

Why Oppose ALL Religion?

Letting people be deceived in religion, ruins your credibility and shows you have no courage and cannot handle tricky things diplomatically. It ruins the peace of the other person who needs to be able to trust others. The deception or being complicit in deceit by silence deprives the person of the chance to find a religion and religious relationship that she values and that suits her better if not best. The notion that what she does not know will not harm her patronises her. It is unresponsive to what she cares about and needs. What is important is that she has a meaningful relationship with a religion or community not that she should have pleasant beliefs about that relationship that are false.

Robert Ingersoll wrote concerning the Church which wonders “why any Infidel should be wicked enough to endeavour to destroy her power. I will tell the church why. You have imprisoned the human mind; you have been the enemy of liberty; you have burned us at the stake – wasted us upon slow fires – torn our flesh with iron; you have covered us with chains – treated us as outcasts; you have filled the world with fear; you have taken our wives and children from our arms; you have confiscated our property; you have denied us the right to testify in courts of justice; you have branded us with infamy; you have torn out our tongues; you have refused us burial. In the name of your religion, you have robbed us of every right. Can you wonder that we hate your doctrines – that we despise your creeds?”

The Greatest of All Lies is the Lie told on behalf of God or religion...

Religion comes from a Latin word meaning to bind. It has to mean more than an outlook or group that binds people together. The best understanding is that it binds people together in a belief system and that that belief system is based on the supernatural so religion is trying to bind people to supernatural powers and each other. It implies that the people owe these powers worship and service as a duty. Religion then is a form of division. And a major source of division and bloodshed.

Religion is rules that have been authorised by God or which at least are claimed to be.

We do not really need religion. We need food and drink and shelter and health care to survive. But surviving is not really living. So we also need, but in a lesser way, arts, philosophy, sport, customs, manners and literature. They are optional for survival but needed for quality of life. You need them more than religion. Many people who have no religion endorse them and embrace them. Arts and philosophy can substitute for religion safely.

If religions are bad, the worse the religion is that you are in the worse you make yourself.

Real goodness is rooted in an extreme respect for human life. Extreme as in you will not give up promoting whatever helps life thrive and thrive happily. If religion is not needed to help people become good it is superfluous. The person who is not religious but who goes among the lepers to be the “god” that cares for them in the absence of divine love is better than the whole system of doctrine and scriptures and authority that makes up the religion. The religion that is superfluous is to blame for the badness in its flock for it pretends to be able to treat it with prayers and sermons and sacraments and it cannot. To make people think they are helped when they are not is to hinder not help.

Some deal with the problem of bad religion by saying that faith in religion is a private matter. They point out how a man can be a good president for his country and still be an adulterer in his private life. But separating private and public is never clear-cut or easy. If the president is a good liar like an adulterer needs to be, is that the kind of person you would trust in all things? The president could indeed still be a good president despite his private life but we cannot be expected to trust him or to take a chance on him. And if he asked us to, that would indicate disrespect for us. Now suppose he is a good president regardless of his adultery. What is worse for us - his being an adulterer or his being a member of a deceitful and bad religion? The latter would be worse if he considers the religion as part of his identity, part of what he is all about. And if people do wrong and do it through religion, you cannot say that they would do wrong anyway so the religion as such is fine. It would be like saying a person should be employed in a bank even if he has a history of stealing because he is going to steal anyway.

Some religions make such major claims that if they are man-made religions or are not divinely inspired then the person who follows them seriously misuses his or her life. No truly good person would encourage you to follow a religion that is wrong or man-made when for example it has you living your life to keep out of Hell forever. That makes you seriously miss the mark. It gives you a mistaken purpose in life. Saying nothing enables the error to continue and soon others end up being led astray as well. No man has the right to have his rules treated or considered as God's rules when they are not. It is only for God - if he exists - to make the rules. Otherwise the man becomes the lens through which you look at the alleged God. He becomes the real God. Anything else intends disrespect to the God that might exist and disrespect for yourself and others. True respect for the man who claims to reveal God's laws to you means you give him only the respect to which he is

entitled to in reality and no more.

The tendency to enable error, to empower it by letting it thrive, is the principle religious vice. Also religious communities actively or through silence or giving money, enable the leaders to get more power to harm people and to promote lies and "facts" that defy science and history and perhaps everything. Religion is training in dissonance where people seem to believe Adam and Eve existed despite knowing science has refuted them decisively. That is one example. A Muslim can read the Koran and see that its alleged perfection and clarity is a myth and still walk away believing that it is the infallible and perfect and clear word of God for God gave the actual words. When one can do that, one can easily feel saintly and believe herself or himself to be a saint while putting a shot in the head of the infidel. If they are not doing it is just because they didn't get into the context for doing it. If enabling error is the biggest problem with religion and why it is a curse, how does that square with other places where I wrote that the problem is religions tendency to persecute? Enabling error is a form of passive aggressive violence and at least implicitly, it persecutes the seeker of truth. A man of peace who lets others do violence is not a man of peace but a hypocrite. He is worse than those who take up the weapons because he gives evil an attractive face. Enabling error is enabling liars and lying to people is a form of abuse. If you let error thrive, you don't know what the consequences will be. Error allows great evil and violence to happen and thrive because without the truth there is little or nothing that can be done.

