

Dangerous and untestable beliefs lead to oppression

Dangerous beliefs can lead to death. For example, a Muslim terrorist or a Christian fundamentalist can believe that evil must be destroyed and this can lead to her or him planning to destroy a whole area thought to be populated with infidels and profligates with a small bomb.

Religion is said to motivate people to do good. Some sycophants say that real religion does this so any community that claims to be a religion and doesn't is not really a religion. The sycophants say that real Muslims do not wage war or kill or do bad things. This ignores the fact that the Muslim God commands Muslims to do bad things. Those sycophants are really in fact lying about how good religion is because they want the religion to exclude its obedient followers who will hurt and maim in obedience to it. They want to encourage and empower the liberals who pretend to believe all the scriptures while rationalising or ignoring the violent commands in them.

Some speak of religion and contrast it with perverted religion. So bad religion is not religion but a perversion of religion. The interesting thing about this train of thought is that if a religion claims to be authorised by God and inspired by him and in fact is merely man-made then it is perverted religion. Maybe bad religion is not a perversion for religion just is a perversion.

Religious leaders and religious people strongly frown upon any criticism of their dogmas – beliefs they are committed to stand by. They make religion very important. But it is precisely because it is that important that it must be criticised or people must look to see if there is any faults in it.

Should we give tolerance to religious beliefs? We all agree that in minor things intolerance is to be tolerated. For example we tolerate the mild rudeness of a cranky neighbour.

Religious believers themselves would not tolerate who says that God lives in the river and we should drink the water to be saved. Indeed they would turn against that person. To them that person would be a fool and a lunatic. They look for a tolerance for their beliefs that they won't extend to others. Yet it is clear that some beliefs are so foolish that those who profess and/or promote them should be treated as fools. Consider the Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine physically become the body and blood of Jesus Christ despite no physical change being detectable. Religious belief should be shameful.

Commanding is bad. God should not say, "You shall not murder." He should say, "Murder is wrong". Commanding suggests that you must suffer if you don't obey. It is an implied threat. Islam and Christianity are intrinsically vicious for they are concerned with what God commands and make commands of their own. Commanding implies that you must do good because you want to be obedient and not because the good is good. Priests and mullahs find the commanding side of their religion and their God very very attractive and it makes them feel powerful. God is massaging their egos.

Religion can command dangerous things. So can any teacher of ethics. There is a lot of disagreement about right and wrong. So it is simply stupid to say that religion necessarily has to be good or should be good. Liberal and moderate believers in religion are assisting the so-called "extremists" in their religions. How? They defend violent religious texts. The Catholic Bible has God commanding that parents be permitted to stone their wayward children to death. A theologian will come up with some excuse to avoid the implications of such a teaching but it is only his opinion. He still says the text is the word of God and people must believe it meaning that those who take a different view are being encouraged to obey it to the letter if they wish. The liberals and moderates create a need and a taste for the religion in people. These people can discover that the scriptures advocate violence and upon realising that they may feel they have to be violent too to be consistent with their faith.

The liberals are really saying, "We don't advocate violence. Our scriptures appear to advocate violence but there must be explanations and these scriptures should be honoured as God's word". They are encouraging and helping to implement the conditioning of people to get them to feel and want to believe in these scriptures. This amounts to advocating the violence in those scriptures. Some say that Jesus did away with the laws of God in the Old Testament that ordered the people to kill homosexuals, apostates and adulterers in the name of God. God threatened Israel with destruction if it did not obey his law. If Jesus did abrogate the laws, the believers today are still admiring what God did and how obedient the people were in carrying out his laws. They are saying that God commanding killing is not intrinsically wrong and if God wanted us to do it we should do it. Belief in God who has the right to take life automatically implies that God as the right to order his Church to kill for him. Its a bad belief and some humanity is lost if we assent to belief in God. That is why there is no such thing as

harmless religion or faith in God.

It is commonly thought that as a society we need religion, we need politics and we need science. Religion is form of politics dealing with other levels of existence. If we have politics on earth we don't need the politics of Heaven! Politics can go wrong and has led to so many wars and injustices and so much corruption. Science has given us the knowledge of how to make Hell on earth and destroy ourselves forever. Religion, politics and science can go bad. So many argue then that just because religion can go bad does not mean that we should discard it.

Some religionists make out that religion is not a political entity. But religion acts the same way as politics. Leaders are appointed and lies are told to defy the facts that the religion does not like. The same fake charm is displayed. Attempts to seem better than other religions are made. Religion is a form of spiritual politics. Religion is politics in that it claims to give us morality and moral principles. Politics always appeals to moral people to participate in it and support it. Politics bases itself on morality and appeals to it. For example, you cannot be a socialist if you think it does not matter if people have access to healthcare or not.

We may need faith but not religion. Despite the threats the Roman Catholic Church for example against those Catholics who decide to cherry pick from its teaching that they will be punished for this sin and are heretics in the eyes of God, most Catholics simply pick what they like out of what the Church teaches. It is the same even with most Muslims. Most members of religion are not true members. They want to act like members and do what they want. So the evidence is against the view that people need religion. If they needed it they would believe in it properly and obey it better. What they want is to fit in and to have beliefs that suit them. If they need anything it is faith not religion.

Liberals have many doctrines that fuel the extremists.

