

RELIGION FEEDS OFF SELF-DECEPTION

People say that they follow a religion because of its God and the message and not the messengers so it does not matter how evil and corrupt the messengers are. But they do not really believe this for the corruption in some religions such as Scientology puts most people off. And Jesus promised that you would know his disciples were his when you see how much they love one another which means he staked his reputation on the good living of his followers. What do we see? We see Churches riddled with sectarian hate that they have fed for centuries. We see Christian devouring Christian. So it does matter if too many in a religion are too bad. A religion likes to take the credit if an evil believing member suddenly does a big good deed! But it will not admit that if it wants to be praised for the good it must take responsibility for the bad too even if it did not tell the bad to do what they did.

Religion and Self-deception

Religion is an education in rationalising. There are plenty of other elements in life that lead to rationalisations. But that does not mean we should have an extra one. Religion is the main force in training people to rationalise. Women who become battered wives use the rationalising skills to endanger themselves because they care what others think about them and blame themselves. Religion certainly will improve their powers of rationalisation. Rationalisation only keeps a religion strong for a while. The rationalisers soon fall into heresy and rationalise it. If a religion plays with rationalising it will get burnt severely.

People who depend on their own self-deception get angry and hateful when that deception risks being exposed. That is why Catholics are more upset if the Virgin Mary is mocked and their silence is deafening when Jesus is made fun of! This does not square with their alleged belief that Jesus alone is to be supremely adored. Muslims get so angry if anybody says their Prophet or religion is false or stupid. If they really trusted in God and his power they would feel the anger is pointless for God can take care of things himself. They would work more peacefully to check criticism of the Prophet. Their self-deception is intentional.

Self-deception does not excuse any damage done. For example, if Catholics deceive themselves and lead souls to Hell by having them in the wrong religion they are still responsible and to blame. And infinitely so! The person of integrity looks for reasons to believe because error degrades and misleads and hurts. The self-deceiver can't expect much respect. Self-deception is bad enough in the humdrum things of life but it is vile beyond our realisation when it involves religions that make such serious claims as Christianity does. For example, that Jesus had to be put to death to save us, that sinners go to Hell for all eternity and that many psychiatric patients are really possessed and so on.

Even if atheism is true and you have piles of evidence in its favour, you might still be deploying your power to deceive yourself to believe it. For example, it could be that the real reason you believe is because you subliminally hate the Church for hurting you in childhood. You support atheism because of that drive and not because of the evidence. Just because you have evidence does not mean you believe because of it. You can never know if a person is engaged in self-deception or not.

Self-deception is bad. We all do it. Religion is the one thing we need to get rid of for it only makes it worse and even gives it respectability. It puts stronger pressure on people to deceive themselves. And there is enough of self-deception around without religion adding to the temptations to engage in it. Self-deception is a dangerous skill to have. It means that you don't know if you are conning yourself about everything or some things. Self-deception like lies leads to more lies and deception. For religious people, if they engage in self-deception then how do they know that God is really God to them? Maybe they do not accept God but accept a version of him that they kid themselves is true?

In Evangelical Christianity, the convert may believe because of a buzz and be a great Christian until the novelty and the high wear off. Then they will lose their faith. They will see that they never really had faith for they never had any real reason to believe.

People who practice this kind of self-deception are likely to turn against critics of their belief and spew hatred against them. The Born-Again Christian who tells you are going to Hell and who looks at you with hate if you point out some flaw in his faith is showing that on some level he knows that it is feeling driving him not real faith. This reaction is caused by his fear that you will take away his crutch or his means of religiously manipulating others. He is insecure in his so-called faith. He does not want you to see the mask of self-deception that he wears.

Pope John Paul II got adored through encouraging Catholics to deceive themselves. If they had not done this, they would see how evil he was for insisting that it was a sin for a man to wear a condom to protect his girl from HIV.

Self-deception will be strongest in people who are subject to a religion that is big into punishing and which adores a vindictive God who loves punishing people and who may go to the extreme of punishing people forever. If some members of the religion are not entrapped in the self-abuse cycle of self-deception, that is because there are benign influences at work which stop the religion getting its full evil hold on them.

The suffering person needs one thing: the strength to keep battling and facing the pain in order to open the door and get the chance to overcome it. The person needs the strength not a sense of meaning. The strong person fights on despite everything telling him to stop trying. The meaning religion tricks you into thinking you need has very little to do with helping you to cope. Not all of us will suffer hugely or for long. Religion plays on your assumption that you will be one of the very unlucky few!!