

Statement of Beliefs

- Religious Tolerance Org

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Personal worth: The inherent worth of every person. People are worthy of respect, support, and caring simply because they are human. Unfortunately, our group has not reached a consensus on when human life, in the form of an ovum and spermatozoon, becomes a human person with civil rights including the right to live. On this matter, our group's lack of agreement on when personhood begins mirrors that of society at large.

COMMENT: I LIKE THIS. THOSE WHO SAY WE MUST BELIEVE IN GOD IN ORDER TO BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE ARE WORTHY OF RESPECT AND CARING ARE DENYING THE ONE REASON WHY WE ARE WORTHY OF RESPECT AND CARING. THEY SAY GOD LOVES US BECAUSE WE ARE HUMAN SO WHY CAN'T WE JUST LOVE OURSELVES BECAUSE WE ARE HUMAN? IS MAN SO AWFUL THAT WE NEED A BELIEF TO HELP US LOVE? TO LOVE OURSELVES JUST BECAUSE WE ARE HUMAN LEAVES NO ROOM FOR GOD. THE CHRISTIAN POSITION DENIES THIS. THAT IN FACT IMPLIES THAT THEY HAVE AN UNDERLYING CONTEMPT FOR HUMANITY UNDERNEATH ALL THE SMILES AND HUGS. THEY ARE PROBABLY SO USED TO IT THAT THEY DON'T NOTICE ANYMORE.

Lack of discrimination: Working towards a culture that is relatively free of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, physical disability, language, age, body shape, etc.

Dignity: The dignity of the human person. We oppose the use of torture and cruel or unusual punishment including the death penalty.

COMMENT: TO SAY THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD UNDERMINES THE REVULSION WE SHOULD FEEL FOR TORTURE AND THE DEATH PENALTY FOR ITS GOD ADVOCATES THEM BOTH AND EVEN INFLICTED THEM ON HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. IT IS OUTRAGEOUS THAT A TORTURE MANUAL SUCH AS LEVITICUS OR DEUTERONOMY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO BE THE WORD OF GOD INSTEAD OF SOMETHING PROFOUND. IT IS A CALCULATED INSULT TO ALL VICTIMS OF TORTURE.

Democracy: The importance of democratic processes within religious, political, and other structures.

COMMENT: THIS DENIES THE CLAIM OF MANY RELIGIONS SUCH AS ISLAM AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND MORMONISM THAT GOD HAS ESTABLISHED MONARCHS OF THEIR FAITHS. IT INFERS THAT SUCH FAITHS SHOULD NOT HAVE THE FREEDOM TO BE UNDEMOCRATIC. IT CONTRADICTS THE CLAIM MADE BY THOSE FAITHS THAT THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO BE UNDEMOCRATIC RELIGIONS.

Religion-state matters: The separation of religion and the state. (This is generally referred to as "separation of church and state." But we prefer the more inclusive term.) The government should not promote one religion over another, promote religion over secular beliefs, or promote secular beliefs over religion.

COMMENT: THEY DO NOT DENY THAT THEY STAND FOR SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND STATE. THEY JUST EXPRESS IT A DIFFERENT WAY. THEY PREFER TO EMPHASISE THAT THE STATE IS NEUTRAL IN RELATION TO RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR BELIEFS.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF A STATE BANS RELIGION IN ALL SCHOOLS THAT IS PROMOTING SECULAR BELIEFS OVER RELIGIOUS. IF THE STATE SIMPLY ALLOWS SCHOOLS TO LEARN ABOUT RELIGIONS AND SECULARISM BUT WITHOUT ANY OF THEM BEING PROMOTED THAT IS WHAT THE PRINCIPLES OF SECULARISM REQUIRE.

Personal freedom: The freedoms of religious beliefs, speech, association, and expression at the individual, congregational and denominational level.

COMMENT: THIS OPPOSES THE RIGHT OF ROMAN CATHOLICS FOR EXAMPLE TO EXCOMMUNICATE THOSE CATHOLICS WHO REJECT REQUIRED TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH. THE CORRECT VIEW IS THAT MEMBERSHIP IN A RELIGION SHOULD BE VOLUNTARY AND IF YOU REJECT A REQUIRED TEACHING THEN WALK. A SOCIETY HAS TO HAVE MEMBERSHIP RULES.

Freedom of speech: The freedom to compare the beliefs of faith groups with each other, and with the findings of science. It

also includes the freedom to criticize faith and other groups when they harm others.

COMMENT: GOOD.

Relative truth: The principle that many moral, ethical, and religious beliefs vary greatly from one culture, religion, and time to another, and are thus relative. We do acknowledge that they are often considered absolute by various religions and secular belief systems.

COMMENT: IT IS TRUE THAT DIFFERENT SOCIETIES AND CULTURES HAVE DIFFERENT VALUES BUT MANY OF THE VALUES ARE THE SAME. THE VIEW THAT TRUTH IS RELATIVE IS RIDICULOUS. TO SAY THAT MURDERING A BABY FOR FUN IS OKAY IF THE RELIGION AND SOCIETY APPROVES IS INSANITY. IT IS HYPOCRITICAL HOW WE READ THAT TRUTH IS RELATIVE - THAT SOMETHING IS TRUE JUST BECAUSE IT IS BELIEVED - THEN WE READ LATER THAT WE SHOULD LEAVE VICIOUS RELIGIONS!

