

God and human vulnerability

It is not God's business what you do. If God loves you he will not interfere. When man tells you about God commandments man is lying. Your vulnerability as a person who does not have all the answers is being exploited and commandments pose as shortcuts for that problem.

Having the attitude that there is no God is not the same thing as believing there is no God. The attitude is stronger and far more important. And especially when the doctrine is a response to our vulnerabilities and exploits them.

So attitude first then.

For many the next step is to try to develop belief or knowledge that there is no God and that gods and goddesses do not exist. It is denial but every denial has a positive side.

God is defined and the all-loving and all-powerful spirit that made all things but the definition is not important. It is the demands made of me if God really exists. Some say I must love him most. No. If he is so great then I must love only him and only help others not for their sake but for his.

Ideas that I must love myself or God so I can love others are telling me to use such love in order to love others! That is an abuse of love and using it as a means not an end!

Atheists and non-religious need to stop obsessing so much with attempts to disprove the existence of God. What is important is proving that even if there is a God that he has no right to be worshipped or to expect obedience of us. Getting people to ignore God is more important than getting people to disbelieve in God.

If you do good and do not believe in God, nobody can suspect that you are doing it for a reward.

Some believers are closer to atheists than others. Seek the common ground.

Inside everyone there is an atheist to be discovered. Help one another find the inner atheist. The true atheists find and create their own strength.

Atheism is not about denying God so much as trying to be a God of love to all who deal with you. Show you care and you will not be afraid to open your atheist heart to others and shine.

All relationships require vulnerability and a lot of it. Thus it is cruel to encourage people to become vulnerable for a God who may not exist. Relationships should be based on real people and what you know about them.

Prayer is about you trying to virtue-signal to yourself by praying for another. It is exploiting your vulnerability and that of the other. You need to think of yourself as spiritual and good. You use their vulnerability to do so.

What do you do instead of praying then?

It is better to frequently take a few seconds every hour think about what you would like for the people you have met in that hour. If they are rude, wish they could be happier so that they would be nicer. If they are sick, wish for their recovery. You cannot change the world but you can change yourself. You are helping yourself to change and be conscious of what others need. You are seeing and nurturing your own goodness and making yourself an example for them. You are opening yourself up to helping. If you had the magic power to help then you would. You are not trying to make yourself feel good about doing nothing for them. You are doing all you can. The more good you see in you the better you will see the good in others and your needless fear of others will diminish.

No affirming to yourself that you are good works unless it is a sort of good work. It is not the message in telling yourself you are great that helps but the telling. Telling as in action is a different thing from the message, the subject. If you need to do something to affirm your goodness then good works are the best kind of affirmations. When you do them, you are proving you are wonderful and happy and healthy and confirming the verbal affirmations you make to yourself. You are putting the affirmations into practice. You are showing the confidence to give. You will feel that as you give so you shall receive.

Put something in the charity box every day. Even if it is small, it shows you reached out to others and cared. When you give a thought to others, you command and compel the universe to ensure that you get a thought in return - though not necessarily from those you have helped.

Your higher power is inside of you and nowhere else. It is the power that reminds you that you are not a failure no matter how many failures you have. The only real failure is not trying again or trying something else.

If you can stop your fear or heal it and don't, you are imposing a limitation on yourself and trampling on the gift of freedom that you possess. You are training yourself to start taking it away for others too. It makes you defensive. It removes your power to trust that your higher powers are taking care of you. You no longer believe that your hidden powers are able to control your emotional reaction to all that takes place in your life.

You have to get your core values right. When people put in the work to develop them they grow in unity and their relationships are better. Your core value is acceptance. You can enjoy enhanced unity with others through having and promoting the correct core values. God is not a core value for the inclusive person. Not all care about God or even believe!

Be careful to praise people's efforts to do the right and caring thing more than anything else. Reserving the praise only for the occasions when their goodness is outstanding is unfair and expecting too much of them. Praising the good deeds of a person who does them for God is not to be praised as much as just doing them for they help people.

