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Freedom of Medicine and of Conscience

ON FAITH - WASHINGTON POST - WILLIS ELLIOTT

This question is and is not a laughing matter: "Are physicians' primary obligations to their patients or their religious convictions?"

A laughing matter: The question's secular-antireligious bias is blatant. Maturely religious physicians have so integrated their religious and occupational "professions" that what is good for their patients is understood within the particular physician's way of seeing and living in the world. Further, the bias naively assumes that what is good for the patient can be objectively known, confining the religious factor to the inferior realm of subjectivity. The question does not occur where what is good for the patient -- for example, stopping the flow of blood from a wound -- can be objectively known.

NOT a laughing matter: Some religious traditions dogmatically exclude or severely restrict some generally accepted medical procedures. For example, Christian Science and Roman Catholicism. For the births of our children, my wife and I avoided Roman Catholic hospitals out of fear that she would die and I would leave the hospital with a neonate and no wife.

But more fundamental than the partly hypothetical question driving a wedge between medicine and religion is the fact that religion and medicine are only superficially and secondarily in conflict. They are **siblings**, born of the common human desire to improve the human condition. Of course siblings occasionally fuss at one another, but their dustups do not erode their sibling identity. Historically, an outstanding instance of their cooperation is the fact that Christianity has been the primary hospital-builder to the world.

Two practical matters:

1 Medical institutions should accommodate the consciences of particular physicians, for both medical efficiency and religious freedom.

2 As in America we have the mutual freedom of "church and state," we should have also the mutual freedom of medicine and law. Government should stay out of doctors' offices and operating rooms.

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | AUGUST 13, 2007; 6:40 AM ETSAVE & SHARE:

PREVIOUS: [THE DOCTOR AS ARTIST AND CHICKEN SOUP AS PRESCRIPTION](#) | NEXT: [TWO COMMITMENTS IN COMPETITION?](#)

Comments

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The first thing of his that I recall reading was the short story "Harrison Bergeron" when I was in sixth grade. I wept at the end. Shortly after that, I found Breakfast of Champions in the school library. I didn't get the whole thing at that age, but I got enough to know that I was reading the work of a genius. From there, I was hooked.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 15, 2007 10:53 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I "discovered" him in college, when I took a modern lit. class. I was skeptical of the "pulp fiction" type paperbacks I had to buy for that class, but was very much surprised as we got into his works. He really affected me with his method of storytelling. Total inspiration...and proof that one cannot judge a book by its cover.

POSTED BY: DANNY B. | AUGUST 15, 2007 10:22 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

WARNING: COMPLETELY OFF TOPIC POST!

Danny,

I had the pleasure of seeing/hearing him in person many years ago at LSU. It was one of the most memorable nights of my life. I had brought my copy of Breakfast of Champions with me, hoping for the chance to get it signed, but alas, it was not to be. He was extremely agitated and somewhat surly backstage and ran everyone off. The next day, the papers announced that he had collapsed the night before in his hotel room and been hospitalized for exhaustion.

I have, however been fortunate enough to have my copy of Dandelion Wine autographed by Ray Bradbury and my copy of Schindler's List autographed by Thomas Kenealy - I met both of them at SLU literary conventions.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:58 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I meant Slaughterhouse-Five...I don't know what's wrong with me this morning.

POSTED BY: DANNY B. | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:50 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Lepidopteryx,

Breakfast of Champions was (and is) one of my favorite books of all time! Which, by the way, is the left-over content from Slaughter House Five (as I understand it).

POSTED BY: DANNY B. | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:46 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Danny:

I miss Vonnegut. He was my generation's Twain.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:39 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

lepidopteryx,

NICE Vonnegut reference! Love him!

POSTED BY: DANNY B. | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:30 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Two practical matters:

1 Medical institutions should accommodate the consciences of particular physicians, for both medical efficiency and religious freedom.

2 As in America we have the mutual freedom of "church and state," we should have also the mutual freedom of medicine and law. Government should stay out of doctors' offices and operating rooms.

"

Does anyone *really* want to live in a place where the above would be true? Should doctors be allowed to do *anything* with absolutely no government over-site?

With respect to (1), if a doctor refuses to operate on people of color, or Jews -- should the medical institutions attempt to accommodate those desires?

With respect to (2), if a doctor wants to employ voodoo or some other experimentation on human subjects should the state refuse to become involved?

The practice of medicine by doctors should be as secular as the practice of law by policemen -- the injection of religious behavior serves no public purpose.

POSTED BY: COLUMBIA MD | AUGUST 15, 2007 9:21 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Vie:

I have a feeling that CS is left alone a lot of the time.
But when s/he attacks, s/he should expect a defense to be mounted.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 15, 2007 7:52 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Everybody:

Leave Canyon alone. He or she is obviously an individual of very weak and tenuous faith who needs to speak loudly and forcefully to reassure himself. Without a big crowd of people to agree with him he might not be safely in the majority. (Is it his tone that makes us all assume Canyon is male?)

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | AUGUST 15, 2007 2:37 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RT:

I don't see your finding common elements between our beliefs as trying to twist me into confessing Christianity. I have said before that I find wisdom in your faith - I just don't buy the whole package, and I do see some things differently. I certainly don't think I have an exclusive claim on communion with the Divine, whatever name you wish to call it by. It's good to find common ground, no?

If it works for you, groovy.

Namaste.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 7:32 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I have also heard it recently referred to as "Red Tea" but technically speaking it is not tea at all.

I think it is made from bark... which makes me want to call it "bark juice"

-RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 14, 2007 6:13 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Lep (regarding your 4:34 PM Aug. 15th): When you say "Whole" (with a capital W...) and similarly "Deity" and "Divine" ... that's the sense in which I use the word God.

When you say "manifestations" and "multiple forms of deity" I would (as a Christian) use words like "glory of God" and "spiritual gifts" and "Living God" and other ways to talk about how God can be seen as working in the world.

When you say "I see it more as a composite that is more than the sum of its parts" That's like the essence of the trinity and communion ... a mysterious ability of the divine to be united with "fleshly" substance and yet still be both worldly and divine. ... hmm... ok this makes me want to find the exact words (googled John 17) ok here it is: "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one" ... even the idea of the virgin birth expresses the idea that the Holy Spirit (the essence of God) was able to be fully united with a Human being in the form of the Virgin Mary. I understand the skepticism there, but one of the ways that people view the Virgin Mary claim is seeing in this claim the explanation of how the Divine and the Mundane can be inseparably united.

I understand that you may see my post here as an attempt to twist your words into confessing Christianity, but I would say I am instead trying to further the dialogue by comparing how you say you see things using the traditional Christian frame of reference and language I am familiar with. Feel free to point out places if I have interpreted something of your words incorrectly. But it does seem to me that your notion of Christians believing in an "out there not here" God is somewhat ... uhh... not accurate. ... IMHO

Peace,
RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 14, 2007 6:07 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RT:

Oops. I thought at first you were saying to mix half Chamomile and half rooibos.

My bad. I've never tried rooibos with half and half either - just a drop of honey.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:59 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RT:

Thanks for the idea - I love rooibos. I've never tried mixing it with chamomile. Sounds great, though.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:55 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Lep: I like Chamomile tea as well, but if you really want someone to chill out I would have you recommend Rooibos... add some 1/2 + 1/2 and it is delish!

-RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:51 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

CS:

Berkowitz can worship any god he wants, as long as they keep his criminally insane ass locked up.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:30 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon-

Let us pray:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console,
not so much to be understood as to understand,
not so much to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

Or perhaps you would prefer this:

Where there is charity and wisdom, there is neither fear nor ignorance.
Where there is patience and humility, there is neither anger nor vexation.
Where there is poverty and joy, there is neither greed nor avarice.
Where there is peace and meditation, there is neither anxiety nor doubt.

Blessed Be.

POSTED BY: WICCAN | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:28 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon:

Dude, you need to calm down before you blow a gasket. I suggest a cup of chamomile tea. Maybe several cups. Maybe you should bathe in it.

At the risk of repeating myself, I hate no one, including your god. Hating someone else gives them entirely too much power over me.

***Punishment of descendents for the sins of ancestors." - An atheist will most likely have atheist babies, a muslim will have muslim babies, a pagan, pagan babies...all will go to Hell, not because of their religion but for transgressing the law.**

Actually, I was referring to stories like all of Ham's descendants being cursed because he laughed at his drunk, naked father. Why should people who weren't even born yet be punished generations later for something they had no part in?

***Punishment of all for the sins of some - eg the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah." - Read your Bible. Willfully ignorant. There are none good, no not one. God promised not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if He could find a single good person in either city.**

Why flood the earth? Why not just cause the wicked to drop dead on the spot? Your god is highly temperamental. If there was none good in either city, including Lot, why was Lot spared? Your god plays favorites? That can hardly be called just, now can it?

Calling a man righteous for offering his daughters to be gang-raped." Willfully ignorant. This action didn't make him righteous, much in Lot's life didn't make him righteous, he was as detestable as the rest of us, except that he sought after God and was thus made righteous. Do you know anything about what Christianity teaches?

I know that, according to the story, when Lot offered his daughters to the mob, neither of the supposed angels spoke up and said, "Whoa, dude. That's not necessary. We can handle these guys."

Punishment of the innocent for the sins of the guilty - eg killing the Egyptian firstborn." - Again, innocent?

Yes, innocent. It wasn't the firstborn that God was p.o'd at - it was Pharoah. As I recall, firstborn livestock were also killed. I suppose they were somehow guilty as well?

***Invasion and destruction of indigenous people - eg the carnage wreaked by the Children of Israel on the various cities and towns they sacked under orders from their/your god." - This is not a reason to disbelieve Christianity, this is saying, "I don't agree with God." If you'd read the Bible, then you would. Especially see the conquest of Jericho in the book of Joshua.**

I can't worship a god who orders such wanton destruction. Such a god is not worthy of my worship.

***Substitutionary atonement, IMO, is invalid. If an innocent person offers to be executed in place of a serial killer, how does that absolve the serial killer?" - Willfully ignorant. The entire Bible is about this very thing, read the story of the Passover, the story of Isaac on Mt. Moriah, Adam and Eve's sin and atonement...**

I have read it. And, again, I cannot worship a god who demands blood sacrifices of innocents.

You don't have a leg to stand on.

I've been standing on my own two feet for some time now.

You may disagree with God, but the true reason you reject Christianity is because you hate God and the fact that He has promised to punish all of your transgressions.

I don't disagree with your god, because I find it impossible to believe that such a being exists. And I have no fear of punishment.

Your so-called prayer is too ridiculous to dignify with a response.

And as someone who has had to do battle with doctors who wished to impose their beliefs on my treatment or that of my family members, I think the question is an important one.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:23 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

CS: You seem to be more concerned with eternity than life right now on earth.

