

HOW RELIGION CAN SET THE STAGE FOR VIOLENCE

Public religion is cosmetic. The cosmetic is used to hide something dark

Religion does not sit well with choice and freedom. This is a form of violence in itself and leads to people being actually killed.

Some Ways Religion leads to violence

- By "love". People who are doing grave evil feel supported by you when you know what they do and are nice to them. That is the reality nobody wants to confess. People don't need constant assurance that they are right. They need a friend or two to encourage them at least once and that equips them to feel others indirectly support them by seeming not to care. It is easier to do bad if everybody around you is just nice to you regardless. And don't forget you can feel God is just as kind!

- By de-sensitisation. Christians engage in a lot of hatred and violence on the internet and in video games and by what they watch on television. They use the idea of sins murdering Jesus to accuse even children of murdering Jesus. Adultery is equated with murder for killing a soul. Masturbation is the sin of suicide against your own soul. The idea is you "lose" your soul to God through serious sin. Why do they want de-sensitisation?

-By pretending that all that matters is a religion not being essentially violent. But that does not mean it is essentially peaceful either! It could go either way! We are not told that though!

-By pretending that any essentially violent religion is not essentially violent or by pretending religion is somehow immune to being violent and condoning violence and making violence out to be a sacred dogma. Claiming that the violence is based on a misunderstanding is assuming that those who founded the religion and gave it its doctrines were well-meaning. That is not necessarily true. They may say that you should talk to the most reasonable exponents of the religion before you dismiss it as essentially dangerous and evil. But what if these people do not follow their religion correctly? They may say that there are many ways of being a Christian or Muslim so you cannot say which professing Christian or Muslim represents true Christianity or true Islam. This is exactly the problem - what if the bad ones are in fact the perfect Christians or Muslims? And if a religion is man-made it is nonsense to say it is essentially non-violent for human beings are all capable of violence. Saying any religion is inherently good leads one to deny the role the faith taught by the religion has played in forming religious warmongers and terrorists.

-By teaching that you must not deliberately expose yourself to anything that makes you doubt the teachings that the divine supposedly gave to the religion. The more you try to conceal and avoid doubting thoughts the more frequent and intense the unwanted craving to doubt is going to be. Suppressing it only makes you mad at those who you see as threats to your faith and turns you into a bothersome person who only sees what she wants to see.

- By insulating faith from being challenged by facts and evidence - for example, Christians say that God answers your prayers but not in the way you necessarily expect so when you get an antibiotic instead of the bike you asked for this proves that prayer works! But this is merely a rationalisation and is about shielding the alleged efficacy of prayer from critique. But if this is done the tools for its justification are lost as well. Truth is put at risk meaning there is an undercurrent of hatred, sometimes latent, for those who serve the truth and those who believe end up exploited and treated like objects.

-By teaching that evil violent books are God's word. A book that is not violent but is open to pro-violence interpretations is still to blame for any violence done by believers. A really edifying book takes pains to avoid giving any impression to readers that violence is okay or necessary.

-By making the more peaceful interpretation of those books a mere matter of opinion or preference meaning that if you follow it your trust in it will be weak and those co-religionists who crave war will see you as sufficiently though reluctantly opening the door in principle to their nasty interpretations. Holy books that are from God will minimise as much as possible the need for interpretation. They are not plain enough. Thus any violence that is defended by appealing to their statements is their fault for it should be clearer.

-By teaching that other religions or secularists are the enemy

-By teaching that if God commands violence we must obey for he knows best and he uses evil to bring good out of it. Even to internalise this principle is bad. It says something about you. Non-violent believers accept this violent principle hypothetically but that makes the filth in their hearts no less real.

-By prayer. Prayer is making yourself feel you have done good when you have not. People who like prayer get that buzz.

That is why they like prayer. It has led to the extraordinary spectacle of terrorists and abortionist Catholics coping with the evil they do by saying prayers.