Praise normality and praise those who break the mould. It is true that normal is a dangerous word for it has connotations of unusual. If a woman likes to dress in black like a widow she is considered strange. If a man likes to wear eyeliner all the time he is considered strange. But if the woman were conditioned by an Islamic culture to dress in black she would be considered strange if she didn't wear black. And if the man were a rock star the eyeliner would be considered normal. To call people strange is to insult them. They are not strange. What is strange is that you think society's prejudices are something sacred and give you the right to make fun of or insult or condemn difference. Celebrate difference – see how interesting it is.

To form a conscience well you need to be able to reason and to be reasonable. If God is unreasonable then your conscience is being exploited.

The notion that God can change hearts quickly has the potential to cause you to expect too much of people. It is easy to be fearful and therefore unhappy if you expect too much of other people. And fear is contagious. When your expectations of other people are too high, you find that you judge them a lot.

Religion thrives on vulnerable people who need forgiving and to forgive. If a religion offers forgiveness for sin that is not forgiveness at all then it is condoning the evil. If there is no God to forgive or God does not care then the evil done by the person is condoned by man rather than forgiven by God.

It is best not to forgive unless you want to and not because you have to. In any case you can move on emotionally from the bad experience.

Emotions convey non-verbal communication to others. And to yourself.

If your self-esteem is good, you will not explain why you did something wrong. You will simply say sorry and leave it at that.

Forgiveness implies that there is a moral law. You act like you broke somebody's law. Where the law came from does not matter so much as that there is a law. For believers it is important that the law came from God.

Forgiveness is when you would have a person punished for doing evil if possible and you would cancel the punishment when they sincerely repent. If you cannot punish you will have a resentful attitude so it will go on once you stop wishing punishment and justice on them.

Forgiveness is evil for it presupposes that punishment is justified and that the person has violated a moral law.

Letting go of hurt and anger is not forgiveness - it is moving on. Moving on and forgiveness are not the same because you can cancel the punishment and still feel angry and hurt. Forgiveness is not about feelings. Moving on is about feelings. There can be overlaps but they are separate.

We are into moving on not forgiving. Moving on opens the door to rebuilding a broken relationship with another person.

I do not believe in the existence of anybody evil. The person needs understanding. If I jail the person is jailed it is not because I want them to suffer. It is because I have to protect people. I am comforted by my knowledge that nobody really intends to do evil.

I need to think of every bad thing that was ever done to me. Then I need to tell myself that I can and will move on to a better emotional place. This exercise is important for the baggage will wear me down perhaps in ways I will not even notice. The strongest way to do that is to take the attitude, "If God is helping me or not, I do this." The greatest acceptance of goodness means when you would do it regardless of God. That is very assertive and firm. It is the only real way to be good.

People fear losing a moral compass should faith in God be ignored or abandoned. You do not need to believe in God to believe in good because sheer evil is impossible. Sheer evil is as logically impossible as a non-existent dog eating your dinner. Your starting point can only be the fact that what we call evil is a falling short of good. It is distorted good or good that is in the wrong place. This principle is more important than God and even God if he exists cannot change it.

The principle has to be valued above God and all else. Even God cannot be valued without it. But it shows that God is an incoherent concept. God by definition is that which is all-good and deserves all our devotion but we see that God is nothing in comparison to the principle.

God is the creation of man when man tries to worship a good being instead of goodness. It is a form of idolatry for we must serve goodness.

"Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin" exploits others and yourself by making judgement look like love.

Never condemn or hate anybody's so-called sins - and especially not your own.

People say you must disapprove of a person's wrong action but that does not mean you disapprove of the person. But surely this means one way you do and another way you do not? What if they somehow identify with the sin? Billy the Kid would not like his sin condemned for he saw being a knave as what he was about! Hate his sin then is clearly hating the sinner.

The more natural our sins are - eg we habitually think and do unkind things every day - the more they are us. Loving the sinner is indirectly attacking the sinner.

If I really thought people judge my sin and not me I would not care what sins they say I have. If you must love the sinner and hate the sin it follows that it does not matter if you think that person is worse than what they are. The bigger the sin the more love is needed. Jesus as good as said that when he said he came to the worst of sinners - the ones who needed the most help. The doctrine is just full of contradictions.

If you love the sinner because he is not completely bad that means you are saying, "If you were completely bad I would not love you."

The notion that I owe somebody love is contradictory. Owing means I am being commanded to love. But commanding to love is a contradiction.