I marvel not just at your arrogance but also at your persistence!! Too bad you have to go denigrating everyone else's beliefs just because they don't agree with you. If you open your mind, perhaps just maybe you'll realise that God by whatever name you may call Him / Her / Energy is within us, all of us.

POSTED BY: NIVEDITA | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:17 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Speaking of Serial Killers, you're REALLY going to hate that God saved David Berkowitz:
adventuresinchristianity.com/?L=pictures.gallery&id=34&pid=046734ce9e2c93

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 14, 2007 5:09 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

The knowledge level in this thread has gone way down and the bull-excrement level has gone way up.

There are so many false statements from Terra and various other pagans that it's impossible, and unnecessary to address all of them. If you become a Christian come back and read them later and laugh at yourself, otherwise make the plea on judgment day to at least have your mind set straight on why you're condemned; we already know the answer, "Because you were willfully ignorant of the Truth."

A couple things that back up your complete hatred of God, the Bible, and the Truth;

"Punishment of descendants for the sins of ancestors." - An atheist will most likely have atheist babies, a muslim will have muslim babies, a pagan, pagan babies...all will go to Hell, not because of their religion but for transgressing the law. Sin is a serious thing.

"Punishment of all for the sins of some - eg the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah." - Read your Bible. Willfully ignorant. There are none good, no not one. God promised not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if He could find a single good person in either city.

"Calling a man righteous for offering his daughters to be gang-raped." Willfully ignorant. This action didn't make him righteous, much in Lot's life didn't make him righteous, he was as detestable as the rest of us, except that he sought after God and was thus made righteous. Do you know anything about what Christianity teaches?

"Punishment of the innocent for the sins of the guilty - eg killing the Egyptian firstborn." - Again, innocent?

"Invasion and destruction of indigenous people - eg the carnage wreaked by the Children of Israel on the various cities and towns they sacked under orders from their/god." - This is not a reason to disbelieve Christianity, this is saying, "I don't agree with God." If you'd read the Bible, then you would. Especially see the conquest of Jericho in the book of Joshua.

"Substitutionary atonement, IMO, is invalid. If an innocent person offers to be executed in place of a serial killer, how does that absolve the serial killer?" - Willfully ignorant. The entire Bible is about this very thing, read the story of the Passover, the story of Isaac on Mt. Moriah, Adam and Eve's sin and atonement...An earthly judge doesn't have the authority, the insight, or the ability to impute righteousness. If the innocent person was perfectly righteous and had the authority and ability to impute His righteousness onto the serial killer who repented with godly sorrow, then this would make sense. Justice is served, the fine is paid. You think that certain sins are worse than others, the Bible says that all murders and all liars will have their place in the lake of fire.

You don't have a leg to stand on. You may disagree with God, but the true reason you reject Christianity is because you hate God and the fact that He has promised to punish all of your transgressions.

I detest the sinners prayer of today, but if you would, John Gertsner wrote this sinners prayer especially for you:

"Dear God, whom I hate with all my being precisely because you hate and threaten me with hell, I hate this punishment perhaps even more than I hate you. Or, maybe I should say that I love my comfort even more than I hate you. For that reason I am asking a favor of you. I want you to make me love you, whom I hate even when I ask this and even more because I have to ask this. I am being frank with you because I

know it is no use to be otherwise. You know even better than I how much I hate you and that I love only myself. It is no use for me to pretend to be sincere. I most certainly do not love you and do not want to love you. I hate the thought of loving you but that is what I'm asking because I love myself. If you can answer this 'prayer' I guess the gift of gratitude will come with it and then I will be able to do what I would not think of doing now—thank you for making me love you whom I hate. Amen."

That said, the original question is stupid, the reply by Dr. Elliott is suprisingly insightful. The truth of this question is we are all going to die someday and it's in your best interest to know where you're going to spend eternity.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 14, 2007 4:55 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RT:

I'd say that I probably fall somewhere between Pantheism and Panentheism.

I see all as part of the One, myself included. The Divine is not separate from the mundane, nor the creator/creatix from the creation. I don't see one God OVER everything - rather I see everything as part of one Whole that includes the Divine in all its manifestations. For me, that includes multiple forms of deity, even though I don't see deities as entities separate from the rest of the world. I'm afraid I'm not articulating this very well.

Gods (for me) are manifestations of the Divine in All - you, me, my cats, my azalea bushes, the baby mockingbird one of my cats brought home the other day and I am now hand-raising, every hair I pull out of my head when my daughter is late getting home, the tomatoes and jalapenos I pluck from my garden to make salsa with...and the Divine is a coalescence of all these things as well. The gods are in these things, and in that sense are very real. But I don't see Deity as a force separate from the rest of the world. I see it more as a composite that is more than the sum of its parts. It's kind of like a marraige - there's You, there's Me, and there's Us, and Us is more than just You + Me.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 4:34 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra: Good Comments... You should note that what you believe about the mythisness of Genesis is compatible with mainstream Christianity. The creation stories of Genesis are often considered to be more tribal and mythical than say the New Testament chronicle of Luke which is more of an historic record of the early apostles' journeys across modern day Turkey and Greece. Even most mainstream evangelicals agree that you have to read the Bible in context of its form (as poetry or as a letter, depending on what book you are reading.)

Lepidopterix: Panentheism is compatible with mainstream Christianity. *Pantheism* is not. There is one God, but God is not simply the sum of all that is created. Rather, God is the One "in whom we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17 -- Paul at Mars Hill)... God is the essence of reality and not just the substance.

Peace,
RT

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | AUGUST 14, 2007 4:17 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon:

Paganism isn't "bringing God down to man's level." It's recognizing that the Divine is infused into everything around you - right here, right now - not separate from you in some far-away kingdom in the clouds that you hope to see after you die.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 2:47 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

anon,
All creation stories are alogories. Myths are cultural truths told in a way that the people could understand, useing their symbols.

In the Christian creation myth Eve...whose name means Life...eats of an apple. That apple was the ancient symbol of wisdom and protection. Cut an apple crosswise and the ancient pentagram is seen.
The snake is the symbol of Goddess wisdom and immortality. Or it was one of the animals that missed the boat.

According to the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras, five was the number of man, because of the fivefold division of the body, and the ancient Greek division of the soul. According to Pythagoras, the five points of the pentagram each represent one of the five elements that make up man: fire, water, air, earth, and psyche. (energy, fluid, breath, matter, and mind; liquid, gas, solid, plasma and aethyr) The Pythagoreans held the pentacle sacred to Hygeia, the Goddess of healing, whose name (HGIEiA) was an anagram in Greek for the elements water, earth, spirit, fire, and air. The pentagram was also found in stone age cave drawings.

All that in the guise of an apple. Eve ate of the apple; she ate of life, so she had to grow as a being. She had to learn through living and striving.
It was not the fall of man, it was the making of humanity.
Oh and Adam just means Clay...he was clay and Eve was life that formed him. Myths are always more then what you think. Don't read them literal...think about the ancients and the cultures and you will better understand.

In my Wiccan tradition we have a creation story...it says in prose what is the big bang. Those in my trad know the symbols... you would not. To you it would be gibberish, to those in the Trad it is science based. In fact science is catching up to magick...it's called Quantum Mechanics.

You may not understand the symbols but that does not mean they did not mean anything of importance.

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 14, 2007 2:42 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Shearer,

Godlessness?

As far as bringing God down to our level? You know nothing about our Gods, religion or our connection to our Gods.

Pagan universal view is not like your's. You can not put it in the same basket as your own view.

I know that for some people having laws in stone is a comfort...they can just go down the list and check them off. No uncomfortable thinking, no having to reason, no needing to know nuance and history...just go down the list or parrot someone else. It is authoritarian and easy.

You are like those, self declared Wiccans I call IRAB's. I read a book. You read a book. And that is all you need...just that one book...in a book that has many other things to say. But your religion and your God reflects who you are. What you choose to read and to believe reflects your spirit.

And for that I am sorry.
terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 14, 2007 2:18 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

There is an idea-that we should all be wicked if we did not hold to the Christian religion.
It seems to me that the people who have held to it have been for the most part extremely wicked.
You find this curious fact,that the more intense has been the religion of any period,and the more profound has been the dogmatic belief,the greater has been the cruelty,and the worse has been the state of affairs.
In the so-called ages of faith,when men really did believe the Christian religion in all its completeness,there was the inquisition,with its tortures;there were millions of unfortunate women burned as witches,and there was every kind of cruelty practiced upon all sorts of people in the name of religion.
You find as you look around the world that every single bit of progress in humane feeling,every improvement in the criminal law,every step toward the diminution of war,every step towards better treatment of the coloured races, or every mitigation of slavery,every moral progress that there has been in the world,has been consistently opposed by the organized churches of the world. I say quite deliberately that the Christian religion,as organized in its churches,has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world.

.
from Bertrand Russell

POSTED BY: BERTRAND RUSSELL | AUGUST 14, 2007 11:49 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

The religious have not seriously considered the arguments against religion or they would not believe anymore. All religions posit ridiculous beliefs that no reasonable person who was not raised in that faith could possibly accept. Here's the Aztec creation myth (below). Does any reader find this story credible? if you looked at Christianity or Islam, etc. from an unbiased perspective, they would seem just as ludicrous as the Aztec stories.

The mother of the Aztec creation story was called Coatlique (the Lady of the Skirt of Snakes). She was created in the image of the unknown, decorated with skulls, snakes, and lacerated hands. There are no cracks in her body and she is a perfect monolith (a totality of intensity and self-containment, yet her features were square and decapitated).

Coatlique was first impregnated by an obsidian knife and gave birth to Coyolxauhqui, goddess of the moon, and to a group of male offspring, who became the stars. Then one day Coatlique found a ball of feathers, which she tucked into her bosom. When she looked for it later, it was gone, at which time she realized that she was again pregnant. Her children, the moon and stars did not believe her story. Ashamed of their mother, they resolved to kill her. A goddess could only give birth once, to the original litter of divinity and no more. During the time that they were plotting her demise, Coatlique gave birth to the fiery god of war, Huitzilopochtli. With the help of a fire serpent, he destroyed his brothers and sister, murdering them in a rage. He beheaded Coyolxauhqui and threw her body into a deep gorge in a mountain, where it lies dismembered forever. The natural cosmos of the Indians was born of catastrophe. The heavens literally crumbled to pieces. The earth mother fell and was fertilized, while her children were torn apart by fratricide and then scattered and disjointed throughout the universe.

Canyon Shearer:

Please do not refer to the dharmic religions, paganism etc. in the same breath as the brand of Christianity that you profess. Its very insulting to the rest to be categorized in the same narrow bandwidth as yours. Thanks!

