they are human, not because God prompts them,
 is it right to risk giving God any credit when they alone own their good?



Relativism and Truth

An objective view of reality refers to something that is true and what I think or don't know has nothing to do with making it or helping it to be true. Even God cannot change truth. Relativism denies these obvious truths.

There are two forms of relativism.

One claims that there is no truth. Truth is the lie and the lie is truth.

Two claims that there is no absolute truth.

What is the difference? The first is relativist in all truth claims. The latter is not. It holds that truth does exist but in matters such as God or ethics nothing is completely or absolutely true. The arguers for it would depend on the parable of the blind men and the elephant. The blind man who feels its tail and thinks an elephant is a rope has some truth but not absolute truth.

In practice, whether extreme or not, relativism is the view that if you believe something that makes it true. It is true in Islam that Jesus was not God and its true in Christianity that he is. It denies that truth is about reality and facts.

One form of relativism is that moral codes are just personal moral codes not absolute truths. Most of these relativists are mistaken in thinking that they are really moral relativists. The notion that a moral rule is right for me and not for you is not necessarily a relativist notion. It can be. Abortion if wrong is not wrong for a man for a man cannot carry a baby. It is morally right for me to administer euthanasia for I think I am sure it is right. But it is wrong for me to do that if I know it is wrong. But that only means not that relativism is right but that it is a moral fact that I have to follow my conscience even if it is wrong and I am sincerely mistaken.

Relativists tend to confuse moral laxity and permissiveness with relativism. That is what is happening with nearly all relativists. To say it is wrong for John to cheat on me and then to say it would be okay for him if he were married to somebody else is just selfishness and permissiveness not relativism. In fact you are still saying that there is no moral dispute and shouldn't be that, "John cheating on me is wrong."

Relativism is not hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is a different thing. Yet hypocrisy dresses itself up as relativism.

If abortion is murderously wrong for you you cannot stop another person who thinks abortion is okay from having one. You cannot vote against legalising abortion in a referendum. A personal moral code is really just another way of dressing up personal tastes as morality. This morality is not really morality at all. It ignores the notion of moral obligation. It would suggest that you are not obliged to help a sick dog when you can easily do so but if you feel like it then it is morally good.

Relativists who say there is no truth must mean it is the truth that there is no truth. If you say it is true that there is no truth then you have to mean that there is one truth: that there is no other truth. So it is an absolute truth that there is no truth besides that one meaning you have to stand by it and take it with you into your politics. It will end up forced on the people.

Relativists that claim to believe there is no truth are in fact in practice living out the notion that the only truth that there is no truth. Saying there is no truth does not meet its own standard. It is thus nonsense.

Now a question. If relativism is saying there is only one truth or one absolute truth where does that leave version two the modified version which says truth does exist but there is no absolute truth in religion or morals?

The modified version is an illusion. It looks modified but is even worse than saying the only thing that is true is that there is

no truth. If there is no absolute truth then there is no truth at all - period. If there is no absolute truth then there is nothing absolutely wrong about saying it is true that there is no truth even if it is not true.

To say there is no truth is better than saying, "Something is true when I want it to be true." Now when you say that you are still saying there is no truth at all. But you are also saying that truth should be followed and respected. It is better to be an incoherent defender of truth than one who denies there is truth.

Relativism makes it impossible to have a sensible discussion or debate with a relativist. It is the most frustrating thing and they have no regard for consistency.

No relativist will hold that a person who thinks killing people is nothing compared to killing ants just has a different code of morality as good as anybody else's. They will see that person as sick and somehow less than a human being. In condemning that person they condemn themselves for they make a parody of morality and judge the person from that travesty of morality they have.

Relativistic people cherry-pick what community to uphold and what community standards to uphold. Comment on a community they arbitrarily protect they will tell you to mind your own business. They have no right to preach relativism or apply it if what any community or community subsection does is none of their business. The relativist may say FGM is none of his business but will hypocritically oppose an anti-abortion activist. They invent rights for themselves that their philosophy says they can't and shouldn't have. The rights are not rights as such but attempts to impose control on others.

Roger Scruton writes that the relativist is "absolutist against authority." So a relativist is just blind. Even then they are inconsistent for they turn themselves and those who think like them into an authority.

NOTES

Saying there is no truth does not meet its own standard.

Saying there is no moral truth does not meet its own standard either for it says its a lie to say morality exists. Morality assumes that values such as love and justice are values because they are true.

Saying there is no religious truth does meet its own standard. It can be true that no supernatural claims are true. It can be true that we don't need core religious things such as praying or the hope of an afterlife. It can be true that these things are only nonsense so we don't need them. We need the truth. A person may cherish their nonsensical religion based around an allegedly divine piece of rock as much as the **pope cherishes his more philosophical "sophisticated" version. People worry about whether fairness is really good or love is really good but pleasure and pain are our masters. We cannot get away from that and that is why it does not matter if we believe in the two principles of love and justice or not. If you hurt you will bring hurt on yourself. That is how it works.**

Stressing supernatural beliefs and Gods above truth and ethics and morality is just another way of making truth and moral truth fail to meet their own standards.

Even making truth equal to moral truth is doing that. In fact truth comes first. Moral truth comes second for it can have no validity without truth being truth.