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Francis Spufford

Why Christianity Makes Emotional Sense

The ridiculous book, Unapologetic, Why Christianity Makes Emotional Sense, is quite popular. It was written by Francis Spufford.

Spufford writes a book stating that Christianity makes emotional sense and he calls that effort a defence of the faith! That is automatically to say that any version of Christianity or religion that does not accord with his does not make emotional sense. If every religion and variation of faith makes sense emotionally then why bother writing a book claiming that Christianity makes emotional sense and is therefore believable?

Things make no emotional sense and are neither true or believable. Spufford is just another illogical person intoxicated by religion.

Spufford's argument is rubbish for there are people who claim to be atheists who say they feel it is true and makes them brave and ethical. The religion is reasonable for it makes emotional sense idea is only a recipe for chaos: "If it feels good then you should believe it." It is fundamentalism to pretend that your feelings are faith. Faith and feelings are not identical. You may feel your wife is faithful though you know she is not. And if a person wants to believe in things such as that babies are in need of God's pardon and rejected by God until baptism, that sinners who fail to reconcile with God go to Hell for all eternity, and that suffering is a punishment from God, and that an innocent man was punished for our sins so we may dodge what is due to us for our sins, that says a lot about that person. Nasty doctrines should only be wanted to be believed if not believing would be nastier. And even then it should be because the evidence is so good that it tells us we should believe so that we can believe against the grain. A person who, out of respect for evidence, believes in horrible doctrines he does not like is far better than the person who wants to believe in them and who believes. We can safely assume that he is honest or trying to be. We cannot assume that of the other for the person is lacking in honesty and goodwill. Such a person may do good but is glad to believe that people must be subject to his despicable God. That is not true goodness no matter how charming it may look. It reminds us of how we can be so nice to people we hate and have a good gloat when they encounter misfortune.

Unfortunately for Spufford, a believer who says he does not believe in a supernatural God is not a believer.

Jesus made miracle claims, claims about his miracle powers and his miracle return from the dead the centre of his religion. If all that is eliminated, what you have is not Christianity but what you think Jesus should have taught but didn't. It is illogical how people like Spufford - Tony Blair take note! - claim, "If the Christian religion teaches nonsense we can be sure that the religion is being misunderstood." That is just a refusal to admit it when the religion does teach nonsense. And why should this excuse be given for Christianity? Why not other religions as well? Why not say, "If Satanism does harm and causes despair and teaches nonsense, we can be sure that it is not Satanism that is doing that but an interpretation of it." If the excuse is correct, then religion is never bad and it does not matter what religion we belong to. The excuse is made in the name of tolerance but it is intolerant and obscurantist towards those critics who refuse to simply pretend that the nasty bits in the scriptures of those religions and the other problems are not there.

Spufford is not a defender of Christianity but of irrationality. He lays out the red carpet for those who want to mould and shape that irrationality into frantic and vicious fundamentalism.

The likes of Francis Spufford deny that the burden of proving God or giving decent evidence for his existence is on the believer in God. He says that there is no evidence for God and the believer is not denying that. [So he is in a position to dictate that the believer with evidence is not a believer!] The believer for cultural and emotional reasons assumes God exists. Spufford says the assumption is embedded in people and is a normal and legitimate part of human experience. The reason he says the burden of proof is not on the believer is that God is not something out of the ordinary like an alien spaceship. God is to be found in mundane things. He is not like something that is so out of the ordinary that he needs special proof. He is not out of context in the universe. He is the ordinary. The plant with the pretty flower. The stone in your rockery. The water you sip at the well. God is more like them.

So he is not aware that most believers think there is evidence.

So he is not aware that if you say you believe something and have no evidence that you are guessing not believing. It is easy for you to mistake your guesswork or your feelings that something is true for belief.

Spufford thinks the best faith comes without evidence. Why doesn't he dictate then that the believer with evidence is not a

believer!

Let us talk about Spufford's believer. The believer for cultural and emotional reasons assumes God exists. Spufford says the assumption is embedded in people and is a normal and legitimate part of human experience. The reason he says the burden of proof is not on the believer is that God is not something out of the ordinary like an alien spaceship. God is to be found in mundane things. He is not like something that is so out of the ordinary that he needs special proof. He is not out of context in the universe. He is the ordinary. The plant with the pretty flower. The stone in your rockery. The water you sip at the well. God is more like them.

All Spufford is really doing is telling us that the feeling that there is something in the ordinary like a benevolent power means that God is there. This is a very vague notion of God. Its Pantheism - the notion that God is nature and is not a being who governs all things as it were from above and outside the universe. Pantheism is actually a religious form of atheism. Spufford says that Christianity makes emotional sense. Christianity denies that God is to be seen so vaguely. It says he has disclosed himself to us in Jesus and has revealed his inner nature of being three persons in one God who though close to creation and who is present in creation is not the creation.

Spufford is to be praised for he would reject the notion of a God with supernatural and magical powers who can do tricks such as bring statues to life. He would hold that such claims put the burden of proof on the person making the claims.

Unfortunately for Spufford, a believer who says he does not believe in a supernatural God is not a believer.