POSTED BY: NIVEDITA | AUGUST 14, 2007 10:48 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon:

****you were in a confused cult formulated around a false gospel...probably the reason you're not a Christian today.****

Actually, the reason I'm not a Christian today is that, the older I got, the more I found certain critical actions attributed to the Christian god immoral and unacceptable.

To name a few:

Punishment of descendents for the sins of ancestors.

Punishment of all for the sins of some - eg the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah.

Calling a man righteous for offering his daughters to be gang-raped.

Punishment of the innocent for the sins of the guilty - eg killing the Egyptian firstborn.

Invasion and destruction of indigenous people - eg the carnage wreaked by the Children of Israel on the various cities and towns they sacked under orders from their/your god.

Substitutionary atonement, IMO, is invalid. If an innocent person offers to be executed in place of a serial killer, how does that absolve the serial killer?

****all people have come from an Adamic/Judao/Christian background and slipped into godlessness and idolatry.****

Adam was simply a metaphor for early man. And if you believe that all people come from a Judeo-Christian background, you're unstuck in time worse than Billy Pilgrim. Paganism was around long before either Judaism or Christianity.

As Person Unknown pointed out, back to the original question:

Should doctors be allowed to refuse care to patients based on the doctor's religion? Only if they inform the patient at the time the first appointment is made "My religion forbids me performing certain procedures, even at the cost of your life, which, even though they are perfectly legal and fall within the boundaries of generally accepted medical ethics, I consider sinful." That way, the patient won't waste his/her time/money on a doctor who missed his/her calling as a preacher.

Should pharmacists be allowed to cherry-pick what prescriptions they will fill based on their religious beliefs regarding certain drugs?

Absolutely not. A pharmacists' job is to fill prescriptions as written. Period.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 14, 2007 8:23 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I came here to simply note that the original thread (remember that??) had to do with the duty of a doctor to care for the patient and if the doctors religion should influence medical decisions and advice. This is not anti-religious since this issue is a valid concern given the behavior of some medical professionals and support for that behavior in legislatures.

For Canyon - you like to quote Paul - I favor Pauli -your statements are not correct, they are not even wrong. Your dedication to one particular book of stories is, however, striking in it's narrowness. When I read tripe such as this, I am reminded of a scene from "Inherit the Wind" with groups standing about singing "give me that old time religion..." Abrahamic religion, that is.

By the way - any thought from you on the original thread?? Something beyond the interesting reading of it to mean "the secular world wants to have lots of sex with young (18 in most of the USA) women." Does a doctor have an ethical right to deny a request for accepted medical care? Should a pharmacist be able to refuse to fill valid 'scrips because of their own beliefs? Should these folks find another career? (my thought, BTW). Well??

POSTED BY: PERSON UNKNOWN | AUGUST 14, 2007 7:18 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra...of course they come to you...all people have come from an Adamic/Judao/Christian background and slipped into godlessness and idolatry.

All religions besides the Abrahamic religions can be easily explained with one of two principles.

1. Bringing God down to mans level:

-Paganism

-Hinduism

-Atheism

-Emergent Church

-Post Modernism

2. Lifting man up to God's level:

- Evolution
- Buddhism
- Mormonism
- Free Masons
- Roman Catholicism

See Acts 17 -

So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said:

"Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription,

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and Everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him.

Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for 'in him we live and move and have our being' as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." So Paul went out from their midst.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 14, 2007 1:57 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Shearer...

I think you are wrong about me being a postmodernist, I am more a modernist...Modernist thought had its origins in the enlightenment period. It was a celebration of the liberating potentials of the social sciences, the materialistic gains of capitalism, new forms of rational thought, due process safeguards, abstract rights applicable to all, and the individual.

This is a Pagan song...it gives a good look at our way of thinking.

Teacher's Song

Question everything that I tell you
Ask until you understand
This isn't a system that's perfect
But I'm doing the best that I can
I wasn't always a teacher
Once I was a beginner like you
Listen very carefully to these words
'Cause they're the only I'll swear are true

Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's so
Let your heart and the Goddess within
Guide you as you go
Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's true
Let the Lord and the Lady and your intuition
Find a path for you

Always keep your eyes open
'Cause everything good isn't old
I'm not looking for robots
Who only do things they are told
This is a religion of learning
But it also comes from the heart
Pick and choose among what you use
And you're ready to make a start

Remember...

Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's so
Let your heart and the Goddess within
Guide you as you go
Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's true
Let the Lord and the Lady and your intuition
Find a path for you

Tradition isn't always stagnant
Innovation isn't always wrong
A little infusion dispels the delusion
And makes the tradition strong
What I'm giving you is a foundation
On which you can take root and grow
Someday you'll be telling your own students
What I hope that they already know

That...
Just because you say it, doesn't mean it's so
Let their hearts and the Goddess within
Guide them as they go
Just because you say it, doesn't mean it's true
Let the Lord and the Lady and their intuition
Find a path that's true

Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's so
Let your heart and the Goddess within
Guide you as you go
Just because I say it, doesn't mean it's true
Let the Lord and the Lady and your intuition
Find a path for you

By Breid Foxsong

Shearer, You trying to convert any Pagan with fear is a bit dumb...if you want to convert, you better understand our religion. And you don't. I am sure there are Wiccans that have converted to Christainity...I guess there is any way, I don't know any. Maybe because of the method used, and not even knowing our language. But all the Pagans I know have been Christian or Jewish at one time...and we do not seek converts, they come to us.
terra

POSTED BY: TERRAGAZELLE | AUGUST 14, 2007 1:12 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Who, in his right mind, wants to become a christian?
And why???

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | AUGUST 14, 2007 12:36 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Lepidopteryx...you were in a confused cult formulated around a false gospel...probably the reason you're not a Christian today.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 14, 2007 12:20 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon Shearer

We all know what your posts say and at some point you may have to accept that we DO understand and still we DO NOT agree. You need to trust the Lord a little better and stop thinking that you are His only instrument. Sounds a bit self-glorifying if you ask me. Bottom line, what you need to remember if your concern is saving others that it is not about just being right all the time. You are driving people away, not persuading them.

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | AUGUST 13, 2007 11:56 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Wiccan a bigot? That's rich.

And growing up Baptist, I was taught in Sunday School that accepting Jesus into one's heart (in those exact words) was how one became a Christian.

Russell...read the Bible the first time. Be anyway you want with it...I have confidence that the word of God will not come back void.

Wiccan, you can pretend you're paying attention all you want, but your, "accepting Jesus into your heart" comment proves you have no idea what my posts say.

I can't argue with Terra anymore because she is a post-modernist, and now I can't argue with you because you're a bigot...

Canyon:

Dude, you have really got to learn to lighten up. I am sure we could have a beer together someday, just.....relaxation is the key. WOOSAW.....

Peace.

Oh, and reread that Bible of yours. This time, be objective. You may get more out of it this time.

Canyon-

I think we've found you:

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal."

I have been paying attention; you just haven't said anything that would compel me to turn my back on the Divine, and cower before your concept of God. In fact, as I told you before, your concept of God is downright insulting to the Divine. I can't see through your eyes, Canyon, where I see love and joy and my responsibility to further the same, you see hate, and despair, and a "get out of hell free" card. Why don't you let God and me worry about my soul, and you take care of your own. No offense, son, but it could use some polishing.

Yoyo, some people will believe anything if it's not the Bible. I envy your faith; albeit it's a bit blind for my tastes.

All you "lovey dovey" people:

Wiccan, when exactly are you going to start paying attention. You don't ask Jesus into your heart, that is the cult understanding of christianity, which you rightly deny. I'm glad you haven't bought into that particular facet of falsity.

Read your Bible, Repent and believe the Gospel, and you will be saved.

I love you to the extent that I don't want you to go to Hell. I don't care for your beliefs or your ignorance or your hatred of God; in fact I despise these parts of your soul. But these things can be cleaned, justified, and sanctified.

There was a recent discussion on how there could be no tears in Heaven if the smoke of Hell constantly wafted through it. The inhabitants of Heaven would know that family members, friends, and acquaintances were burning for all eternity, how could there possibly be no tears? The reason is because while we love the person, their iniquity is disgusting and the hatred of God is repulsive. God will be glorified either in saving you as a kind and merciful God, or He will be glorified in punishing you as a perfectly just Judge.

"God showed his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." - Romans 5:8

Lep-

ROFLMAO!! Yes, our Canyon would make a perfect pastor there, or at least a deacon.

But seriously, can we find Canyon here?

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (English-NIV)

1

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

2

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not

love, I am nothing.

3

If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

6

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8

Love never fails.

POSTED BY: WICCAN | AUGUST 13, 2007 6:52 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Its like we're all computers

and our religious beliefs are programed into us
throughout our childhoods.

What we end up believing has nothing to do with truth,
and everything to do with the programing.

And different religion, different program.

If Canyon Shearer had been born and raised in a Muslim country,

today he'd praying 5 times a day facing Mecca:

and he would consider Christians to be infidels.

Had he been raised a Hindu, today he might be

burning incense and praying to Vishnu. Had he been

raised in Utah by Mormons, he'd now be a Mormon.

in Ireland, probably a devout catholic.

Like the rest of us Canyon Shearer believes what he was raised to believe;

and what his community believes.

Why don't we get it?

Religions are just passed-on customs and beliefs

from ancient times that cannot all claim to be true.

The likelihood is none of it is true.

If it wasn't programed into our heads as kids,

we'd never believe it as intelligent adults,

hearing about God, or Allah, or Vishnu, for the first time.

It would sound perfectly ridiculous.

POSTED BY: YOYO | AUGUST 13, 2007 6:02 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Wiccan:

Really, Canyon, you don't witness about the love of Jesus, you use hellfire and damnation as weapons against anyone who doesn't drink your particular brand of Kool-Ade. Why? Do you get a toaster oven if you sign up so many people?

Nah - Playstation <http://www.landoverbaptist.org/index0107.html>

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 13, 2007 5:57 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon-

Every time I read one of your posts I'm struck by your arrogance and hostility. I thought accepting Christ into your heart was supposed to change you, and for the better. If this is better, glad I didn't know you before...

Really, Canyon, you don't witness about the love of Jesus, you use hellfire and damnation as weapons against anyone who doesn't drink your particular brand of Kool-Ade. Why? Do you get a toaster oven if you sign up so many people?

POSTED BY: WICCAN | AUGUST 13, 2007 5:46 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Interesting point Canyon Shearer, "No one comes to the Father except through the Man who bears these names." Who actually was the Father of Jesus,, the individual on who's life the fictional person you call Jesus life's based?

There's another option, <http://www.hoax-buster.org/sellyoursoul> Actually, there's two other options, the whole thing is a hoax or, God forbid, the Father of Jesus was the biggest Devil of them all, Lucifer.

The Muslims are coming up fast. Seems Gabriel is hornin in on God's business too. No wonder hell is so chaotic, two fallen angels vying for power. Make sure your rocket is pointed towards heaven and not hell. Now where do you think Muslims going? All aboard!!!