Religion undermines what is best for people by judging actions wrong because a God forbids them and not because of the suffering the actions cause. They believe in a God who uses suffering and lets it happen.

Religious believers put their views beyond falsification. Nothing however evil disproves the love of God. The contradiction between Jesus dying and being with his disciples afterward is solved by the explanation that he miraculously rose from the dead. A person who gets into this non-falsification habit will end up perhaps thinking that God can want him to kill unbelievers. If you have one irrational belief then why can't you have another?

Fundamentalism refuses to listen to critics and seeks to demonise them and is irrational and often violent. Religion tends to be fundamentalist.

Even sweet religious ideas such as that we must love the sinner and not love the sin are fundamentalist. They seek to blind people to the fact that the difference between a sinner and a sin is linguistic only. We are never against any sin. We are against the bad character of the person. The sin is only a communication of what is inside the sinner - of what kind of person the sinner is.

Can an atheist be a fundamentalist? There has to be such a thing as a non-fundamentalist. Belief in God urges that God be treated as important. Belief in naturalism (the denial that there is any God or supernatural power) says people are important and gods are not. Which one is not fundamentalist? Which one is not putting belief before people?

Atheist fundamentalists are thought to be those atheists who want to debunk religion and leave old people without the comfort of God and faith. They are thought to be those atheists who force secular ways on believers. They are thought to be those atheists who have a bad opinion of religion.

Many people die happily without belief in God or an afterlife. The belief in these causes addictive behaviour in some people who suffer without them. Many old people would be glad to be rid of their belief. It is better to believe death is the end than to fear that death may be the door to everlasting torment in Hell.

An irrational or stupid faith is a dangerous thing for a person to depend on. It seems uncharitable to take their faith away from them. But would it not be worse if the whole house of straw came falling down with the death of a loved one or some other disaster? What if we had a better alternative for them to believe in?

If it is right to force a bully to stop it is right. If it is right to fix a dangerous bridge then to fix it is right. If the state should be secular, then religion should not be complaining. It should not be moaning that it has secular ideas forced on its members. What can it expect? What else can we do?

And if religion deserves to be thought badly of it should not be objecting when naturalists say it is harmful.

Religion shows its true potential for harm and violence when these take place in its name. The actual harm done is the best proof of the harmful potential of religion. You may object that there are good people in it too. But it is human to be good. They are good as people not as religionists. Good must never be attributed to a religion but to how a person responds to it.

Some Christian and Muslim groups are fond of bloodletting. If they are behaving contrary to the Christian or Muslim religion, the fact remains that the God speaking in the Old Testament and the Koran and Muslim tradition authorises violence. That leads to the sects thinking, "Okay let us endorse and dish out this violence. If we are wrong, it is not that big of a deal for violence is endorsed by God in the scriptures anyway." And it does not matter if the sect is authentically Christian/Muslim or not. What matters is that it claims to be a religion and we should take it at its word. Is the religious attitude the problem? Is religion the problem? Is the sect merely a symptom of what religion does to people's heads? Does "good" religion pose a risk? Is it luck or forces external to the religion that we have to thank when nothing has happened?

Religion should not try to influence politics. For example, if Catholics have to legislate for or against abortion, they must think of the pros and cons without letting themselves be influenced by their religious feelings about abortion or by the teaching of the Church. It is hard enough to legislate fairly, without religion coming along to make things even more complicated. And if the Catholic religion really trusts it's God, then why does it try to influence and control the law and stop divorce and abortion? If somebody wants to sin by wishing they could have an abortion, the law banning abortion or allowing it is going to make no difference. And surely God can fight abortion and divorce by grace and not by law?

What we need is more therapy and education faculties everywhere to normalise and encourage people to defect from religions that have violent gods and scriptures. The Koran God, the God of Jesus, even the Book of Mormon God directs people to murder Laban. Such books are a bad example to believers and feed the belief that as God uses evil to work out his good plan he could command us to kill. Murder is not a sin when God tells you to do it for God supposedly owns life.

Racism is the irrational tendency to hate and discriminate against people who do not share your skin colour. As racism is irrational and it expresses how tribalistic we are as a species, anything that creates and us and them mentality such as religion is to be suspected of passive aggression at best. If you want to discriminate against a class one way to do it is to have a religion that is not theirs. The members of another religion are seen as composing a class of their own. Christianity claims to be a race - a chosen race. Religion then is racism without the skin colour issues. If it is not racism's sister it is very like her. The two monsters spring from the same noxious well.

Religion be it a force for good or bad is based on some level of loyalty to a group. You identify with the group. You and God become the group. That is where the problem lies.

Conclusion: Religion is dangerous. If you do not oppose religion you oppose atheism for religion thrives if it is not questioned or gently challenged. Not taking a stand is taking a stand itself. If you say nothing you invite disrespect for yourself and your right to be seen as not encouraging religion and your right to discourage it. Gently promote atheism with sensitivity. Leave religion because if you stay in it, you make your case against its violations of human rights and truth contradictory and hypocritical and therefore redundant. Do you want to be the one whose religious friend wastes hours in the chapel or Temple, gives his hard earned cash to religion, risks a worse disappointment and faith crisis the deeper she gets involved in her false religion and who gives up marriage and family to waste his life on religion all because you couldn't be a real friend and discuss the matter?

