

Agnosticism (part 4 of 4): Settling for Less

Description: How a lack of any untainted religions has led people to settle for half truths, or, half lies.

By Laurence B. Brown, MD

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To return to Francis Bacon, he once opined, "They are ill discoverers that think there is no land, when they can see nothing but sea."^[1] Believers would offer advice to Atheists and Agnostics alike that God exists, whether seen or not, whether desired or not, whether considered proven or not. Argument to the contrary is just a distraction from a reality which will unfold as undeniable truth on a future day of joy for some, deep regret and horror for others.

A great many people need not await the Day of Judgement to entertain such a conclusion, for all people faced with insurmountable trials find themselves drawn to belief, for when faced with desperate circumstances, Who else do people instinctively call upon other than God? Although few make good on the promises of fidelity made at such moments of desperate appeal, the evidence of the oath remains long after the promises to God are cast aside to lie neglected in the gutters of the memory.

Can anybody help the insincere? Very likely not. The concept of recognizing God and living in satisfaction of His commandments only when, and for as long as, it suits one's purpose, demonstrates an unwillingness to submit on God's terms. Take, for example, St. Augustine's pathetic prayer, "*Da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo.* (Give me chastity and continency [but not yet!)"^[2] Here's the prayer of a 'Saint?' who on one hand was praying to God, and on the other hand wasn't ready to leave the houses of prostitution, to the compromise of his sexual incontinency. Compare this with the exemplary lives of the disciples of Jesus, who are reported to have deserted infinitely more honorable pursuits when called to follow Christ Jesus. These men left their worldly priorities, such as their livelihood of fishing and their obligation of burying the dead, when the truth came to them, without delay to a time of greater personal convenience. The religious might be inclined to comment, "Wow! Those are my kind of guys!" The more important understanding, however, is that those appear to be *God's* 'kind of guys.'

Of course, that was then and this is now. In the present age prophets walk on water, heal lepers, and bid mankind to follow only in the imaginations of those with a view to history. All the same, a lot of people still seek the truth of God and, once recognized, will follow immediately, regardless of the sacrifice required. But first, they must know the truth with certainty.

So what's the problem? Simply this: information has never been so readily available, and yet (on the surface at least) never so confusing and religiously obstructive. Most people have been raised with the intellectual tools to root out and identify the

inconsistencies and fallacies of the religions predominant within their exposure. Sincere seekers log a certain depth of experience in discrediting various faiths, a few of which are truly twitty cults, but the majority of which are sects claiming to be based upon some version of the Old or New Testaments, but in fact diverging from the balanced and fundamental teachings found therein. After a while, one sect begins to look very much like the others, many times with only shallow doctrinal differences, and almost always with the same questionable foundation. Most such sects have evolved to a modern conglomerate of truths, half-truths (or in other words, half-lies) and solid unadulterated deception. The problem is, mixing truth with falsehood is like mixing beauty with ugliness -- it doesn't work. Any one particular religion is either entirely truthful or to some degree impure. And since God doesn't error -- not even once -- if people can't trust one element of that which is presented as revelation, how can they know which teachings *can* be trusted? Furthermore, many of the religious have difficulty conceiving that God would leave humankind to hang the hereafter on an impure understanding of Him.

The problem screams in the doctrine-stuffed ears of man that a person cannot mix truth with falsehood and continue to consider the blend to originate from God any more than a person can mix loveliness and ugliness and continue to win beauty pageants. Place a single, hairy, multilobulated mole (not a beauty mark, but a true *ugly* mark) smack dab in the middle of any picture of facial perfection and what does a person get? Pure, unadulterated 'Angelic' beauty? On the contrary, the end result is the all too human reality of beauty marred.

Place the tiniest of falsehoods in a religion, which is reported to be from a perfect and flawless God, and what is the result? A lot of sincere people walking, for one. But for those who wish to hang on to the canon of a flawed belief system, apologists assume the role of religious cosmetic surgeons. These apologists may succeed in smoothing the uneven surface of scripture by way of doctrinal dermabrasion, but anybody with depth of insight recognizes that the foundational genetics remain faulty. Consequently, while some see straight through the lame attempts at excusing the absurd, many follow anyway.

Amongst those who do choose to embrace a faith, many arrive at their choice by throwing up their hands in frustration and choosing whatever religion suits best or, at the very minimum, offends least. Some file a telepathic communiqué with God to the effect that they are doing the best they can, others rest comfortably on insecure conclusions. Many become Agnostic with regard to all doctrinal faiths, pursuing an internal, personal faith for lack of exposure to a doctrinal belief which is pure and consistently Godly.

Refusal to compromise belief in a perfect and infallible God for a 'settle for' religion possessing shaky foundation and demonstrable doctrinal weaknesses is understandable - respectable even. After generations of distracting family traditions, centuries of confounding cultural misdirection, and a lifetime of prejudiced propaganda, many Westerners have become spiritually immobilized. On one hand the concept of a pristine, pure religion devoid of adulteration, corruption and, in short, the grimy and fallible hand of religion-engineering man is much sought after, but elusive to Western consciousness. On the other hand, many see too clearly the inconsistencies of any present day religion

founded on that with which the West is most familiar—namely the Jewish and Christian Bibles. Some may remain trapped within the narrow confine defined by the horn-tips of this dilemma. Others look deeply into Biblical scriptures and recognize that as the Old Testament predicted the coming of John the Baptist, Christ Jesus and one remaining prophet, so did Christ Jesus predict a prophet to follow himself—one who would bring a message of truth to make all things clear.

Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, and a variety of other Christian sects claim to fulfill this prophecy with the founder of their flavor of belief. Many others are skeptical and still searching. It is for the latter that this book has been written.

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The above excerpt is taken from Dr. Brown's forthcoming book, *MisGod'ed*, which is expected to be published along with its sequel, *God'ed*. Both books can be viewed on Dr. Brown's website, www.Leveltruth.com. Dr. Brown can be contacted at BrownL38@yahoo.com

Endnotes:

[1] Bacon, Francis. *Advancement of Learning*. I.vii.5.

[2] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. viii, ch. 7

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