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | AUGUST 13, 2007 2:10 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon:

I always wonder why it doesn't bother the Pagans who say, "We can't possibly know." that Christians say, "We absolutely do know."

It's not your conviction that you know that bothers me. It's your arrogance.

Your travel analogy doesn't hold because it's directional - east/west, up/down. Perhaps your heaven is fixed in locatio. Mine is all around me and I already inhabit it. No baggage, no maps, no vehicle, and no tour guide needed to get there.

No one comes to the Father except through the Man who bears these names.

I don't need to come to the Father - I'm already securely held in the arms of the Mother.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 13, 2007 2:01 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I always wonder why it doesn't bother the Pagans who say, "We can't possibly know." that Christians say, "We absolutely do know." These are so polar-opposite that it bears consideration.

It doesn't bother me that Pagans said, "We can't possibly know." Rather I know what they mean is, "We don't want to know."

The peanut butter analogy was stupid.

Imagine we're driving from Los Angeles to New York. You have an affliction to driving East. You don't want you. You say, lets just drive, we'll get to New York, West sounds like a good idea.

As you know, West leads to the Pacific Ocean. Lest you turn around, you'll go to your death.

Consider this analogy, the Moon is Heaven, we all want to go. Pagans are twiddling their thumbs, Buddhists have taken the train, Muslims have rented a rowboat, Catholics have boarded a Jumbo Jet...on the landing pad is the STS-Jesus Christ, a space shuttle equipped with lunar lander.

Who do you think is going to the moon?

I can say with absolute certainty, the Space Transport System is the only one, the only way.

Repent and believe in the Way the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through the Man who bears these names.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 13, 2007 1:35 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Pagan Grace
(©Catherine Deville 1996
Tune: Amazing Grace)

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found.
I'm in recovery.

T'was Pagan grace that taught me fear
was something to disown.
and Pagan folk that lead me here,
that helped me find a home.

T'was Mother Earth who set me free
and taught me how to see.
I'll no more look to other men
for my divinity.

I now have freedom, joy and power
I have the Pagan key.
I know my freedom lies in self
responsibility.

I no more seek for God in fear
and crawl on bended knee.

My Mother's love is full and kind
and wants no such from me.

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 13, 2007 12:30 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Ok I love creamy peanut butter...and well done steaks. But Vie and Lepi..I give you the right to your own dietary menus.

Well I do think that the only good place for chunky peanut butter is in cookies, and raw steak on black eyes.;)

Shearer, About Pagan grace:

Amazing Pagan Grace

(Author unknown)

Amazing Grace
How sweet the Earth,
That bore a Witch like me.
I once was burned,
Now I survive.
Was Hanged but now I sing.
'Twas Grace, That Drew
Down the Moon,
and Grace that Raised
the Seas,
The Magick in,
The people's Will
Will Set our Mother Free.
We Face The East,
and breathe the winds,
That move across the Earth,
From gentle breeze to hurricane,
our breath will bring forth change.
Turn Towards the South,
and Feel the Fire,
That burns in you and me,
The Spirit's flame shall rise again,
and Burn Eternally.
We Greet the West
Our Souls awash,
In Tides of Primal Birth,
Our Pain and blood, Our Tears and love
Shall cleanse and heal the Earth.
Reach in to North,
and Know your roots,
Down Deep ancestral Caves.
We find the Wisdom of the Crone,
of Circles we are made.
Amazing Grace
How Sweet the Earth
That bore Witches like We.
We once were burned
Now we survive
were hanged and now we sing.
Goddess bless,
So mote it be
Our Magick Spirals on,
Merry meet and Merry Part
and Merry meet Again.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 13, 2007 12:26 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Oh, Canyon... As for Grace.

Grace is as Grace does.

Patent not pending.

Hee. Peanut butter analogy, very good. :)

Frankly, I think one key difference between Pagans and Christians, not that we don't have our own ideas about spirit:

Christianity seems to be about insisting that one *knows,* and investing everything into that knowing... inciting terror in the very uncertainty that's claimed to be a sign of 'faith.' (nice way to shut people up, that: if you don't have "faith," you're *damned,* so why live life as a 'damned' person when you can try to 'redeem' yourself by converting others?)

Paganism, if I know our kids, is about being *prepared to face the unknown.*

We're free to know things, but also, free to *not* know things.

I mean, seriously. We'd all flip the bird at Gods who said, 'You didn't interpret Apuleius correctly!'

"Did I bring my brain with me? I thought I was dead. Sorry, there."

These so 'justified' premises for *hurting people* just don't fly with us. Don't make a whit of sense, especially in terms of 'Final Judgement By An Inconsistent Maniac That Likes Dick Cheney.'

I mean,what?

As I told some Fundie employers who tried to forbid me from obeying the law and recycling the business' related waste, ...cause it would slow the Second Coming, they said, ...well, to them, I just said,

'There comes a point where if your God did rule the universe, I'd just have to say, 'OK, last I heard, people trying to end the world in suffering, pain, and tyranny were supposed to be the bad guys. Pardon if I missed that bit, but if you thought I needed to extract the one truth from contradictory sources, you shouldn't have sent liars and cowards to tell me.'

I mean, there's freedom of religion here in America, but the excuses to *hurt people* with it that just happen to make money for the greedy have worn just *so thin,* it's hard to take it as anything but insane suicidal influences occasionally displaced upon those not-sexually-dominable or something.

I'd say, not only are they desperately-afraid of evolutionary theory cause someone might notice the resemblance between us and 'monkeys,' (their bread and butter)but also because they're afraid to admit that we are dreaming and feeling creatures...

Not damned... Equipped.

We bring goodness with what we got, or we do not.

Heaven, Hell, fear.... Nothing to do with it.

If your God wants to torture me eternally in the world of your dreams, that's not on me...

It's on you.

Ready to be professional, yet?

Vie,

I love the peanut butter analogy. I doubt that he'll get it, however.

I tried to explain how truth often is subjective on another thread with a similar analogy.

I like my steak rare. Just light a match near it, blow it out quickly, and slap that puppy on a plate. I consider well-done steaks unfit for human consumption.

My mom likes hers well done, approaching burnt. The slightest bit of pink in the center makes her nauseous.

When I say "Well-done steaks are disgusting," it's true for me, but not for my mom. When my mom says "Rare steaks are nasty," it's true for her, but not for me.

When she and I go out to dinner, I order my steak rare, she orders hers well done, and we both enjoy our meal. Two different truths, and a win-win situation.

CS's question:

"Which is more important:

What we believe?

Or if what we believe is true?"

Is very revealing of a certain religious arrogance. After all, we each hold our own belief to be the true one. Some of us do not have the ability to assume that those who reach different conclusions must be wrong; we allow for the fact that our own instincts may be, at best, true only in our own particular circumstances.

For instance, I do not like peanut butter. It is my firm belief, based on honest and sincere experience, that the stuff is inedible. Should I conclude that those who eat peanut butter are just stubbornly pretending to enjoy the flavor, or that they have faulty taste buds, or that they are mentally unbalanced?

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | AUGUST 11, 2007 3:03 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Nice going, Terra.

Canyon, your problem in making any logical sense has much to do with the fact that your claims to have access to exclusive 'Truth' and 'Law' are simply based on false premises:

These premises you claim, and upon which all your hatred and condemnation of others are based, like authority of your book or theology or even a particular God, well, these have no basis in *fact,* as you claim, they are mere *insistences,* logically-speaking.

You believe they're true cause you believe they're true. There's no sound logical basis for your claims.

In many cases, your fears and threats of Hell, which you try and 'cut' people with, are actually directly contradicted by experience, as well as fallacious, logically, and demonstrably bad in result.

Particularly in the case of medicine, when your 'Truth' just seems to keep coming down on the wrong side of both the *facts* and human dignity.

I appreciate those Christians who've come here to say that's not what they want to be about. Thanks.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2007 1:08 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon Shearer

You're not only out of your depth here,you are an embarrassment to Christians like me and others,with your puffed up ego-centric jabbering.

Please stop.You do sensible Christians no favors.

POSTED BY: D.WEAVER | AUGUST 11, 2007 11:59 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon, you are a life-hater. You hate human life and human beings. You glorify the eternal death of those who YOU deem unworthy, not God. You are what I like to call a Revelations-only Bible Thumper - one who wins no converts because his vitriolic hatred of human life makes his words awful to listen to. You bask in genocide yet threaten over the life of an unborn. Do us all a favor, if you believe God will save you, don't wear a seatbelt.

POSTED BY: LUKE | AUGUST 11, 2007 10:50 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon Shearer,

Does it bother you that the only thing keeping you from being recognized as mentally ill is the number of people that share your condition?

POSTED BY: TJ | AUGUST 11, 2007 7:58 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

See <http://trustobey.blogspot.com/2007/06/in-garden-of-edden.html>

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 11, 2007 2:17 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra,

Thanks for answering my question the most round-about of ways possible.

Truth is not subjective, as you believe. It is impossible for me to argue with you if you're going to make up fantasy and call it truth. There is an irony in this, because I can't win the game if you keep changing the rules, but if I don't win in converting you, then you're the ultimate loser.

I would like to correct you in one place, on your understanding of grace...which may be one reason your religion is so subjective.

Justice – When we get what we deserve. Sin should result in instant death, but God is long-suffering and merciful. I deserve Hell, you deserve Hell, we all deserve Hell. God will be glorified in giving perfectly just judgment.

Mercy – When we don't get what we deserve. Currently we are living on Earth by God's mercy, we should be thrown into Hell. God is glorified in His long-suffering.

Grace – When we get what we don't deserve. Jesus lived a perfect life and faced a sinners judgment so that we can live a sinners life and face a righteous judgment. All because He loves us and He will get all the glory for being a kind and benevolent God.

You are a sinner doomed to Hell; you won't go to Hell for not worshiping the right God, you're going to Hell for transgressing the law. Christianity is grace-based because our God DIED for us, so that we can get what we don't deserve.

This is Truth, while you can debate it all you want, you can't change it.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 11, 2007 2:16 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Here is a more modern prayer of the Goddess by Cunningham.

Song of the Goddess

I am the Great Mother, worshipped by all creation and existent prior to their consciousness. I am the primal female force, boundless and eternal.

I am the chaste Goddess of the Moon, the Lady of all magic. The winds and moving leaves sing my name. I wear the crescent Moon upon my brow and my feet rest among the starry heavens. I am mysteries yet unsolved, a path newly set upon. I am a field untouched by the plow. Rejoice in me and know the fullness of youth.

I am the blessed Mother, the gracious Lady of the harvest. I am clothed with the deep, cool wonder of the Earth and the gold of the fields heavy with grain. By me the tides of the Earth are ruled ; things come to fruition according to my season. I am refuge and healing. I am the life-giving Mother, wondrously fertile.