-By motivating terrorists through encouraging its members to think they are part of God's plan and God's plan does include tolerating violence for he is said to let evil happen for his and our own ultimate good. Terrorists do not use a proper military strategy to defeat whoever they are against but they do it recklessly in order to make a religious or political point and to make society feel endangered and threatened. Without religion there would just be the political point to worry about and though the state will act against terrorists who claim to act in its name religion refuses to disown its terrorists.

- By using the No True Scotsman fallacy to get away with evil and to keep the ideology strong and put people into denial that it is harmful. It easily becomes or encourages the No True Nationalist attitude. What does the notion that religion is essentially good mean? It may mean the core is good but is a core really good when it slots itself in a heap of excrement? Or it may mean that religion is always good and that whoever does bad in the name of religion is not being a religious person even if they pray as they kill babies. And it denies the truth that working out what is good can be messy dangerous business meaning there is a risk with our moral and religious systems.

-If you worship God you necessarily worship a being who gives many people violent genes, and who gives everybody genes that make them enjoy the misfortunes of another, and who is ultimately responsible for the existence of political institutions. Religion and faith in God involve YOU taking responsibility for worshipping such a God and approving of the evil he creates. And if there is no God the responsibility is yours by proxy. Do not add insult to injury by saying that no truly religious person would condone or do violence. They have to and there are countless examples. Some say that faith in God or gods is not to be blamed for religious violence and that God or the gods cause the violence and inspire it in the belligerent. I don't know how they expect to be taken seriously.

-If you believe in a perfectly good God, you must say that evil is good that is used wrongly. So evil becomes the absence of good. Violence becomes the absence of peace. Peace usually is not real peace but just war not happening. Too often, peace means that people are experiencing good conditions but is it real peace? It is only provisional peace until the good things they have are threatened and then war breaks out. And each religious country blesses its favourites with peace. Many groups are left out of the equation. Another difficulty is that if a religion or group is considered pacifist, it may not wage war but it makes up for it by battering children and wives and spewing hatred. Such groups are no better than the non-pacifists or the population in general. And religion creates new "needs" to get aggressive and protective about - eg, a non-religious nation will persecute missionaries who enter it to bring in another religion. Lucretius noted that once you start needing and craving beyond the bare necessities you start taking baby steps to becoming a warmonger.

-Many faiths such as Christianity believe that Jesus will war one day against the evildoers. They may claim to be non-violent but that is a lie. They love deferred violence.

-The notion that you can wage war in God's name and be assured that God will protect you or will not retaliate (at least not much!) if you think the war is lawful when it is not can encourage you to maim and kill. And more importantly, it SHOULD.

-In many cases, violence WOULDN'T have taken place without religion. It proves that religion is not immune to causing strife and would cause it. But even if the violence would have taken place without the religion, what does that say about the religion? That it would cause it even if it does not.

-In many cases, violence COULDN'T have taken place without religion.

-Religion is to blame for violence when the amount of the violence or the number of the violent is above what is normal statistically and when any other possible cause has been shown unlikely or eliminated or just to possess a minor role. Religious people too often try to get you to just assume religion is always good when they should be getting you to collect and check the evidence for and against. Finding evidence that religion can sometimes be bad is enough to prove that religion and good are not the same thing. Keeping you away from evidence-based thinking is a typical tactic and manipulative religionists are notorious for it.

-If Satan uses human enemies to do evil, and Christianity says this is his favoured method, then it is always self-defence to attack them first.

-Human nature is not intrinsically good so if non-religious people engage in violent extremism or religious people engage in it, it is a demonstration of how there is nothing intrinsically good about anything human - even religion. To say religion is good is to be lie and you will only tell that lie if you want to cover up the violence.

Belief in God is a terrible thing

Believers say that God does not just represent and endorse morality but he is morality. He is justice, for example. Interestingly, nobody praises Stalin for serving justice in his perverted way. Nobody says, "Justice is God and Stalin then was just serving his hazy and confused version of God." Indeed if God is justice then you can say even secular wars are fought in the name of God even if that is misguided. If they think they are fair they are trying to connect to God. You can still blame God. You cannot blame secularism. God by definition is the be all and end all.

