

giving of all money to the church.

The Catholic Church is against contraception. It extends this ban to everyone by secular law where its political strength is strong enough. Charitable efforts to feed the hungry while blocking long term solutions has led to hunger on a gigantic scale.

Conservative Or Liberal?

Conservative churches grow, liberal churches disintegrate. The fundamental churches are growing in numbers, wealth and influence. Liberalism allows people to think for themselves. When they do so, they find they don't need the church themselves and they see no reason why its doctrines should be imposed on others. So they leave the church. Current problems of membership and income of the Catholic Church are partly due to the liberalizing moves of Pope John XXIII.

Creation

Matter has probably always existed in some form or another. If so, it makes it unnecessary to explain the creation of matter. Attempts to describe god and explain his method of creation bog down in contradictions. Explaining one mystery with another is hardly a contribution to knowledge.

Present knowledge of the origin of species is incomplete. However, the Genesis descriptions of the origins of species are obviously myth intended to show the power of god. The two stories contradict each other. They are presented as fact with no reservations at all. The stories indicate a lack of understanding of the sky and the solar system so they could hardly be inspired by an all knowing god.

Religious Words

Religious words like god, sin, salvation, spiritual need, atonement, etc., have a vast range of meaning. A speaker uses them to suit the purpose he has in mind at the moment. It is necessary for the listener to guess at the meaning by the way the word is used. This is an exhausting process and makes communication quite difficult. In my opinion, these are nonsense words that cannot be precisely defined as they do not represent a realistic way of thinking. Theology is not real knowledge.

Religious Rituals

Church rituals have the effect of helping people to be more comfortable with their own religious

programming. This is upset by changes in the ritual. Successful churches change their rituals slowly and cautiously. They stay with the old hymns and melodies. The altar was originally used for sacrificing. It has been retained centuries after sacrificing was discontinued.

Reform in such areas as birth control, abortion, divorce, and voluntary euthanasia has been impeded by religious doctrine. Believers are apt to follow their church teachings and vote against politicians who stand for change.

Politicians

The problems caused by religions tend to be long term ones, such as how should Jerusalem be governed? Politicians have to have quick solutions. Advocating disengagement from religious belief is a long term solution.

Some churches encourage members to go into politics and provide them with supporters. Such politicians are apt to be helpful to their church. Churches have income and voting strength which permits them to lobby effectively. It is hard to organize lobbies around non-belief, because non-believers feel little need to reinforce their non-belief by belonging to an organization.

Action Needed

People should neglect their church, because church rituals reinforce the faith. If this neglect causes guilt feelings, then they should do their own homework on religion and re-think their own personal philosophy. At least some will obtain sufficient conviction and self-confidence to permanently abandon their religious beliefs.

ALL CHURCHES ...
ARE HUMAN INVENTIONS
SET UP TO TERRIFY AND
ENSLAVE MANKIND, AND
MONOPOLIZE POWER AND
PROFIT. —Thomas Paine

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