



Fardale Trinity Church August 18, 2013 Pastor Joe Talone

Questions & Answers w/ Discussion

Summer Sermon Series Sundays, June 16th-Sept 1st, 2013

Q #10 If religion is such a good thing, why have so many wars been fought in the name of God and religion?
The Church is responsible for so much injustice throughout history. So are all religions.

“Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.”- Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

1. Critics of Christianity call for the end of all religions as the path to world peace and progress. Some of the abuses they cite are:

- A. The Crusades 1000-1400AD
Religion is not the source of mankind's [warring](#) tendency.
- B. Roman Catholic Church Inquisition
Religion is not the source of mankind's [power-abusing](#) tendency.
- C. Colonial Slavery
Religion is not the source of [slavery](#).
- D. Racism of the American Southern Baptists
Religion is not the source of mankind's tendency toward [race-based hate](#).
- E. Some blame the Holocaust on Christianity.

The actions of the Nazi regime in the 20th century are best explained by the more immediate referent of [atheistic](#) social Darwinism to which they appeal in their writings.

- True, Hitler played the God card.
- But he cited [evolution](#) as grounds for his master race ideas.
 1. Darwin's *Origin of Species* had been translated into German in 1860, followed by his *Descent of Man* in 1875.
 2. Ernst Haeckel had become 'Darwin's chief European apostle proclaiming the Gospel of evolution with evangelistic fervor.
 3. The German nation had been subjected for many years to the 'God-is-dead' atheism of Friedrich Nietzsche.
 4. "Another factor that gave rise to this shameful and destructive period of human history was the relentless attack on the Bible in Germany throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries by the proponents of so-called "higher criticism". The diminished respect then held for God's Word, primed the German church for capitulation to the Nazis."
- Some Christians risked everything to help the Jewish people.

2. The 20th century atheistic regimes that forcibly removed all religion, and gave us the most violent century in human history.

- A. Stalin and Pol Pot were [atheists](#)!

- B. Societies that have rid themselves of all religion have been just as oppressive as those steeped in religion.
We must conclude that the problem lies with the human [heart](#), not religion.
- C. Aldus Huxley's post WWII admission:
“We are living now, not in the delicious intoxication induced by the early successes of science, but in a rather grisly morning-after, when it has become apparent that what triumphant science has done hitherto is to improve the means for achieving unimproved or actually deteriorated ends.”

3. Atheism and evolutionary naturalism are as much a worldview as any religion.

- A. Everyone lives out his religion, whether he calls it a religion or not. Everyone lives out his view of the world, his worldview. Religion is as integral to a person's worldview as the [absence](#) of religion.
- B. So arguing for the end of all religion, as the path to world peace and progress, is inane and naïve.

4. Don't lump all religions into the same category.

- A. Distinguish between religions that live peaceably beside those of other faiths, and religions that violently persecute those who do not believe as they do.
- B. When you follow the teachings of Jesus and live authentic NT Christianity, you love and serve your neighbors for their benefit, even your neighbors who believe and live [differently](#) than you do.

5. Don't confuse institutional religion with authentically following the teaching of Jesus and the practice of NT Christianity.

- A. Authentic followers of Christ are those who practice NT Christianity. They are committed to grace and mercy, and treating others as God has treated them. They're [fanatically](#) humble, sensitive, loving, empathetic, forgiving and understanding as Christ was.
- B. Christianity contains the standards by which we can identify hypocritical behavior as wrong. Without the Bible and Christianity we would have no resources nor standards to make [correction](#).

Message

When Christians do evil, this is a contradiction of NT Christianity, not an authentic outliving of it.

Think about it and act on it:

Tim Keller (The Reason for God, P. 35-50) suggests two key questions for determining whether a community is open and caring rather than narrow and oppressive?

Which community's beliefs lead its members to treat persons in other communities with love and respect - to serve them and meet their needs?
[NT Christianity, original Christianity, historic Christianity.](#)

Which community's beliefs lead it to demonize and attack those who violate their boundaries rather than treating them with kindness, humility, and winsomeness?