RELATIVISM MAKES IT RIDICULOUS TO SAY THAT HUMAN DIGNITY SHOULD BE EMPHASISED. WHAT THE HONEST RELATIVIST WOULD SAY IS THAT BELIEF IN HUMAN DIGNITY GIVES US DIGNITY. WE DO NOT HAVE IT AUTOMATICALLY. WE MUST BE GIVEN IT BY BELIEVING IN IT. WE HAVE NO REAL DIGNITY IF WE NEED BELIEF TO GIVE IT TO US. A MAN WILL NOT GET THE DIGNITY OF THE MONARCHY JUST BY BELIEVING HE IS KING.

RELATIVISTS TEND TO THINK THAT THE BELIEFS OF A SOCIETY ARE TRUE JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE BELIEVED. THAT ACTUALLY ADVOCATES INTOLERANCE FOR THE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY WHO REJECT THOSE BELIEFS AND WHO DEPLORE RELATIVISM. IT IS INTOLERANT TO SAY, "BELIEFS ARE TRUE IF THEY ARE SOCIETY'S BELIEFS. BELIEFS ARE NOT NECESSARILY TRUE IF THEY ARE THE INDIVIDUAL'S BELIEFS." IF BELIEF MAKES SOMETHING TRUE THEN IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE HOW MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE. IT IS THE SAME IF ITS ONE PERSON BELIEVING OR A BILLION PERSONS.

Impact of religion: The generally positive influence that most religions have had on their followers and on society.

COMMENT: HOW CAN YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE IF TRUTH IS RELATIVE AND EACH RELIGION MAKES THINGS TRUE SIMPLY BY BELIEVING THEM? RELATIVISM EVEN IF TRUE IS A DANGEROUS HARMFUL IDEA.

AND WE READ THAT "MOST RELIGIONS" HAVE A GENERALLY POSITIVE INFLUENCE. NOT ALL RELIGION THEN IS SAID TO BE A GOOD THING.

Problem with the use of prayer: It is our belief that prayer is an unreliable method to assess the will of God. We were initially divided on this matter, but a pilot study appears to indicate that prayer for this purpose is unreliable.

COMMENT: GOOD. THIS IS EASILY PUT TO THE TEST. PEOPLE HAVE CONVERTED TO WRONG RELIGIONS AFTER PRAYING FOR GUIDANCE. PRAYER AND HAVING A SENSE OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WHO IS GUIDING THEM DID NOT PROTECT THEM AGAINST BEING WRONG. THE QUESTION IS, WHAT WAS THE PILOT STUDY NEEDED FOR? THOSE CONDUCTING IT SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER. AND IS PRAYER PRAISEWORTHY WHEN IT IS ABOUT INDUCING THE FEELING OF HAVING DONE A GOOD DEED? IT IS NOT A GOOD DEED. IT IS NOT MAKING ANYTHING HAPPEN. YOU ARE NOT HEALING JOHNNY BY PRAYING FOR HIM. YOU ARE NOT THE CAUSE OF HIS CURE.

Evil in religion: In the importance of individual believers detecting evil influences and policies that currently exist within their chosen faith group, and strongly advocating for their correction. If change is impossible, we feel that they should consider withholding financial support and/or leaving the group.

COMMENT: EVERY RELIGION HAS TO HAVE TEACHINGS IT CANNOT CHANGE IN ORDER TO BE A RELIGION. IF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MORPHED INTO A FORM OF BUDDHISM IT WOULD NOT BE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ANY MORE. IF THE EVIL, WHETHER MAJOR OR MINOR, IS ENSHRINED IN THE TEACHINGS OF THE RELIGION THAT ARE ESSENTIAL FOR MEMBERSHIP, THEN THE MEMBERS MUST STOP GIVING MONEY AND LEAVE. IT IS OKAY TO STAY IN A RELIGION THAT IS BREAKING ITS OWN RULES BY ADVOCATING EVIL. LEAVING COULD BE WALKING AWAY FROM THE PROBLEM.

Education: The principle that people are not truly educated unless they have studied the world's major religions and ethical systems. They need to learn of both the good and evil impacts that each has had on society throughout history. They need to be taught skills at analysis and "baloney detection."

COMMENT: TEACHING THE ETHICAL SYSTEMS TAKE PRIORITY OVER TEACHING THE RELIGIONS
THOUGH. THE BALONEY DETECTION SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL TODAY WITH FAMILIES AND HOMES BEING
RIPPED APART BY FRAUDULENT RELIGION.

MY THOUGHT

I object not to people smoking but object that I should in any way have to put up with the consequences of their smoking.
The secularist often follows similar logic, "I object not to people having religion but object that I should in any way have to
put up with the consequences of their religious faith." Religious faith necessarily hinders the rights of the secularist and the
sceptic.