

Losing My Religion: Part 1

By Glenn Lambdin

I recently came to the conclusion that I've lost my religion. After spending twenty years as a fundamentalist Christian and the last six years dissecting and re-evaluating my faith, it's time for me to admit that I have lost my religion. The very institution that guaranteed me eternal bliss, now guarantees me an eternity of torment, sorrow, and gnashing of teeth. I am a heretic. For some odd and uncanny reason, however, I am more at peace with my after-life now than I have ever been.

Shortly after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, I embarked on a six year soul-searching quest that questioned many aspects of my faith that I, like almost all Christians, took as unquestionable truth. In some Christian circles, just the mere act of questioning some of the historical doctrines that I doubted would have been regarded as heresy. Furthermore, many of my conclusions would be grounds to remove me from the fold as an apostate.

I still believe that as the Bible says, "God is not the author of confusion." However, what could be more confusing than the Bible? We only need to ask ourselves, "How many lives have been destroyed because of Biblical confusion?" How could the results of this confusion come from the God of the universe?

When I started on this journey to evaluate my faith, (the) authorship and validity of various scriptural texts, and the historical Church as an institution, I tried to approach it based in logic and reason. If God is not the author of confusion, then I presupposed that God must be the author of logic and reason and that the laws of logic, reason, probability, and science are the laws of God.

Something, though, has gone hay-wire with religion. The same pool of religious thought that brought the world Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is same pool of religious thought that, in practice, has forced humanity to suffer millenniums of unthinkable atrocities of hate, murder, torture, bigotry, slavery, and worse. The events of 9/11 clearly demonstrated the degree to which the religious faithful are willing to inflict man's inhumanity on man. It showed the ease and extent that religious fundamentalists, in the total absence of evidence, are willing to reduce this planet to a pile of smoldering ashes and debris just to put an end to heresy and some promise of a better life.

The truth of the matter is that there is no way to either prove or disprove the existence of God. I choose to believe that God exists even though I recognize that there is no evidence to prove it. I, however, can no longer believe that there is a single piece of evidence that any holy book, anywhere, was written by the Creator of the universe. How can I, when everywhere I look I am reminded of the global killings that these ancient writings have inspired or even mandated? To quote Sam Harris, "All of these ancient works were in fact, the work of sand-strewn men and women who thought the earth was flat and to whom a wheelbarrow would have been a breathtaking example of emerging technology. These writings offer no mechanisms to test or revise its core beliefs, even in the realities of modern technology and science. In the end, those that accept them as inspired works written by God are forced to accept the superstitions and hatreds of their predecessors."

Religious fundamentalist faith has elevated belief to the highest place in human virtues in the total absence of true logical evidence. And the practitioners are continuing to kill each other and the innocent.