Worship me as the Crone, tender of the unbroken cycle of death and rebirth. I am the wheel, the shadow of the Moon. I rule the tides of women and men and give release and renewal to weary souls. Though the darkness of death is my domain, the joy of birth as well.

I am the goddess of the Moon, the Earth and Seas. My names and strengths are manifold. I pour forth magic and power, peace and wisdom. I am the eternal maiden, Mother of all, Crone of darkness and I send you blessings of limitless love.

by Scott Cunningham

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 11, 2007 1:40 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RS,
I only know what is true for me...I do not try to tell others what truth is. Your truth is not mine.

Here is something that I thought I would share to return the prayer you posted..
A Hymn to Inanna
Below are the words of a high priestess, named Enheduanna (en-hey'-du-ana), who worshipped the Goddess, Inanna. Enheduanna, is the first known author in the history of writing, she was a high priestess who lived 4,000 BC in the city of Ur, (now southern Iraq).

The passage below is a new translation of Enheduanna's poetry from the recently published book "Inanna, Lady of the Largest Heart" by Betty DeShong Meador,
~~~~~

"Queen of all given powers/unveiled clear light/

unfailing woman wearing brilliance/cherished in heaven and earth/

chosen, sanctified in heaven/you/grand in your adornments/

crowned with your beloved goodness/rightfully you are High Priestess/

your hands seize the seven fixed powers/my queen of fundamental forces/  
guardian of essential cosmic sources/you lift up the elements/  
bind them to your hands/gather in powers/press them to your breast/  
vicious dragon you spew/venom poisons the land/like the storm god you howl/  
grain wilts on the ground/swollen flood rushing down the mountain/  
you are Inanna/supreme in heaven and earth..."  
~~~~~

Not as flowery, but for beginning writing, not bad. Enheduanna seemed to know how to say her Goddess was all things...Goddess Inanna had all control of the Universe.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 11, 2007 1:32 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Shearer,
You can believe what you believe is true..BUT that does not mean it is true for me. It isn't.
So what is better...to force others to believe what is not true, or to allow them to be true to themselves?

You do not have any respect for those of us whose truth is not yours. Guess what...we don't care. We find with our ways the kind of love and happiness that you have with your religion. We lead good lives, we have a strict code of ethics...we do good in the world...so why should we leave what creates such joy in living to follow what would only be cohered?

You really do not know us, our laws or our philosophy. But you think you need to save us from something...what is that something?

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 11, 2007 1:23 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Shearer,
You are saying that Christianity was around before Christ?

Funny how you mention Mesopotamia...have you read anything on the Neolithic Goddess figures from around Antalya, near Hacilar which is Turkey and Musa Dag which is part of Syria, but used to be part of Canaan. I am very interested in the beginnings of Goddess worship...most of the figures in the near east start in about 9000 to 7000 bc. Just about the same time when other art takes place...animal carvings as well as the statuettes of the Great Mother.

So, Shearer, where exactly is Christianity in this? This area from Canaan (Palestine, Israel) Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and to the northern reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates (Iraq and Syria...this area known as the Cradle of Civilization...was not known for Christianity but for the Goddess. Even the Hebrew priests, long ages away from the beginning of religion, had a hard time keeping the people away from honoring the Gods...since that area was Pagan from the dawn of humanity...

You talk about Grace based...is that what you have been pushing? Grace based means that there is a knowing that God loves you no matter what. That there is no battle for the soul by limiting boundaries and rules. So what have you been showing on this site? Has it been grace or fear?

And sorry...but Wicca is certainly grace based. If grace means love. And I can see the ruins of temples of my religion. There are writings and art and poetry and rites that are known and seen from my religion. Even in the bible it talks of the women that went into the hills on the full moon nights, with wine and cake to make offerings to the Queen of Heaven...and would not stop. Saying that when she gave praise to the Queen of Heaven in the old days that they were happy and all things were abundant. But with the One god they were in sorrow and want.

That is called an Esbat...from the French, it means "to frolic."

No Shearer... you have proof that there is a Christianity But you have as much proof of Jesus being the son of God as I do that Hecate is the Queen of Witches. That there are things in the bible that are proven...yep, just like any ancient book...it has some historical facts.

Your religion is a rather new one...mine is a renewal. Your's won against mine back when your's was young. The mobs killed and tore down our temples and shrines...your's was just more vicious as a youngster. Mine got even when we gained power back. Then you gained power and we suffered. It was a shame, because both religions lived in peace for a long time before ego and power got in the way.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 11, 2007 1:13 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra,

Here is an honest question;

Which is more important:
What we believe?
Or if what we believe is true?

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 11, 2007 12:51 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thanks Lepi,

Some folks forget that in any Democratic society tolerance allows religious freedom as long as no laws are broken and no harm done. Their religious beliefs should not step on others. In America no one has the right to tell you what to do or what to think. We all have the responsibility to respect the thoughts, faith, persons and property of others.

We should remember that ALL religions are like pathways up a spiritual mountain, but when we reach the top of that mountain & stand alongside humans of any religious faith, the view of God will be the same for all - no matter what name we call the Supreme Deity ! As long as people of any religion honour the supreme godhead, and live a good life, their religion has value to humankind. All should be free to choose their own religious pathway.

But then there are those who are "once borns"... ;)

Blessed be sister,
terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 10, 2007 11:56 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thy goodness and love, reflected in eternal pain and torment if we get a little dirty. Funny, my parents never set me on fire for getting mud on my jeans. What filthy, vile beasts they are!

POSTED BY: LUKE | AUGUST 10, 2007 9:02 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon:

Terra is a friend of mine, and she most certainly has never maintained that she is perfect. She simply does not believe that she is in need of your particular brand of religion to save her from eternal destruction, which she also does not believe exists. Incidentally, i share her core beliefs.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 10, 2007 8:49 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thank you Vie,

I certainly do not believe I am perfect. I strive for being a good person, one that will leave something in this world better than I found it. I love my gods and I do my utmost to follow the laws of my religion. I believe that is what I am here to do...

My law is Love onto all beings...that is the Law of My Goddess. I try to be Her representative on this Earth, I fail as I am not Her and anger and frustration gets in the way of my striving. But then easy is not promised. If I can not love all beings I at least try to respect their right to believe as they wish.

I do not like to judge others...it is frowned on in Wicca, and it is basically not part of my personality... we are to respect others and their god/s as they are seekers also.

I do not think that Shearer is treating me worse than he would treat anyone else that is not his particular brand of Christianity...I and my fellow Pagans just are an easier target.

If I wanted to skip the chances of being bothered by those who are not sympathetic to Pagans, I would stay in Pagan sites...But I like learning and sharing with others. And I have met some great Pagans here as well as of other faiths...so I am the winner.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 10, 2007 8:40 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I've never gotten the idea that Terra thought she was perfect. She just seems to be uncomfortable judging others.
Anonymous: That was rude. Both Shearer and Stallgiss are sincere and deserve to be taken seriously.

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | AUGUST 10, 2007 7:46 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Richmond T Stallgis
What are you shearer's yappie poodle?
Yap yap yap yap yap!!
You need each other.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | AUGUST 10, 2007 7:37 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RT,

That's an interesting response to Terra's question, but her question is not an honest one.

We've had this conversation in the past, Terra thinks she is perfect and doesn't need a savior, so she rejects the fact that Christianity has the only way of salvation.

Despite the fact that Christianity is the only grace-based religion, has a visible history all the way to the "dawn of man" at Mesopotamia, and the only prophetically perfect, archaeologically proven, God-written religion which knows the beginning, middle, and end.

Besides that, Christianity really isn't all that unique.

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 10, 2007 7:05 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I hope you appreciate all the "thou's" in this hymn. :) :)

It is based upon 1 Timothy 1:17; 'Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever'

Peace,
RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 10, 2007 6:05 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra... it's not *your* truth. It's *the* truth.

One part of *the* truth is that the world exists.... a person would not be able to argue against the *fact* of the a world outside them ... even if they choose not to believe in the existence of the material world or other people, it doesn't stop there from being a fundamental, universal, objective truth about other people and things existing besides you.

There are other things that are true even if you choose not to believe them. What I am saying is it shouldn't be offensive for people to claim that there is objective truth, even if you don't claim it as *yours*.

Your question "What in Christianity is original?" is pretty easy to answer. "There is nothing New under the Sun... Jesus is, was, and always will be exactly the same, the Word of God... Immortal, Invisible, God-Only-Wise"

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessèd, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.

Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
But of all Thy rich graces this grace, Lord, impart
Take the veil from our faces, the vile from our heart.

All laud we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee,
And so let Thy glory, Almighty, impart,
Through Christ in His story, Thy Christ to the heart.

Y'know, if I were neither Christian nor Pagan instead of the Catholic hybrid that I am, I might be looking at these posts to see which group seemed to have a better connection to the Almighty. Terra Gazelle would be winning.

LOL...

Shearer,

My friends and loved ones can tell you, indifference is not possible for me. I am passionate about the rights of man and woman... I resent the crap out of anyone thinking they have the truth for all humanity. Specially telling me what my truth is.

Cut by the cross? Why is it with those like you that it has to be fear and pain? Maybe you could be forced to believe because of carrot or stick...I can not be. I have been through too much to stand for my own spiritual beliefs...that belief is to turn my face to the sun and moon...To know that they are representatives of lights that shine on all alike.

No matter which god you call on, that light was put in the heavens for white, black, rich, poor, saint, sinner, Christian, Pagan, Atheist...and I give praise to that Power no matter what name it is called by the billions and billions of people throughout time that has made sacrifice and prayers to it. You do not have the truth for me...I do. My truth, my gods, my soul and my path to walk.

I have never said anything mean or abusive to Christians about their belief, ever. I have had words to certain Christians about their treatment of those who do not believe as they do..But I have never abused your god or path. Just to lay off me and my co religionists. You treat those who do not believe as you as being less than you, not exactly Christ-like.

Maybe Shearer, you need to read the bible for comprehension, stop skimming for the verses that say what you want it to, leaving out the context. And at the same time...as I do not want you to follow my religion...why should you expect me to follow your's? I respect Jesus, but I do not even expect you to respect my beliefs or gods. I know you do not have it in you to allow that others have their own way to seek truth and diety.

I have asked many others this question..
What in Christianity is original?

Inquireing minds want to know what your thoughts on this are...
obh and it is not Mrs. Gazelle..that is part of my online name..and in any case it would be Ms.

terra

(Oops, last post I accidentally hit post button too early... here is the version I wanted to post)

Carson:

When Christ said: "You snakes, you brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?" .. he was talking to the Pharisees (the religious leaders of the time) as they hypocritically held up Legal standards that they themselves did not follow. ... Christ was talking to people like you and me, not to pagans. A better quote from that same passage would have been Matthew 23: 27-28 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."

