

ROMAN CATHOLICISM - WE MUST ASSUME IT DECEIVES ITSELF

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Most people are irrational. This causes problems for the right of freedom of speech. In principle, we should be allowed to say what we want, even if it is hate speech, as long as the other side can be presented. But too many people will not think rationally about it. Religion does not emphasise reason which means it encourages this problem. It does not help people to reason.

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 and even justify their husband's behaviour. They do this because they care what others think about them and feel they will blame them. They also blame themselves. Religion certainly will improve their powers of rationalisation.

People who depend on their own self-deception get angry and hateful when that deception risks being exposed. That is why Muslims get so angry when Muhammad is criticised. 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.

Self-deception is not letting yourself remember that you know or believe that something is wrong so that you can support and seemingly accept it as true.

We engage in self-deception for the following reasons.

We know that liars often give themselves away. They may contradict themselves. They may have emotions or lack of emotions that are a tell-tale sign that they do not believe what they are saying and are intending to fool.

We know that if liars practice self-deception the give-aways will not happen. Self-deception helps you to hide your giveaways.

Self-deception then is all about fooling others.

Suppose a person self-deceives herself that she is a good singer. She is lying to others when she is making that claim. That is direct lying. She is also indirectly lying when they see her going about with her musical equipment as if she were a professional singer. When she does anything non-verbal that conveys, "I am a talented singer," that is indirectly lying. Indirectly lying makes it no less lying. In fact indirect lying is far worse than telling a bare-faced lie. It is more manipulative and trying to give out falsified hard evidence instead of asking people to merely take your word for it. Self-deception is only about deceiving others. You have to deceive yourself so that you can be a convincing fraud. The good singer does not lie to herself just to make herself feel good or to feel that she is a good singer but to get others to think she is a good singer. Why would you want to believe you are a fabulous singer if it is not about wanting others to believe it? Because self-deception is about fooling others it is always intentional. If a religion is based on self-deception then it follows that the more the members go on missions, pray and do pilgrimages then the greater their self-deception is. They nurture it. The more they at least indirectly lie to non-members. They more they work against the non-member's right to the truth about them and their religion.

Self-deception is of little or no value to yourself. You only need it to deceive others. That is what it is chiefly about. Some would say that is what it is ALL about. If I am a useless accountant for I have no head for it and cheated in my accountancy exams, I may persuade myself that I still have potential. I may do this to feel good. Why does it make me feel good? Only because of other people. So strictly speaking I do it to please others

So its proven that self-deception is all about impressing others. It takes concentration and skill to be able to deceive yourself. You know you are a fraud but you just put it out of your mind. Good con-artists can get people to deceive themselves. They make the aging woman for example tell herself that - though there is no evidence - that this miracle cream will make her look 25 again.

If God and religion are as important as Christianity and Islam say, then it follows that we will deploy the strongest and craftiest forms of self-deception in their name. If we deceive ourselves so much with family and money and business which are less important than God and religion then imagine how much we will do it in relation to God and religion!

We cannot pervert our reason unless we reason right first. We have to realise what reason says before we can distort it. The one who self-deceives in matters of sense perception is worse off and more stubborn and perhaps more dangerous than one who self-deceives with logic.

Self-deception is necessarily uncontrollable for every person will do it differently and do it for different reasons. A religion that trains in self-deception is therefore to be blamed if some members go out and kill heretics or those who refuse to convert to the religion. Each religion sets certain major goals. Only those whose self-deceptive "beliefs" coincide will adopt and serve those goals.

Self-deception arises from our love of control. We like to think we are in control. We fear not being in control. The self-deceiver can turn very vicious if his facade is caused to crumble thanks to you. The religious believer who realises that he cannot control everything - finds a new way to remain feeling in control. He hands it all over to God. He gives God permission to let whatever is going to happen happen. Thus he still feels in control and is as good as being in control.

EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS SELF-DECEPTION

Religion engages in the same charm and exploitation and skin-deep peace loving as politicians. Both religion and politics get people's devotion and attention through religionists and politicians using self-deception to come across and caring and sincere and inspirational.

The Church picks out the nice bits of the Bible to give the misleading impression that it is the good book. It knows Catholics will find it as abhorrent as atheists do. Self-deceivers easily proceed to deceive others.

There is a Catholic traditionalist group called the Society of St Pius X. SSPX. It was excommunicated from the Catholic Church by John Paul II in the eighties for the consecration of bishops without papal permission. A Church split resulted. The SSPX continually maintains that it is in communion with the pope and the Catholic Church and is not a separate Church even though it is excommunicated for schism. They say the excommunication is unfair and therefore null and void. The concept of invalid excommunication doesn't solve any problems for the pope and the Church are separating themselves from some person or group and vice versa. There is still a split, casting-out, separation and division even if the decree is invalid. The decree might be invalid but it is still effective. If you give John a vodka but not knowing it is a synthetic copy of vodka you have given John an invalid vodka but it still makes him drunk and has consequences. It's real in its effects.

They cannot seriously believe that they are part of the Catholic Church.

The SSPX priesthood is trained according to the stern and austere and dogmatic ways that priests were trained before Vatican II. They go out into a hostile world and fear the Catholic Church headed by Rome as an enemy of the true Catholic faith. They make huge sacrifices. They say they adore and revere the pope. But their sect behaves as if it were the Vatican and the Pope and does not take orders from them. All this shows that you can suffer greatly for what you know to be untrue. They commit grave sacrifices for their self-deception that they are better Roman Catholics than the pope! Yet their devotion to him and the duty of obedience to him is lip-service. Protestant psychologists argue that some ascetic Christians who sacrifice a lot are doing so not for God but from pride. The lesson is that self-deception must never be underestimated.

The power of the SSPX to forgive sins in confession has been taken away by papal authority. They ignore this and dishonestly pretend to be true papists and to forgive sins. The fact that they are so self-sacrificing and dedicated in the confessional only highlights how powerful self-deception is. It can mask itself as sincerity and devotion.

Catholics think priests forgive sins as if they were God. They give God's forgiveness. And Catholics who feel comforted when the priest forgives their sins in confession are strange. If God forgives you, he will not wait until a priest forgives you until he forgives you. Would you feel forgiven by a man who will not forgive you until his mother permits him to? Forgiveness is not real if its tied to conditions. Either you have a loving attitude that wants to forgive or you do not. Anything else is irrelevant.

Most people who imagine they are Roman Catholic are really agnostics. They have a vague sense of a higher power, a benevolent reality, and that is what they really worship when they worship Jesus and God and so on. Just like a man can end up saying to his wife that he loves her it might be merely words that he thinks he means, so too religious language can just become a thing of habit. We can think we mean to talk to Jesus when we talk to the vague higher power. Christians have noticed how a tendency can arise that turns religion into mere words and doctrines. Vatican II said the Catholic Church must be careful that it gives a person a personal encounter with God instead of dogmas and religious language becoming almost a substitute for God. The Catholic can feel a vague presence while praying to the wafer god. It is quite easy to feel a presence. It stands for nothing.

Catholics believe in venial sin. That is sin that is not too bad and they will get to Heaven once its purified. They may reason like most people in different religions, "I'm okay. I will not go to a Hell forever if I were to die now." Catholics tend to see as venial sins what the pope sees as grave sins. They cannot deal with the feeling that they have done something really bad so they underestimate the seriousness of their sin.

The Catholics often misinterpret their agnosticism and their feeling that they are okay as part of the Roman Catholic faith.

Human nature is so adept at self-deception that there are people out there who are innocent of murder and who believe they murdered people they never even met.

Roman Catholics pray the following at Mass: "Glory to God...I adore you." That prayer is a lie. They do not adore God. If they did they would be inclined to thump whoever ridicules God.

