

Blind Faith?

Early in the twentieth century, there was a strong movement to remove religion from the public domain. The public school, for example, is now to be administered in all its capacities on the premise that secular education can be isolated from religious teaching. "Separation of church and state" is interpreted by many as a separation of Christianity and the state. Just attend any public school's "Christmas assembly" to see if it isn't so.

To imply that religion can be separated from the state is to imply that people can function and make decisions without reference to what they believe is true. What an absurd idea. The teacher insists that cheaters will be punished. Why? Because it's wrong? Based on whose morality? Why can that particular religious connection be forced upon the class?

Should we allow students to cheat? Of course not. We expect every teacher to adhere to certain faith-based values. But whose values? Whose faith?

Would we expect elected officials to sacrifice their conscience because it is guided by their faith?

Every thinking person has a view of reality. Every thinking person assumes certain things, about God, man and the world, and bases this faith in both the seen and the unseen. These core beliefs form the foundation of every world-view. Everyone exercises faith to create a framework to understand existence. Every world-view begins with faith, so every world-view is religious. Everyone holds to certain views, which they will not compromise. Those things we call "dogma." We all have them, not just theists.

Separation of church and state cannot remove religion from government. In our country, it has only meant replacing theistic religion with atheistic beliefs and their outworking in "faith." The atheistic world view quickly grows intolerant when their dogma is challenged in the classroom, or anywhere else in the "secular" domain. By accepting a false dichotomy between faith and reason, we have effectively sanctioned the marginalizing of all theistic religions. This allows state endorsed dismissal of any faith based (theistic) assertions in favor of atheistic assertions under the guise of neutrality. We certainly must guard against establishing any state religion. We must also guard against discriminating against any particular faith. We have failed on both counts.

No faith is blind. All faith is based on some kind of reason. This question is, what is the most reasonable faith? (this article was sponsored by the United Reformed Church of Thunder Bay <http://www.thunderbayurc.org/>)