When Paul said "gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless." you are correct that he referred to idol woshippers as "God-haters," but he did not say "you are God haters" to anyone's face... Paul, in his letter to the Romans was introducing himself to the Romans and declaring his theology to them in a letter so the Christian theologians in Rome would understand and welcome him there. When Paul went *face to face* with *actual idol worshippers* at Areopagus, he did not inveigh at them, but reasoned with them. (Acts 17: 16-34)

When David wrote Psalm 69, it was as a person calling to God to rescue him from *unmerited* scorn.... The sad thing is that *sometimes* scorn against Christ-followers *is* merited... some people who call themselves Christians go out and hate on non-Christians so much that they give Christianity and Christ a bad name. Just a little farther on in the Psalm 69 passage you cited, it says, "May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me" ... we should all take those words to heart.

In any case, none of the passages you cite show Christ verbally abusing pagans, atheists, or other Gentile non-believers.

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 10, 2007 12:00 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

When Christ said: "You snakes, you brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

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When David wrote Psalm 69, it was as a person calling to God to rescue him from unmerited scorn. Psalm 69:6 says: "May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me"...

In any case, none of the passages you cite show Christ verbally abusing pagans, atheists, or other Gentile non-believers.

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 10, 2007 11:59 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Mr. Stallgiss,

Thank you for your response, both to me and to others. Paul said that he was chief among sinners and the least of the saints. Now that Paul has gone Home, I have inherited those titles. I am quite pleased that I got a rile out of Mrs. Gazelle, it lends me to believe at least she is starting to pay attention. Offense is one of the signs that the cross has cut to the heart; when she had indifference I knew she wasn't listening.

I like the quotes you posted, the verses I was thinking of whilst being Christlike in this thread are Matthew 23:33, Romans 1:30, and Psalm 69:4.

You snakes, you brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? You are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though you know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, you not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. They that hate [Jesus Christ] without a cause are more than the hairs of His head: they that would destroy Him, being His enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then Jesus restored that which He took not away.

Amen.

POSTED BY: [CANYON SHEARER](#) | AUGUST 10, 2007 2:42 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Terra Gazelle Said: "What makes you think that YOU have the secret of life..what gives all those holier than thou's the right to tell me or anyone how to believe or live?"

Wow... 'holier than thou'... I have not heard those words ('holier than thou') in like 15 years... I did not realize people still held that stereotype... my friends and family are not like that at all... anyhoo... My response is that when I read Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and James' Letter, I realize that these early Jewish and Christian leaders had great wisdom to share about the Character of God and the Christ-ness of Jesus and about the power of the Holy Spirit to bring people to God. I believe not just because I have read it, but because I have seen God work in my life and Christ's love reflected in the church people around me. Christians aren't perfect and don't claim to be, at least as far as I have seen. I can tell you that Christians aren't any more arrogant or evil than 'normal' people, as your comments would suggest.

To: Former Christian:

Noah, Lot, and Pharoah

... Noah: Parts of the Noah story can be shown by archaeology to have actually happened... if you want to talk about theodicy, "why bad things happen" is an religious and philosophical question that science has not provided helpful answers to.

...Lot: the Lot story is an explanatory myth reflecting how the Israelites considered their neighbor nations (Moabites and Ammonites) to be the product of sexually immoral incest and the history of the Moabites and Ammonites as sexually immoral refugees from the sexually immoral Sodom and Gomorrah. (Genesis 19:36-38). The fact that the crimes of Israel's neighbors are recorded in the Bible is not intended to be normative in Christianity or Judaism, much as the Baal worship of the Canaanites is also not considered to be 'good' in God's eyes.

... Pharoah: Christians believe that the historical events of the Passover presaged the events of Christ on the cross. In that frame of reference, the hardening of Pharoah's heart as he sent an Army to chase the Israelites demonstrates the historical fact that a weak

insurgency of fleeing slaves somehow overcame the powerful Army of Egypt only through the power of God and not through their own power. The Israelites did not harden Pharaoh's heart, but God did, to demonstrate God's power. The lesson is not that we should kill our enemies, but that God can rescue us even when we are weak and powerless.

What was my point? Oh yeah... *you* claim that the Bible has bad moral stories... but *I* claim that if you insist on uncharitable interpretations of the Bible's stories then of course you will end up with absurd consequences. It is like you are quoting the George-Washington-Cut-Down-A-Cherry-Tree story and concluding that "Americans hate trees" (rather than the traditional moral: "honesty is the best policy"). Go ahead and create your own fractured interpretations of the Old Testament history narratives, but that is not doing justice to the internal coherency of the text and therefore that method will not be not convincing to me or lots of other people who have put a lot of thought into *correct* interpretation.

Peace,
RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 10, 2007 1:01 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I can't believe nobody called this guy on his implication that a Catholic hospital doesn't provide responsible medical treatment to pregnant women. This is just one more example of Elliott's embarrassing provincial narrowmindedness. (It's amazing that he comes from the same tradition as Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite.)
Mary Cunningham, Speed123, where are you?

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | AUGUST 10, 2007 12:56 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

How do you make people believe superstitious nonsense?

Get them when they're young.
Tell them stories of gods and demons and heaven and hell.
Insist the stories are true.
Tell them that if they believe, they will live forever in heaven:
if they don't believe, they'll burn in hell.
Place the child in the appropriate religious community,
and let groupthink do its work;
And one day, God willing, Behold! Another robot.

POSTED BY: YOYO | AUGUST 9, 2007 9:47 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

To: Richmond T. Stallgiss

Yes, I do act as if religion and medicine are in conflict. Medical ethics may involve philosophy but I can't see any evidence that religious people are particularly moral or have high ethical standards.

Let's take the bible as an example. What moral story can I teach my children about god's love when he (supposedly) destroys all life save a few during the flood? Is there a lesson about love here that I'm missing? How about justice -- what do you think is fair about killing everybody including animals and innocent children?

Then there's the story of Lot, who offers his virgin daughters up to be gang-raped to "protect" the angels. What's the moral story there that we want our physicians to embrace -- any woman can be given up or discarded to protect a man?

Of course we could also discuss the moral implications of the pass over. Now here's an example of a loving God. God (supposedly) punishes all the first born of Egypt because of the stubbornness of Pharaoh. Of course, a few sentences earlier, it was God who hardened Pharaoh's heart to begin with. So let's see what moral lessons we can learn from this bible story: How about kill anyone associated with an enemies clan -- whether they are innocent or guilty.

I'm sorry Richmond, I don't buy the whole idea of getting morals from either our sacred scriptures or from God -- at least the God as described in the bible. In fact, I'd doubt whether you would want your children to follow the ethical standards that God portrays.

POSTED BY: FORMER CHRISTIAN | AUGUST 9, 2007 8:04 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Shearer-"I believe a woman becomes a woman and earns all of the same rights as a man at the age of 18.

No, I'm kidding. Actually it's younger, 13"

"Well, I became a "woman" at the age of 10." You think that is too young to be a woman?

As far as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness....that is for folks who are independent and can pursue anything. I have given birth to three children, buried one because of Spinal Meningitis at the age of three weeks. You do not know me or my life and you assume a hell of a lot about folks not of your own beliefs.

Life is sacred. All life.

In the bible it talks of God forming Adam...and Adam was not alive until God breathed the breath of life into him. No where does it say that until breath fills the body there is life.

There is life... the life of a tree, a dog, a frog, a whale...then there is human. So tell me what is the difference between the tree, frog, dog, whale or human? All start as one called life...they all multiply, they all need breath...so what is it that makes one being sacred and the next something that is out side of the sacredness of the divine?

What makes you think that YOU have the secret of life..what gives all those holier then thou's the right to tell me or anyone how to believe or live?

You are right though about one thing...what is between me and my Gods are not your business...I believe the Godhood is big enough that S/he can make a call on my little failings.

Shearer, you seem to believe that because you are Christian you are then more moral..and the rest of us are doing what? Orgies and human sacrifice? I keep missing those invites.

Let me fill you in...I have been married twice..the first time for 25 years and now 19...I have two children and with my husband's kids and mine , we have 15 grandkids. I have two dogs, three cats, chickens, guinea fowl and a quarter horse and her little filly. I am very much in love and have always been faithful to my husband, I have a glass of wine now and then...I do not smoke and only cuss at republican right wing dufi.

I live the Rede, or try to. I live knowing I am responsible for my actions...and those actions can cause harm to others.

I live a very happy life. I do not need salvation...I do not fear death and damnation. That is your balliwick, I am too busy living the gift of life I have been given.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 9, 2007 6:07 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon... in your head you are preaching to the choir... but unfortunately, most of the people here are not the choir so I don't know why you feel obliged to call them God-haters to their face... not exactly how Jesus would have sought converts.

2 Cor 2:14-15 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. 15For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

2 Cor 4 1-2 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 9, 2007 1:44 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Of course it is nonsensical to the God-haters, please see 1 Cor 1:18

"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing."

POSTED BY: CANYON SHEARER | AUGUST 9, 2007 1:20 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Former Christian Said: "Your understanding that medicine and religion are complementary rather than antagonistic lacks any kind of evidence -- and for every example where you can provide illustrating that complementary nature I can provide 10, illustrating a conflict."

I think you misunderstand Pastor Willis' comment. When he says Religion and medicine are siblings, he seems to mean they have the same status in civil society. You act as if they are in opposition... which is a textbook false dichotomy... like "religion *versus* the internet".... clearly the two are compatible and I should not be forced to choose *between* them when considering this question.

You act as if science provides a sole basis for normative ethics. In fact, medical ethics also involves philosophy and religion. What does science alone say about the meaning of life, and the *value* of human life? What evidence does science contribute to these topics, and what other disciplines must be considered to arrive at compelling answers to these eternal questions about life and death?

Peace,
RT

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 9, 2007 1:05 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Without a Christian World-view it is nearly impossible to realize why the secular world is so hung up on the embryonic(human baby)-cells. They show no potential for success in test-animals and are more likely to cause cancer in lab-rats than to cure their ailments. As a Christian it is easy to see why secular science is so obsessed with the dead-end road of embryonic-cells. The Bible tells us that those that hate God love death."

Well, Canyon, actually, the stem-cell research question is a prime example of where Christian religion *has* caused a lot of suffering, ...by forcing medical science in America to *throw away fertilized eggs that could otherwise be yielding better knowledge.* Who knows, these years when things drag on could well have made the difference for whether things that ail me will ever get fixed.

If they religiously believe these are all human lives, why do they spend so much on the fertility treatments that create large numbers of fertilized eggs for each successful pregnancy? It's not 'killing babies' to use these cells for something productive when the alternative is treating them like medical waste, anyway.

