

6. ABOUT RELIGION AND THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

WTM FAQ 6.3 Aren't all Griffith's demystifications of religious teachings going to be seen by supporters of religion as blasphemy? / Does understanding of the human condition undermine a faith in religion or God? / How does this affect my personal religious practice? / How can you reconcile the explanation of the human condition that defends the upset state with religious teachings that condemn upset?

The great founding prophets of religion actually looked forward to the arrival of the reconciling understanding of the human condition—which means supporters of religion shouldn't see Jeremy's scientific demystification of religious teachings as blasphemy, but as religious fulfillment!

The whole objective of our conscious mind has been to replace ignorance, mystery, superstition and dogma with knowledge and understanding. *But*, in order to search for knowledge *and* comply with our almost universal need to deny the human condition, we needed both science and religion. This is because science took up the responsibility of inquiring into the mechanisms and workings of our world in a denial-complying, mechanistic (not-holistic) way, while religion became the custodian of the integrative, 'Godly', cooperative ideals of life while the search for the liberating understanding of humans' 'fallen' condition was underway. (Integrative Meaning, which we have personified as 'God', is explained in [chapter 4*](#) of biologist Jeremy Griffith's definitive work, *FREEDOM: The End Of The Human Condition*, and in [Freedom Essay 23*](#).)

As Jeremy writes in paragraph 1217 of *FREEDOM*, "religions aren't being threatened by the arrival of dignifying understanding of the human condition—they are being fulfilled. The whole purpose of religion was to be the custodian of the ideal state while the search for the liberating understanding of humans' 'fallen' condition was underway. Buddha, for instance, looked forward to the arrival of the amelioration of the human condition when he said that **'In the future they will every one be Buddhas** [meaning in the future everyone will be free of psychosis] / **And will reach Perfect Enlightenment / In domains in all directions / Each will have the same title** [there will be no more distorting alienation] / **Simultaneously on wisdom-thrones / They will prove the Supreme Wisdom'** (Buddha [Siddhartha Gautama] 560–480 BC, *The Lotus Sutra*, ch.9; tr. W.E. Soothill, 1987, p.148 of 275).

In the Bible, Moses similarly anticipated a time when we **'will be like God, knowing'** (Gen. 3:5). In his *Lord's Prayer*, Christ instructed us to pray for the time when **'Your [Godly, integrated, peaceful] kingdom come, your [integrative] will be done on earth as it is in heaven'** (Matt. 6:10 & Luke 11:2). He also looked forward to the time when **'another Counsellor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth** [the denial-free, truthful, first-principle-based, scientific understanding]...**will teach you all things and will remind you of everything** [all the denial-free truths] **I have said to you'** (John 14:16, 17, 26). He

similarly said he looked forward to when, instead of being restricted to ‘speaking figuratively’, we ‘will no longer use this kind of language but will [be able to] tell you plainly about my Father [be able to explain the world of Integrative Meaning in denial-free, human-condition-reconciled, compassionate, understandable, rational, first principle, scientific terms]’ (John 16:25).

And again, the same anticipation of our species’ liberation from the human condition is expressed in Revelations in the Bible where it states that ‘**Another book [will be]...opened which is the book of life [the human-condition-explaining and humanity-liberating book]...[and] a new heaven and a new earth [will appear] for the first heaven and the first earth [will have]...passed away...[and the dignifying full truth about our condition] will wipe every tear from...[our] eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain [insecurity, suffering or sickness], for the old order of things has passed away**’ (20:12, 21:1, 4). Yes, as Isaiah hoped, there would come a time when humans ‘will beat their swords into ploughshares...Nation[s] will...[not] train for war any more’ (Isa. 2:4). And what did that truth-saying prophet John Lennon ‘imagine’? A time when the human condition is resolved and ‘the world will be as one’, when there will be ‘no heaven [above us and] no hell below us’; when, in essence, there will be a world without the condemning differentiation of good and evil, a world liberated from the insecurity of the human condition and thus the need for religion, where, as Lennon sang, there will be ‘Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion too...all the people living life in peace...No need for greed or hunger, a brotherhood of man...all the people sharing all the world’ (*Imagine*, 1971).”

In the following comment, the Dalai Lama acknowledges that the peace religions long for cannot come about through ‘religious faith’, but only through a ‘universal solution’: ‘The Dalai Lama believes secular ethics, not religion, is best placed to assist the “moral crisis” facing the world’s people...[because it] respected all traditional faiths as well as non-believers. “Some people—some my friends—believe moral ethics must be based on religious faith,” he said. [But] “No matter how wonderful a religion, (it will) never be universal. The crisis is universal—now the remedy must also be universal”’ (*The Australian*, 14 Jun. 2013).

So, the true role of science was to bring an end to faith and belief and introduce the age of knowing, and with it a world of psychologically secure human beings, while the true role of religion was to comfort humanity while the search went on and explanation of the human condition was finally found, which is exactly what has happened. Through the advances made by mechanistic science, Jeremy has been able to synthesise a holistic, denial-free, human-condition-confronting-not-avoiding, first-principle biological explanation that at last answers the age-old question about our fundamental goodness and worth as a species.