It is hard enough to love somebody on the basis of a command to love. But it is ten times harder if you see the person as a sinner.

To say you cannot hate a sinner for she is not totally bad is to say that you would hate her if she was.

The sin would be part of the person for sin only shows what a person is like. Love the sinner and hate the sin really means love the sinner in spite of the sin! You have to force yourself!

Loving the sinner in spite of the sin implies this love is not good but is a mere necessary evil.

Loving the sinner because of the sin is saying you must prefer sinners to the good person!

Loving the sinner and hating the sin is impossible for it calls for the sinner to be punished and punishment is not about what is good for the sinner. It is about hurting the sinner.

If you believe in sin or morality, then it is the immoral person who is the problem not their action.

When we do evil we don't necessarily become evil. It is evil in its results but the intention was to do good and the reason

evil happened was because we did the wrong kind of good. This is true even when we do what we call sin or deliberate evil. Strictly speaking there is no deliberate evil. What we call evil is less bad than what we think.

The teaching of sin is to be undermined and rejected at all costs. To say nothing is to become part of the problem.

What do I do then? Each person must realise, "People never attack me personally. Ever. People only attack what they perceive me to be. It is not because of me that they attack me. It is because of the way they let themselves feel about me. If they attack me, the only person they succeed in demeaning is themselves." I do not hate the sin and love the doer of the sin. Instead I refuse to call what another person does a sin. I may call it a mistake. I hope I can give light to the doer to make them see they want to be good and can do it better. Love the wrongdoer and see the good in the wrong and discourage the part of it that is wrong. This is very difficult because we tend to deny there is any good in evil actions that upset us. This is feelings taking over.

Sin is based on the idea of commands from God. You break the commands and that is sin. The suggestion that God gives commands is a form of violence.

God cannot command you to do right. If anything should command, then right commands itself. But right only suggests and does not coerce or demand.

Gods, Bibles, prophets and popes commanding people to do this and not to do that are making it a duty to do what they say. Commands are violent for they try to overpower the will of another. But what if the person who is commanded wants to and chooses to obey? That does not change the fact that the Gods, Bibles, prophets and popes are trying to make their will greater than theirs. Commands are attacks on another person's self-esteem. I build up my sense of self-value. I will then never need to be commanded. I will help others build up their own. So then I will never need to command them but to simply ask.

Commands say I must say certain acts are despicable instead of saying I feel they are despicable. Just because I don't like a painting does not mean it is a bad painting. I notice that I can't totally dislike it. Never say, "I hate it" or "I don't like it." That is too black and white. It's too simplistic.

Commands and negativity are close friends. Commands imply I should be forced to do what I don't want to do. If there was no interest in forcing, then asking would suffice. Commands cause me to break them by affirming that I am dangerous and need a bit of forcing. They do not help as they stir up the rebel in me.

My self-esteem will grow if I try to stop categorising my judgements as black and white. It's never that simple. My self-esteem will grow if I stop value judging. When I experience myself as a judgemental person, I fear being judged and I become more prone to mistakes. I fear what I have learned to fear through experience.

Belief in God is not necessary if commands are to be opposed. If people want comfort they can find comfort in an idol if they wish. Whatever works for them would be what matters. Belief in God implies that judgement and unhappiness are desirable.

You have to judge yourself. Nobody can tell you have really done wrong but you. God or the law judging you when you don't fully agree with them is simply a form of oppression.

I am free. I will remain free. And peace will flow to me and from me. I am free from the forcefulness of commands which at best is a tacit form of violence. I am free.

The sick are vulnerable to the exploits of people of faith and to faith which is exploitative.

When you suffer or see another suffer, do not say this is permitted by a good God for its in his plan. Unless you see the plan in detail you have no right to saying it is a plan. It is only a guess to make yourself feel better. When others suffer, it is not about you. It is not up to you to feel better about it. It is about them.

When you suffer tell yourself repeatedly - I am bigger than this. I will do good in spite of it. At the end of the day, that is the only thing that can help you.

I have such compassion for you.

Compassion means I see no good in or justification for what is happening to you.

If I fail in compassion towards you at least I know I'm wrong. At least the door to doing something about it is being opened.

We hope that this essay gives some help towards linking God and the abuse of the vulnerable and addressing it.