

No Religion Too.

“ Your followers are blind, too much heaven on their mind”

- from *Jesus Christ Superstar*

Contrary to what a lot of folks think, I'm not anti-Jesus, in fact he's one of my favorite mythical figures. Not exactly Augustus McCrae, but solid overall. He threw the bankers and thieves out of the temple. Cured a few lepers. Preached love and acceptance for all. Drank a little wine, perhaps smoked a little smoke. Was good to his mom, loyal to his friends, forgave his enemies, stood up to authority, defended sex workers (looking at you Mary Magdalene) ultimately died for his beliefs. He got a little bit full of himself; not sure of that rising from the dead thing, or that 'son of god' nonsense, but overall Jesus is just all right with me.

It's Christianity I have a problem with.

A religion that condones, supports and promotes violence and war. A religion that subjugates women, thinks homosexuality is a sin, looks the other way when a member of clergy abuses a child. A religion that has an insatiable need for power, influence and most of all, money.

With tactics that are no different from any politician seeking power or any company looking to make a buck they advance their agenda and promote their product by manipulating the message to tell customers what they want to hear. And the product? A golden ticket to heaven! Who doesn't want that? Their top salespeople, their closers, folks like Kenneth Copeland (net worth 760 m), Pat Roberts (105 m), Joel Osteen (90 m), Joyce Meyer (25 m) get rich because of their ability to persuade churchgoers to put billions each week in the collection basket. The money buys the power. What a racket. Just Jesus freaks, out in the streets, handing tickets out for gold.

And the followers, Jesus, what is up with these folks? Are they really this blind?

The Evangelical Christians who actually believe that the money they drop in the collection basket goes for good, as they watch with eyes wide open as these pastors live in mansions, drive ultra-luxury cars, and jet around the world on their personal planes. The Catholics who believe the Vatican, with an estimated net worth over a trillion dollars, does not have enough money to keep parishes and schools open in poor neighborhoods.

The indolent whom offer prayers in lieu of doing anything that could actually help. The “look at me” Christians wearing cross chains complimented with MAGA hats. The pretentious affluent who believe what Osteen preaches, that their riches are proof that god loves them the best. The duped believers whom are convinced that the same god who permitted the holocaust will help you find your car keys, watched as you hit a home run.

The human race has always had a messiah syndrome; most people want to be told how to live their lives and hope that the good they do is rewarded. So Jesus's message still resonates. But Christian power brokers, cloaked behind the promise of paradise, bastardized the message. They took over the temple.

This is why a whole bunch of folks gave up on Christianity. As recently as twenty years ago, 90% of Americans identified as Christians; it's down to 63% now. And it's worse with younger people, 50% report that they have no religion too.

So what's a well-meanin', god lovin', church goin', bible thumpin', true believin' Christian to do? Well, here's some preachin' from an agnostic; a sermon from the sidelines so to speak.

If you find comfort in belonging to a church and attending services, by all means, keep going. If praying brings you peace, pray away. But understand that neither do a damn thing to ease the pain of the suffering. If it makes you feel better to toss \$50 in the collection basket or dropping a buck in a box to light a candle for the poor, fine. But understand where that money goes. Not to those in need but to line the pockets of the church. If it makes you smile to hear "feel good" preaching at a Mega Church or singing along at Baptist revival, great, we all need to be entertained. But don't believe their schtick, because that's what it is. Showmen all, salesmen first and foremost.

The truth is, all of these things, the going to church, the praying, the putting money in the collection box, lighting a candle, listenin' to the preachin' do nothing to make a difference in this world. They're the easy way out, a way to make folks feel good about themselves.

Want to really make a difference?

Go volunteer at a hospital or a nursing home or a homeless shelter. Help out at a food pantry. Donate money to a local organization. Find an unaffiliated local group helping out in your community and help fund them. You'll know who they are, the leaders get their hands dirty.

Open your mind, open your mouth and close your wallet. Assert yourself to your priest, your minister, your bishop. Demand that your religion practice what they preach. If not, cut off their money supply. The empty collection plate will be a powerful motivator for change.

Then show others how to live their lives by how you live yours. Do unto others as you would have done to you. Love thy neighbor. All that Jesus stuff. Take your church back, return it to a house of prayer not a den of thieves.

Thinkin' that's what Jesus would do.

That's all I'm sayin'

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