We must never consider how much good a religion does. The more a religion opposes truth, the more good it needs to do to look good. All organisations, however evil, need to look reasonably good. What we must consider is its attitude to truth. Does it enable error and does it preach in defiance of known facts? Every religion claims to have the truth. So each one must see the others as prone to error or as witting or unwitting opponents of the truth. Every religion itself must agree with us that the religious enabling error is a huge problem because if people were not doing it, there would be fewer false or religions about. Many religions are outright cons and still get tremendous devotion. People who enable possible error are not much better than those who knowingly enable error.

Even "good" religion makes bad religion or religion that enables evil to look good or better because it legitimises enabling. "Good" religion helps "bad" religion to thrive by developing the main ingredient of "bad" religion, people who enable. Those who deny that evil religious people are really religious are examples of such enablers. The enabling is the biggest problem. Without it the abuse and violence (violence against reason and truth and people) in religious contexts will not take place.

By blaming the bad deeds of a religionist on some other impulse and not on the religious impulse is enabling the problem. If the religious impulse is irrational, it means the person is risking becoming violent for religion.

Many religions are sectarian in the sense that they condemn other religions and condemn things or people that/who are not really wrong or that bad. The system of religion may be sectarian but the people in it might not be. But as they enter and/or remain part of a sectarian system and thus support it they lose any right to protest against sectarianism. They make their argument against sectarianism hypocritical and redundant. They hurt and demean themselves by acting like they want to be squeaky clean but have others in the religion doing the dirty sectarian work for them. Or perhaps they want the religious system of ethics and doctrine to do the sectarian hurting for them. They are still sectarian but of a less obvious and therefore more dangerous variety. They act like passive aggressive sectarians who want the social benefits of being seen as wonderful and good. And that is just what they are.

If a religion or all religion is untrue and is man-made and not acting with divine authority and mandate then religion is separating people from reality and keeping them away from their right to know the truth. They are cut off from the truth about who and what they really are and what life is about. They are blind and they cause more blindness and encourage people like Joseph Smith to take advantage of the blind.

All religions claim that perversions of religion, when religion is twisted and perverted by human beings, are dangerous. They deny that religion as such is necessarily bad or harmful.

We are encouraged to respect the beliefs of others. It is people we should respect not beliefs. Respecting the beliefs of others is popularly taken to mean that you don't criticise these beliefs at all - not even in a kindly way. This is nonsense. Respecting a belief does not mean sweeping it under the carpet. That is fearing it not respecting it. People do not have the right to ask us to fear their beliefs or their rights to hold beliefs. Fear like that leads to resentment and bigotry not to mention more fears!

Respecting the beliefs of others, ie not criticising or showing you disagree with them, is often restricted to religious beliefs which in itself is an admission that religion gets a dangerous level of reverence. It is asserting that it is dangerous to openly disagree with somebody's religious beliefs and admitting that religion is dangerous. It is accusing the practitioners of being dangerous. We disagree and contradict the beliefs of others every day so why should religious beliefs be exempt from our vocal criticism? If religious belief is dangerous and it makes the believers dangerous then that is all the more reason for

gently trying to discourage religious belief and expose the untruths that it arises from.

If religious belief deserves such respect that nobody should try to express disagreement with it, then it should only get it when the believer is open to checking that the belief is not detrimental to human welfare. Otherwise the believer doesn't care. For example, the Catholic who denies that birth-control should ever be allowed is opposing human welfare if this belief is wrong. He or she is part of the forces that are against birth control. If he or she is set upon believing that birth-control is always wrong and refuses to listen to the truth that person is simply bad.

Some people are not offended when their god, say Jesus for example, is insulted even though they claim to be Christians. And some Christians are offended. Should we be silent because some people have a bad reaction that they refuse to try and control? Should we be silent because even if we try to reason with them that Jesus might not have been what he said he was without insulting they will still get mad and offended? Surely in the latter case they are doing wrong not us. Surely their reaction is their own business.

Belief is not a private matter. Beliefs and opinions affect how you work in the world and relate to others. Believing something for emotional reasons or on little or no evidence shows poor self-control. If society could have the same beliefs it would be knit together better. Life would be better.

Work against religion by trying to educate its victims and expose the lies of their clergy.

Beliefs — what people believe to be true or false about our world — are vitally important. Just because we take them for granted and they don't feel important doesn't mean they are not important. Everything we do can be traced back to our beliefs. If we want to encourage a bad person to be good, we have to teach that person perhaps that people are not as bad as he or she thinks. Anti-social acts are often committed out of fear of others and to feel in control. Fearing other people always lead to disrespecting them at least in your thinking.

All our beliefs are important for they make us what we are. Religion says that religious beliefs are the most important beliefs of all. For the God believer, believing the doctor can help you is a sin. Believing that God uses the doctor to help you is a duty. It is to be all about God though believers may seem to act like secular people when they go to doctors.

From the perspective of the safe side, people who believe their religious beliefs entitle them to special treatment must be ignored. We can't pander to every form of religion. Religions disagree with one another. We have rights as people not as religionists. To expect special treatment because one accepts certain doctrines is just arrogant and silly. To expect people to say nothing critical about religion as if religion were something special is just paying homage to religious fundamentalism and implicitly endorsing it.