The Catholic Mass is a good proof of the power of self-deception. The communion wafer has none of the characteristics of living things. It doesn't excrete or breath etc. Yet its alive according to the Church. The Mass makes nonsense of science.

The Islamic and Jewish and Christian sects and denominations claim to be about helping people to enjoy a relationship with God. If that is true, then why do they catch each other out in lying so much? Even within a religion there are factions. Liberal Catholics lie that abortion for rape for example is in agreement with the Catholic faith. Some in the Anglican Church claim you can be a good Anglican and not believe in God. Some breakaway Mormons see nothing wrong with having sex with underage wives. Post something negative about the Queen of Peace of Medjugorje - even if it is the truth - and you will see how much the Catholics who follow her love you! Why is there so much lying and bitterness among people who claim to be servants of love? Self-deception is not an ingredient of love and respect and honesty.

Religion that likes to hide or simply not mention its worst doctrines knows fine well they are nonsense. Their self-deception develops cracks when they think of these doctrines. Mormonism does not tell new converts many things. The Catholic Church hides vicious doctrines. The excuse is that they can't tell new converts everything! Then why is it the charming doctrines that are selected? Hell is even made to look like God is doing us a favour if we go there. It is said we won't go to him so its all our fault. Interesting spin!

Religion is not happy with the fact that we are all a family anyway and it tries to make a religious family and cause a division and create difference. It is said that it is how people use religion that makes it bad or good. It is not the religion then itself that is bad. But we don't need religion. What is wrong with working out a faith of your own that is consistent and healthy and accepting is not your business what your wife or child or parent or friend believes? Thus when religion is not necessary it follows that people using religion at all is bad. It is how people use religion that makes it bad or badder.

The majority of those who are baptised into the Roman Catholic Church as adults lie to themselves and everybody else that they have enough knowledge of Catholicism to justify such a huge step. They break the promise to spread the faith. They do not tell people that their faith is a joy and that they would love it for others to have that joy too. The majority of Catholics who are confirmed take a promise to do these things. They promise in vain.

Confirmation is about reinforcing your membership of the Church - becoming a full member and membership entails a will to promote the faith and membership to others. The confirmed Catholic in theory has the right to refuse the full membership of the Church that it confers. The confirmed Catholics do not keep their promise to be soldiers of Christ and promote the faith either.

Judge means to condemn a sin in the sense that you regard it as bad and wish punishment on it. The fact that you may not be able to punish it does not mean you don't agree with it being punished if the circumstances are right. If you forbid the punishment it is not because you think the punishment is wrong.

Some say that judging the sin is wrong for we are all sinners. The world will make no progress if we don't speak out even if we are hypocrites. Some say that judging the sin means you take it on yourself to punish it instead of leaving it to God. Then why bother having a state punishment system? And the Bible does say we must judge. The apostles put curses on people to punish them.

The doctrine that we must not judge sinners is all over the Church. In practice it means treating the person as if she or he has done nothing wrong. Why bother opposing abortion for example if you are going to treat the person who has one as if it does not matter and she is forgiven?

People lie so much in religion that when they report miracles - even if they are honest people - they are probably not very honest on the religious level. And a miracle story is the one lie anybody can get away with. If you say you saw Jesus in a vision nobody can prove that you didn't.

If prayer is about changing yourself into a more helpful caring person, you can do that merely by thinking about the suffering in the world and arousing a wish to relieve some of it. Many people confuse doing that with prayer. It is not prayer. It is about you trying to find your goodness. Prayer for many is about wishing God would do something about it. That is actually atheistic in the sense that it denies that God should let people suffer. Prayer for Christians is essentially, "God I submit to your will be it good or bad for me. Do what you will."

Prayer proves only how good we are at fooling ourselves. That is a bad trait to encourage. We fool ourselves that the harm we do is justifiable. Prayer is effective training in the art of self-deception.

Religion more than anything proves the omnipotence of self-deception.