The physicist Charles H. Townes summed up this ultimate reconciliation of science and religion best when he said, ‘they [science and religion] both represent man’s efforts to understand his universe and must ultimately be dealing with the same substance. As we understand more in each realm, the two must grow together...converge they must’ (‘The Convergence of Science and Religion’, *Zygon*, 1966, Vol.1, No.3).

How does this affect my personal religious practice?

Basically, the degree we have needed/hung onto/lived off/believed in a metaphysical God, is the same degree we will struggle to accept the demystification of God. It would feel like we are being asked to give up our faith, which has absolutely been sustaining us, but it is actually not a case of having to choose one or the other. In fact, very importantly, as is explained and emphasised above, faith is being supported and upheld and verified and looked after and validated. So what is actually being introduced with this first-principle-based scientific explanation of love and purpose and God and the lives of the great prophets, is an even better way of living, one that will be infinitely more sustaining and nourishing, but it naturally will take time to absorb and reconcile the two interpretations in our mind.

We suggest that what is required is to hold onto your more ethereal, metaphysical faith while patiently continuing to think about all the scientific explanations of our meaning and place in the world—because those understandings (if they are truly accountable, which we are sure all the evidence will indicate they are) will eventually confirm every aspect of your faith. To quote from [FAQ 6.2*](#), ‘in fact, all the attributes we have imbued ‘God’ with—‘His’ lovingness of our fallen state, ‘His’ reassurance that if we are as true to him as we can be all will be okay in the end, ‘His’ kindness towards all forms of suffering, ‘His’ essential ‘goodness’, ‘His’ ‘bigness’ in every sense; namely ‘His’ universality, ‘His’ omnipotence (all-powerfulness), omnipresence (all-presentness) and omniscience (all-knowingness)—are actually now confirmed and reinforced by our ability to understand ‘Him’.’

So, we suggest it’s not a case of one being right and true and the other inadequate and wrong, rather it’s a case of holding onto your faith and associated practises like prayer and church, while continuing to think about the explanations of our purpose and God and so forth, and eventually discovering whether or not those explanations actually do satisfactorily explain, and even enhance, all those precious aspects of faith referred to in the quote above.

Readers might find this response someone wrote to what is said in the three paragraphs above useful: “It is truly incredible that, with Jeremy’s dignifying and compassionate explanation of the human condition, we are at last on safe enough ground to look into all these big previously off-limits topics, like what is God and why religion. Chapter 4 of *FREEDOM* is the chapter to read because it’s the most comprehensive explanation of God and the meaning of life. And Freedom Essay 39: *Christ Explained* is fascinating.”

How can you reconcile the explanation of the human condition that defends the upset state with religious teachings that condemn upset?

With understanding of the human condition we can now appreciate that in order to encourage people to adhere to the integrative, ‘Godly’, cooperative ideals of life, religions sought to restrain ‘upset’ behaviour by making people fearful of behaving in an overly angry, egocentric and alienated way. So you will find in the Bible passages, such as the following from Jeremiah, that spell out the upset state—‘**The heart is deceitful above all things, and beyond cure: who can understand it?**’ (Bible, Tr. 1978 NIV, Jeremiah 17:9)—and other passages that seek to

persuade people to not live out their upset; for example, ‘**He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power**’ (ibid, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9), and ‘**Then he will say to those on his left, Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels**’ (ibid, Matt. 25:41). The more upset and therefore destructive people became, the more they *needed* to try to obey the Godly ideals of life that religions taught, but the problem was such condemnation of upset behaviour, as ‘**deceitful**’, ‘**cursed**’ and warranting ‘**eternal fire**’ for instance, could be terrorising and extremely oppressive. As a result, many people who grew up with strict religious doctrine suffer all their life from the ‘you’ll-burn-in-hell-if-you-sin, fire and brimstone’-terror that they were subjected to as children.

Obviously what was desperately missing was the reconciling understanding of our upset behaviour and the Godly ideals; reconciling understanding of the human condition in fact—which is exactly what Jeremy Griffith presents us with. With the understanding of the human condition that explains *why* we departed from those Godly ideals, no longer does anybody have to preach, or be terrorised by, religious dogma. And everyone can now understand the aligning (with Integrative Meaning) and restraining (of upset)—albeit repressive—purpose of religious doctrine. No wonder the reconciling understanding of the human condition has brought incredible relief to people who have spent a lifetime suffering from religious fire-and-brimstone teaching!

To understand prophets, including Christ and the incredible importance of his work, we suggest you read [Freedom Essay 39: Christ Explained*](#). And read more in [chapter 9:8 of FREEDOM*](#) about how this information represents the long awaited fulfillment of the religious faith that humanity would one day be liberated from its human condition. Also in [FAQ 6.2*](#) you can read more about how the scientific explanation of ‘God’ does not undermine the religious metaphysical description of ‘God’.

Published by WTM Publishing and Communications Pty Ltd (ACN 103 136 778)

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