

CHRISTIANITY IS A PLACEBO FOR THOSE DOING EVIL

A placebo makes you think you are well when you are not and for some this feeling actually does lead to them improving.

A placebo can help a sick person - eg they fight an infection better for they think their sugar pills are curing them.

A placebo can also be used to make a sick conscience or a twisted one think it is okay or better.

The harm is that the placebo "treatment" probably isn't what makes the sick or the spiritually sick feel or think they are a lot better or getting better. Now they are in a trap. They will spend energy, time and perhaps money on this instead of something that actually would help or help better. Anecdotal thinking drives placebos and empowers them. Anecdotes and placebos encourage us not just to cherish and follow the unreal. They get us to forsake the real and even get hostile to it.

A placebo is not an individual thing. No placebo will work for person x if x is aware that it works for nobody else. So it is part of a bigger picture where people influence each other. And even if it were an individual thing it would not necessarily be one. A group can be subject to a placebo as well. If placebos are bad then they are worse when it is a group that is using them.

Sin is breaking the law of God so it is a judicial thing. Doing wrong is different. It is wrong to hurt a baby and that is not about laws but about the baby. There are overlaps but sin and harmdoing must not be confused. A placebo for sin and harmdoing is different.

Right and wrong are confused with moral and immoral. It is more important for right and wrong to be real and facts than for moral or immoral to be. That is because something has to be wrong in the first place to have a chance at being immoral. Moral and immoral are about rewarding and punishing. Nothing more and nothing less. They are interpretations put on right and wrong but do not necessarily go with right and wrong. You must have right and wrong but moral and immoral can be done without and indeed should be if there is a contest.

Morality starts not with morality but with what is right.

Moralists never agree on how to reward good or punish evil. Moralists are smoke-screeners.

Anyway there may be placebos for sin and harm or both.

So what? It leads to not feeling the right things then if somebody is hurt or degraded or falls into vice. It leads to you not feeling the right things if you are that person. Desensitising leads to more desensitising. If you start off as a 10 per cent psychopath you will end up 90 per cent.

You have a placebo for what you have become and a placebo for how much hurt you give to others.

Is Christianity a placebo for sin? Harming? Both? Does that explain why it is so useless at improving society?

"THE SIDE EFFECT"

Hurting others is bad. But if there is a God then he alone matters for there would be nobody without him. No person matters at all in comparison. Hurting others is only a sin because God loves them and does not want them hurt. So it is about him not them. The pain and wrong done to others is only a side-effect if what matters is how it offends God. If you do not like people, you can see how this doctrine can be a placebo. You feel good about your attitude.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE PLACEBO

The placebo helps the person who feels ill physically or mentally through making them expect to feel better. It is unethical to give a person a placebo without their informed consent. A placebo can help the bad person feel good or good enough about the terrible things she or he gets up to. You would actually expect it to be better at doing that than helping an illness. And the placebo effect leads to people becoming liars for they think their lies help you. It puts pressure on them not to own up in case you relapse. Also you can suffer withdrawal symptoms and other problem if your placebo is removed. Also taking it away can result in you getting a NO-cebo. That is when you end up feeling worse and sicker all because you expect to. A placebo is based on lies and lies get found out so it is better to do without the placebo in the first place.

A placebo concerned with improved health of mind and body is one thing. But what about the religious placebo you can use to feel better about being bad or dishonest?

We all know religious people who do terrible things and seem to have no shame. They know it is wrong to live as they do. So they pray to try and feel that it is okay if not right. And it works!

Religion will not admit that faith can be a placebo for evil.

Thus they enable the problem of wicked people using faith as a placebo.

"GOD IS ABOUT MY HAPPINESS"

The religious placebo effect has the underlying assumption: "Faith in God and in religion is about making me happy." The shocking thing about that view is that they would still pray to and praise a God who has not done much to make people happy. For atheists, the existence of suffering proves that God is useless, bad, or non-existent for God should be about making us happy and well. In any case to praise him is wrong and you show how selfish you are by doing so. Such a placebo will not help for you will not always be happy. If it seems to do little harm, the reason is that the person is using other placebos to nullify the bad effects.

God is said to matter in himself and not because of what he does for us. So the Christian is to stand up for him despite the evil he lets take place. He is defended and worshipped for his sake and not for ours. Those who run after God because they think he is going to fix all that is bad one day or because they think faith in him gives happiness and meaning to their lives are really their own gods - their god is what they can get out of him.

You can adore a God who is in your head - you adore what you want God to be not what he is. You tell yourself he alone matters or comes first - presto you have a way to feel you are incredibly good without being really good. Even if you have a sound and logical theology, it does not prove that you adore God for him not you. It might happen that you understand what God would be like and is like, but you adore him for you not him. It could be pure luck that the God you want him to be is the God that is. If God is a mental idol then your devotion and religion is idolatry despite appearances. It is a placebo for your selfishness and enables you to conceal your selfishness from yourself.

Religion says that God is truth and demands total honesty from us and courage. Christianity says that religion is not about making us happy but about sacrifice. If religion is used as a placebo then it is a form of idolatry.

ANY PLACEBO SHOULD DO

Believers in religion think they get healing from their moral flaws and even their illnesses from their faith. This is a placebo for Satanists claim that Satanism is good healing therapy while Christians say it is Christianity that is effectual. It is a placebo when everybody has different ways to feel better as a religious person. With the religious placebo, you end up saying that it is the only one that works properly for anyone because it works for you. Or you think it works!

Any placebo would and should do. Yet each religion is dogmatic about its version of the placebo. It discourages other placebo religions. If we justify religion because of its placebo effect then that makes no sense. If a placebo works it does not matter what placebo is used while the problem with religion is that it says it does. This leads to intolerance. It is very dangerous if a religion thinks other religions cannot do the spiritual good it does.

With all the problems caused by organised religion, people should find better placebos.

APPENDIX - THE NOCEBO EFFECT

The nocebo is the placebo effect in reverse. It is when you learn how bad your spiritual illness, your mental illness or your physical illness is, knowing this makes you feel worse and even sicker. It is a self-fulfilling bad prophecy. You perceive the terribleness you expect to perceive. It involves self-deception just like the placebo effect does. If you are good with the placebo you will be as good with the nocebo. Worse, if you give the placebo such great power you may give the nocebo even more power.

Consider how most people spend very little time doing harm and yet it is the harm we remember. The nocebo then is probably more powerful than the placebo.

As Meynen et al (American Journal Bioethics, 2012) puts it, "mere information about potential harm is likely to be harmful itself." Religion by warning about harms such as being exploited by the Devil, everlasting punishment in Hell and the horror of offending God's infinite love then is a disgrace.