Personally, my suspicious mind says that it's a religious hysteria supported by companies that stand to make a whole lot more money off *treating* illness than *curing* it. Certainly, Canyon, you've demonstrated your idea of science is self-serving and, just wrong.

Frankly, Canyon, your hatred of everyone not your particular brand of *Christian* is what shows, and that's the kind of thing that has no place in the practice of medicine.

Even the author here describes having been afraid of going to a Catholic hospital lest his wife be denied treatment that could save her.

It seems the question isn't so laughable after all.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 9, 2007 12:10 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

First, to Dr. Elliot.

It seems to me that since you've concluded that science and religion are unalterably linked because the mature nature of a physician's religion. Okay, so which religion?

The problem with that kind of statement is that it supports any religion. So, if my religion dictates that I bleed someone, or sacrifice a dove in order to treat them, you're okay with that. Remember doctor, you spoke of religion -- and did not indicate which religion.

Since religions in general are based on faith -- meaning trusting in an outcome for which there is no evidence -- doesn't it seem problematic that anyone's beliefs should trump science? Would you want to be treated by a physician whose belief in prayer was so strong that he/she insisted on prayers first, even in time-critical circumstances (like a stroke or heart attack)? Hold on to those paddles -- we need to pray for guidance first.

Or, how about being treated by someone who genuinely believed that you were better off dead than continuing to live isolated from their view of God?

You see, the problem is that when you say religion, you mean something in particular. But there's no evidence that your understanding of what God wants is the same as someone else. Remember, it has not been that long since we sacrificed animals and humans in an attempt to appease an angry God.

Your understanding that medicine and religion are complementary rather than antagonistic lacks any kind of evidence -- and for every example where you can provide illustrating that complementary nature I can provide 10, illustrating a conflict.

Now, on to Canyon Shearer:

There are quite a few strange statements in your post. But let's address your closing statement about Jesus.

Even though we've "evolved" our understanding of what God wants so that he no longer demands sacrifices, the entire Christian religion is based on human sacrifice. Explain to me this: How does killing someone (Jesus) save the world? How is that any different than prior human and animal sacrifices? Here's a dialog that kind of summarizes my confusion:

From God: Well, I'm not real happy with what I see going on down there. The world is a mess. People are lying and stealing and murdering. What's a God to do? I'd like to forgive them for their sins but I just can't.

I know, I'll have myself re-created in human form. Then, I can be tortured and put to death. Then I can forgive their sins.

I feel much better now. Of course, I could just forgive their sins.....nah.

POSTED BY: FORMER CHRISTIAN | AUGUST 9, 2007 11:02 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

BGONE said: "Medical providers should be required by law to reveal their positions on legal medical procedures they faith to be sins. Drug stores that won't fill prescriptions for certain medicines should be required to put that on the outside of their places of business in extra large letters. Same or similar for doctors and hospitals. We can call that "cutting down on the turn downs."

This is an excellent idea. Really.

I also want to applaud Rev. Willis' essay. He rightly assesses the questions as a "false choice" (google it). Willis also correctly 'diagnoses' medicine as a sibling to religion in its state relationship -- the medical establishment is a world of its own separate from a civil institution and yet subject to its regulation.

BGONE's idea begins to bridge the gap in a reasonable way -- allow the physician to practice in his/her way, but require that patients be informed about those particularities that may prove controversial.

POSTED BY: RICHMOND T. STALLGISS | AUGUST 9, 2007 10:39 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Good job, Canyon, embarrassing yourself again. Since the God you believe in kills people constantly, does that mean he is pro-death? Oh wait, he's perfect and just happens to be outside the realm of criticism. I've got a great idea, if you are anti-abortion, you can be pro-life by donating 1/3 of your paycheck to caring for the children! If you let them starve to death, aren't you pro-death too? Also, since the money you pay in taxes funds a war where innocent civilians are killed (and you probably support it), I guess that makes you adamantly pro-death too! Bravo!

POSTED BY: LUKE | AUGUST 9, 2007 10:35 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Oops! What is there about child birthing that's done differently at Catholic hospitals? By Catholic doctors?

Good idea. Medical providers should be required by law to reveal their positions on legal medical procedures they faith to be sins. Drug stores that won't fill prescriptions for certain medicines should be required to put that on the outside of their places of business in extra large letters. Same or similar for doctors and hospitals. We can call that "cutting down on the turn downs."

POSTED BY: BGONE | AUGUST 9, 2007 9:22 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

re Dr. Elliott's comment about Christian Science:

neither the Christian Science Church nor Christian Science as expounded by Mary Baker Eddy, "dogmatically exclude or severely restrict some generally accepted medical procedures."

every Christian Scientist is always free to choose a particular healing method in any situation.

Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures says:

"If Christian Scientists ever fail to receive aid from other Scientists,--their brethren upon whom they may call,--God will still guide them into the right use of temporary and eternal means." [444:7]

Verndigger

POSTED BY: VERNDIGGER | AUGUST 9, 2007 8:50 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

jyhume:

Are Canyon Shearer's posts as nonsensical to everyone else as they are to me?

Yup.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 9, 2007 7:51 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Are Canyon Shearer's posts as nonsensical to everyone else as they are to me? Somewhere, CS, you've gotten it into your head that the "secularist" agenda is about controlling a patient's choice to go heaven, having sex with young girls, and celebrating death.

What?

This is a blindness even your favored adult stem-cells can't cure.

No one here is suggesting that "secular" doctors should force anything on their patients. Rather, doctors should provide their patients with the full range of legal options so they can make their own informed decisions.

POSTED BY: JYHUME | AUGUST 9, 2007 7:02 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Heathen-americans likely have a different view on medicine than the bible-thumpers, and wish that the holy rollers would finally, finally get around to updating the old 'go forth and multiply' to 'go forth, and wrap that rascal, or keep it in your pants'. Doctrine, dogma, karma, my karma ran OVER your dogma, call it what you will, anytime you have a centralized body trying to think for others, you've got a problem looking for a place to happen. Will the church ever start trying to encourage its' flock to go forth, and think for themselves? Hmmm...the truth is out there, but you may have to set down the religious literature in order to find it...

Such demands might be made by other professions as well, and then for whom would law and governance remain?

Considering Science, can't pass up a moment to post about stem-cells.

My Christian View on Stem Cell Research

(c) 2007

Most secular humanists are shocked to learn that I am all for Stem-Cell Research. As far as my limited research has concluded, Stem-Cells have been directly responsible for children with diabetes being cured completely, returning motion and even function to paraplegics, and improving the success rates of Leukemia treatment.

Stem-Cells are certainly the greatest medical discovery of the modern world, and their merits and uses should be explored to their vast potential.

Where a secular humanist and I differ are where those Stem-Cells should come from. A secular humanist hears the word, "Stem-Cell" and instantly thinks of a Petri dish with a tiny human being in it. When I hear the word Stem-Cell, I think to marrow cells, umbilical cells, and amniotic cells. Albeit out of these three, the marrow-cell, otherwise known as the adult-cell is showing the most promise in the laboratory.

Without a Christian World-view it is nearly impossible to realize why the secular world is so hung up on the embryonic(human baby)-cells. They show no potential for success in test-animals and are more likely to cause cancer in lab-rats than to cure their ailments. As a Christian it is easy to see why secular science is so obsessed with the dead-end road of embryonic-cells. The Bible tells us that those that hate God love death. The Pro-Lifer's have allowed their opponents to gain an upper hand in semantics by calling them Pro-Choice, when the proper and real term they have earned and deserve is Pro-Death. The Pro-Death group of people know, deep down in their conscience, that killing babies is wrong. No matter how dull their conscience is, it still hurts to know a baby has lost its life for their selfish purposes. This is why the embryonic-cell has so much potential for the Pro-Death crowd, because if the embryonic-cell could somehow become the greatest miracle the world has ever known (to them), then the 50~ Million babies they have killed will not have been in vain. Just as the Nazi's hid behind science when they dropped people from airplanes to study the effects of gravity on the human body, the secular humanist is justifying the means by the ends; the means are babycide.

I would love to see the Michael J. Fox's of the world cured, quadriplegic's walk again, and the disease of diabetes go the way of small-pox and polio. These are real possibilities, things that we may see in our life-time. But embryonic-cells and killing babies will not bring us to these ends. In order to exploit our newfound miracle of Stem-Cell's, there is one direction that has proven fruitful, which is as of yet an untapped well of untold remedies, and that direction is adult-cells. If you were unclear on Stem-Cells before, please don't take my word for it, research these issues and realize just how much potential God has given us to cure our earthly ailments. Please, spread the word on the beautiful nature of adult-cells and condemn the malevolent nature of embryonic-cells. Write to your Congressmen detailing the merits and failures of both types.

Knowledge is the only way to the truth, and truth comes from hearing. Please don't let your final opinion on this important matter be from a biased media; look at both sides of the argument.

Terra,

We finally find a place where we agree on something! It's not on Muslims...see Surah 5:6, if you can't find clean water, sand is a viable alternative.

Women have rights! Yes! The same rights as men! The right to life, liberty, the pursuit of property and happiness.

Where we probably disagree is when those rights come to fruition. I believe it is when a woman becomes a woman.

I believe a woman becomes a woman and earns all of the same rights as a man at the age of 18.

No, I'm kidding. Actually it's younger, 13.

You probably still don't agree, I am still being coy.

The reality is that a woman becomes a woman and has the same rights as a man the moment she becomes a woman.

When is that? Conception; two X chromosomes get together and she earns the right to life, liberty, the pursuit of property and happiness.

If you want to deprive this precious little girl of any of those, well then that's between you and God.

Until after the enlightenment in Christian countries, doctors would use the same tools inside of a dead body then use them in the living ill...sometimes as a child was born. It was called Milk Fever...the mortality of women after giving birth was high. Where did cleanliness come from? The Muslim world, by way of the ancients. The good Christian warriors brought back the idea of Hygiene with the rest of the loot from the Crusades.

In the middle ages dirt was your friend, a shield against the devil and his imps.

Tampanning was discovered in the ancient Egyptian tombs (and the patients lived)...while more "civilized" medicine men were bleeding their patients to death.

Do no harm? The Wiccan Rede goes: An do what ye will, do no harm. Is forceing a woman to have a unwanted child doing harm...yes it is. Not only to the woman, but to the rest of her children, if she can not provide for one more child.

Is causing a person to die slowly inch by inch in horrible pain doing harm? Yes it is, if that person wants to die in peace and his spirit is ready to fly free.

So who called any Doctor god? Does he have the right to take another's choices out of their hands and make those life choices for them? That is harm.

I am Wiccan, a Witch, my choices for my care and ending is not what any oneelse might like..tough. I want cremated, my daughter was horrified. But it is my choice. Throw some good incense like Nag Champa on the pier and I will go up with sacred smoke and be happy as a lark. It is my choice.