Belief in God is a terrible thing. In Islamic countries in particular it is responsible for many murders legal and otherwise. People are killed because it is claimed that God has decreed that they must be punished by a cruel death - often by stoning. Some believers will respond that it is not belief in God that does this but men looking for power. The Bible God and the Muslim God wants adulterous people subjected to cruel capital punishment. Men could get power without stoning adulterous people to death. And do we have the right to say those killers are just after power? Why not take them at their word - that they do it out of a sense of duty to obey God? Accusing them of being godless hypocrites who are really only interested in power is a guess. You need proof to say that and you cannot get such proof unless you can do the impossible and see into their hearts. Imagine the damage you do if you are wrong! You enable the problem. You just judge the evil servants of God instead of judging the real problem which is belief in God. The belief in God - God is by definition that which is to be obeyed - is to blame. If God is such a great belief then how are people able to use this belief to wreak great evil? Accusing them of being hypocrites who are pretending to care about God is antagonising and angering them far more - especially if they really do care for God.

Those who say, "Belief in God does not always lead to terrible deeds" need to learn how to think. They too enable the problem of god inspired violence. What you do is check to see if more people kill because they believe in God or if more people kill if they don't. It is a statistical matter. If more kill because they believe then you cannot hide behind the excuse that the belief can be harmless.

People are being urged and conditioned to try to love God more than their own lives. That automatically says that beliefs and religious authority come before life. It is a short step then to start believing in books like the Koran and the Bible that say we may kill for God and to start obeying them. To love God entirely is to hate disobedience to him. The step from hating disobedience to him to hating the disobedient is too short for comfort. Belief in God certainly encourages violence even if it pretends to forbid it for it puts the temptation to violence in those foolish enough to believe. When the religionists say they kill because God commanded it then why not believe them? It is better for the whole belief to be abandoned if that is what it takes to save as much as one human life. Religion devoted to God denies this for it says that God as the originator of life comes first and that is why I attack and abhor the fanaticism it stands for. They are fanatics because they should have beliefs that are so respectful of human life that no harm is done if their religions are false. Happily there is hope. God does not exist and we should not want him to.

Christianity when it seems to be a religion of peace is actually a religion of deferred violence. The violence is given to the Hebrews to do for them. For example, consider how the Church regards the laws commanding the Hebrews to stone people to death as divinely inspired.

When you believe in a God who uses evil to do good or if you think that evil is necessary for real good to take place then you are saying it is reasonable to believe that God can command you to go to war for him. Even if you are not violent, you are still to blame for the believers that are for you and they both cut the key to open the door of violence. If there is a God it is reasonable that you may have to do harm for him but you will deny the harm is really evil in the scheme of things. If there is no God and you believe in him, you are making it reasonable for you to believe you may have to harm for him. Do not enable damaging beliefs and behaviour - you could promote healthy beliefs and behaviours instead.

If a person is conditioned to believe that killing people of other religions is not seriously wrong or not wrong at all or even good you need incredible evidence before you can trust that person in society. Conditioning is very powerful and can seem to be gone and then resurrect itself unexpectedly. The person themselves could end up surprised at what they want to do and do. The seeds of violence were planted in the child and seeds can grow when the person himself least expects it.

Religion opens the door to violence and censorship and indoctrination and abuse and pious fraud. It both opens the door and leads to them. A religion that leads some not all to such things is still bad. A good religion opens the door to no evil and does not lead to any evil.

Saying anything is an abuse of religion can be used in an ideological way and become a strategy for disrespecting and attacking religious freedom. You can say it is an abuse of Catholicism not to let priests break the seal of confession to stop murders. Or you can say it is an abuse of Catholicism to ban abortion. Or to ban atheists from becoming pope. Atheists would not want to but you never know. Stranger things have happened. It is thus in a faith's best interest to admit that it, at least in some unknown way, leads to hate and violence.

Only the fruits of a bad religion show if it is implicitly or manipulatively endorsing evil. Only they show if it has an inherent knack for doing this.