That is my religion. I want science. I want clean, modern, knowledgable doctors who will do all they can, to a limit. I am not afraid to die, I would hate to be forced to live. It should be what my religion is, and my beliefs, not the doctors. If I take birth control that is up to me...not up to a pharماسist. They don't want to hand out all pills perscribed by a doc..change professions.

Lepi. In 1975 I had my little boy...when I was 7 months gone I told my doc I wanted a tubal... I wanted that bridge cut, burned and knotted... Well, it was an Army Hospital, I was told that my husband would have to come in and sign for it. I asked why? It was my body being cut on, not his. But I had to have him come in and sign. He did. While in the office the doc. told my then husband that if he changed his mind and I was on my way to surgery, I could not have it done.

Ok...day after I had my son, and I ask the doc why did he not preform the tubal...his answer? he was Catholic and did not believe in it.

So the day later I see a white coat passing my room and holler. The doc came in and I told him what happened. He said he would do the surgery. I had it done. But why should I have to have been treated like an owned person by the policies of the hospital then by the doc?

Why should women be put through any of that? The morning after pill, Birth control pill...abortions...what man gets turned down for Evagra? For Rogain? for anything? Do they have to fight to get their tupes clipped?

Shearer...you are a rabid wingbat.

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | AUGUST 9, 2007 1:32 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Rev. Elliott: I hope you'll find the same enthusiasm for a bit of fact-checking as name-calling.

The question isn't "biased" or "antireligious." It repeats the exact language Americans have used --including religious Americans-- to describe their own positions in this matter.

More to the point, modern medical science is founded upon reason and empiricism. Its professional practice here in this life is therefore licensed and regulated by our earthly, democratically-elected government.

A civilized, pluralistic society does not allow individuals to substitute their individual religious ideology or personal superstition for proven medical science. As a government-licensed doctor or pharmacist, you can't deny legal medicines or procedures to people just because they contradict *your* religious beliefs.

As a parent, you can't deny your child a proven, life-saving procedure because your religion says prayer, animal sacrifice or burning sage will work better. Such is the kind of thinking that led Saudi religious police to deny women exit from a burning building because their heads weren't covered.

The legal authority to practice medicine in the USA --which includes the authority to prescribe potent drugs and perform risky procedures-- is a state-granted privilege, not a right. Anyone unable to refrain from substituting personal religious ideology for the scientific practice of medicine is not entitled to this privilege. They should not even become medical professionals in the first place if they're unwilling to do the job honestly.

POSTED BY: ANTHONYG | AUGUST 8, 2007 11:38 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Canyon Shearer

You write the kind of drivel that made me an atheist.
A thousand thanks.
You are a master at demonstrating how deranged the religious mind can become. It's really quite amazing.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | AUGUST 8, 2007 11:09 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I would like to do something I NEVER do to an On-Faith Author, applaud Dr. Elliott. For the first time since On-Faith began asking these questions an author took one seriously and I learned something. Bravo, Dr. Elliott.

You are definitely correct in the antireligious nature of this question, and I didn't expect an answer so lucent. I wrote this prior to reading your answer, and have tweaked it slightly to make it fit;
Like all questions, if you take it to the extreme, it may be easier to answer.

Consider China, whose atheistic community has FORBID Tibetan Buddhists from reincarnating. Do they have that authority?

If an American atheistic physician forbid someone from going to Heaven after they die, do they have that right?

Of course not, so we've established that there is a line, where does that line stand?

If a Mormon suffered from fatigue, does the doctor have the right to recommend caffeine?

Or if I, as a Christian, demanded that the doctor wash his hands under running water before touching me, does he have the right to wash his hands in a basin of water? (Look up Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis and Lev 15:13)

Perhaps the religion with the most confusing ethical restrictions is the Jehovah's Witness religion, who will not accept a blood transfusion to save their life.

The reason for this question, though, is the secular world wants to have lots of sex with young (18 in most of the USA) women. In Denmark recently the pedophiles wanted to lower the age of consent to 12. In preparation for brainwashing our young women into thinking sex is what they were created for, a vaccine was formulated to immunize girls against HPV, in the attempt to "Make Sex Safe Again." Do doctors (and teachers) have the right tell our otherwise virtuous young people that sexual immorality is fun and should be partaken in as often as possible, as long as its safe?

The answer to all of these questions; what does the Bible say?

Of course you can drink coffee, of course doctors should wash their hands in running water, of course saving a life is worth more than breaking an out of context superseded-covenant ceremonial command, and of course our young people should be taught righteousness and holiness over gross sexual sin.

Here is the ultimate statistic, every person, whether they've been worked on by a doctor or not, will die. On that day no doctor can say, "Go to Heaven" or "Go to Hell", this is a matter between God and you. On this day God will look into your conscience and judge you against righteousness. Every deed done in darkness will be brought to light, I can't condemn you of these deeds, I don't know what they are, but rest assured that your conscience has recorded these things. To be prepared, ask yourself, "Have I ever told a lie?", "Have I ever stolen anything?", "Have I ever contributed to the delinquency of a minor?", "Have I ever looked at a woman, whether underage or state-sanctioned, with lust?", "What exactly did Jesus mean when He said, "Who-so-ever looks at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery already with her in His heart." or "All adulterers will be thrown into the lake of fire."? These are important questions because these are just a few questions which have been and are being written to the book of your conscience.

Now ask yourself if you would want your mother thumbing through this book? Would you be embarrassed? When God looks through this book, will He find you innocent or guilty? Answer truthfully, because lying to God is considered an abomination.

If guilty, should you go to Heaven or to Hell? Remember that no thief, no adulterer, no fornicator, and no blasphemer shall see the kingdom of Heaven.

But there is good news, while all are guilty before God, He has made a way to be saved. God loved us, not that we loved Him, He sent His only begotten son to die for us. Jesus Christ lived a full human life, subjected to sin and temptation, but He didn't succumb, He willingly gave Himself up to be the propitiation for your sins, He was bruised for your transgressions and He died on the cross at Calvary for your sake.

Your fine was paid, but like all gifts, what you must do to receive this gift is come to God in godly sorrow, apologize for transgressing His laws, ask to be washed clean of your iniquity, and trust in the Gospel that Jesus Christ has paid your fine. Do this and you will be saved, you will be like the caterpillar that is confined by gravity, but is transformed by God's will into a beautiful butterfly; and you will know that you are redeemed to God.

No physician or doctor or mere mortal could give you this gift, even if you wanted them to. Only the mediator Jesus Christ can sanctify and justify you, but He won't do so unless you realize you need saving and ask for forgiveness.

POSTED BY: [CANYON SHEARER](#) | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:52 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Who says that the origin of religion is to improve the human condition? The origin of religion is to make a living for priests so that they did not have to have an honest job.

Most early religions were based on the notion of sacrifice to gods in exchange for things like rain for the crop or an easy birth. These sacrifices to gods such as Wodan and Jupiter were a waste of time and the priests who benefited were confidence tricksters.

Modern religions may be about something different but the origin of religion was a confidence trick

POSTED BY: TOM MUNRO | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:40 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Hmmm...I notice that while Willis E. Elliott is "An ordained United Church of Christ and American Baptist minister, 'On Faith' panelist Dr. Willis E. Elliott has been a pastor, teacher, lecturer, administrator, consultant (to Newsweek for 38 years), church executive, and the author of six books. His five earned degrees in religion include a PhD, University of Chicago, where he was divinity research librarian." etc. etc. that NONE of his seemingly endless certifications actually include MEDICAL DOCTOR. How about he stays in the church and stays THE HELL OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, since he is not certified to treat patients. You can believe what you want, but when you refuse to perform valid and legitimate medical procedures in contradiction with the will of a lucid patient because of your "religious beliefs" you are committing malpractice. Period.

POSTED BY: STEVEN REICH | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:30 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Religion and medicine (empirical science) cannot be tied together with a string of good intentions... human sacrifices were performed with the intention of bettering ourselves through the divine relief of drought.

The reason why Mr. Elliott avoided Christian Science and Orthodox Catholicism when having his baby is the same reason why we ought to avoid magical thinking as a whole. No system wrought by humans will be perfect, but the least we can do is apply the basics of skepticism and learn the lessons of our ancestors.

POSTED BY: ATHEISTARCHON | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:27 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I might add that religion is all about death.
Medicine is all about life.

POSTED BY: YOYO | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:19 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Religion and medicine are siblings???

Don't flatter yourself.

They have almost nothing in common.

Medicine is science. Religion is mumbo jumbo.

Medicine is about the real and actual.

Religion is about the unreal, and the unlikely.

Medicine is about fact.

Religion is about fiction.

Medicine is constantly learning and changing.

Religion is static and unchanging.

Medicine searches for the truth.

Religion is only comfortable with lies and deceit.

Medicine will continue. Religion will eventually die.

POSTED BY: YOYO | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:13 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Any time a physician refuses to perform medical procedure or withhold other medical services because of his or her religious convictions, he or she ought to be liable for medical malpractice. There is no room for religious convictions when it comes to practicing medicine.

POSTED BY: KEVIN | AUGUST 8, 2007 10:12 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

****Maturely religious physicians have so integrated their religious and occupational "professions" that what is good for their patients is understood within the particular physician's way of seeing and living in the world.****

The problem arises when "what is good for their patients...within the particular physician's way of seeing and living in the world" is not what is good for the patient within the patient's way of seeing and living in the world.

A neighbor of mine, knowing that her fifth child was going to be delivered by c-section, told her doctor that she wanted her tubes tied at the same time, as she did not wish to have any more babies. He refused to do the ligation unless HER HUSBAND agreed to it. Her husband would not give consent, the OB did not tie her tubes, and a year and half later, she had her sixth baby - she was over forty by then. She

chose a different doctor (one that respected her ownership of her body) for the sixth pregnancy, and had her tubes tied without even telling her husband that it was being done.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | AUGUST 8, 2007 9:05 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

In the United States it is generally accepted that a physician, licensed by the government and approved by his licensed institution of higher learning, has taken on the responsibility of practicing medicine in the manner prescribed by the governing bodies.

This does not, in any way, include any consideration of religious or spiritual practice. As I understand it, the practice of medicine is based upon secular science and has little to do with religious practice or belief.

There are those who will try to bend the rules to include practices outside the realm of the science and art of medicine. We have learned to expect these people to pop up every now and then, and we must be prepared to deal with them as required.

I do not believe that religion and medicine are "siblings" in any way. One could use the comparison that Mr. Elliot offers to include any number of sciences and arts. This is merely mumbo jumbo, offered to broaden Mr. Elliott's opportunities at some point in the future. In other words, "if you lay out enough manure, sooner or later something will flourish."

POSTED BY: CTMONT | AUGUST 8, 2007 9:00 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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