



Theories Contradictory to Faith

Today medical science greatly depends on MRI scanner to diagnose diseases. It's inventor Dr. Raymond Damadion, shared his feelings after the great success in 1977, "I could feel the wisdom of God from the beginning of this effort.. My faith in prayer got more strengthened. Though I felt as a scientist, nothing is there that doesn't yield to human intelligence and keen research, I became very humble when I experienced God's invisible intervention and loving inspiration".

The progress in the field of science and technology is quite amazing. Some consider this as the ability of man alone. What is the truth? Creation is the act of God and it is an on going process. Those who challenge this truth are the exponents of the rejection of God. The vision of progress without God makes man a slavish or mechanical. He goes after joys and pleasures. They think that God has no role in material world. They place arguments to discard God in everything. Though challenges to faith varies from seasons, places and forms, there are some factors which are common to challenges.. They are certain ideological questions, some natural thoughts from the self, challenges from those who misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the word of God in its true sense. Let us examine the theories and ideologies in history, which challenged faith.

1. **Agnosticism**

Agnosticism is the philosophical stand against the capability of human mind to think beyond what is physical and experimental. God may or may not there. Even if there is God, He is beyond human reasoning and we cannot reach Him. So why to worry about God? This is the view of Agnostics.

2. Rationalism

What cannot be proved by reason is not real. Knowledge acquired through five senses alone is true. God is not subject to sensory knowledge and reason. Hence God is not a reality. Fear and ignorance of man are source of faith in God. The concept of God is the irrational imagination of man to explain the concept of Universe which is beyond his reasoning. Rationalists say that the unending sufferings and inevitable miseries of this world and the anxieties they produce will support this image of God. They are very eager to declare that "there is no God" But their arguments are not logical. Rationalists highlight the material achievements of science. They claim that man has conquered space but they did not see God there and they invented and possessed machines, which can go beyond time etc. But real scientists do not agree with them. Scientists only say that there are more to discover than what is discovered. What is remaining is manifold than what we have known. The whole universe witnesses the activities of an invisible power.

3. Materialism

Materialism says that material things alone are real and there is nothing beyond it. The proponents of this theory agree that God, soul and life after death are myths. Their understanding is that man's end is himself. Man is the creator and judge of history. They do not agree with people who accept and respect God – a supreme power, the reason or beginning and goal of all created things. They deny the role of a supreme power in the origin and final goal of the universe. They argue that the universe exists by the action and reaction of material things, which remains forever. Hence there is no need for any supreme power. Among the materialists, Marxists stand first.

4. Humanism

Humanists deny God for the sake of the glory of man. They say that man, not God, is the measuring rod of everything. Recently humanism has influenced religious thoughts also. They argue that heaven and hell are not the realities at the end of the world, but things that happen here on Earth. They say that man does not need God. Some humanists agree that God is an imaginary creation of man out of his own self. They insist that God is the essence of man himself. Some humanists agree that God is an imaginary creation of man himself can grow unto the fullness of this imaginary God.

5. Communism

Communism is a philosophy that paved the way to many changes in the history of the world. Frederic Engels (1818-1895) and Karl Marx (1820-1895) gave form and shape to a new

social set-up communism with its manifesto giving emphasis to the liberation of the employee. Once, Communism had considerable influence on almost ninety countries. But today, its influence is limited to a very few countries.

Communism had its inception in a particular social environment. It was presented as a socialist set up which gives economic equality at the time when some exploited many others. It was presented as an ideology where none exploits the other and where power is given to the -workers. But Marx and Engels accepted materialism, atheism and class war as the fundamental principles to solve economic inequality. They also took up a stand that any means can be used to attain the end. (End justifies the means).

Communists, who insist that material world alone is true, do not believe in God who is beyond the universe. Hence religion and faith in God has no place in communism. Communism is not merely a secular philosophy but a philosophy founded on atheism. This philosophy teaches that there is no God, no soul and no life after death.

Christians cannot accept the important doctrines of communism such as, denial of religion, atheism, and fascism in the name of democracy; use of violence to attain their end, the principle that end justifies the means and denial of individual freedom.

Church opposes communism because it is an atheistic system and it justifies violence to attain its end. Christian faith and the communist ideology will never go together. The important areas of disagreement are the following:-

1. Atheism and Denial of Religion

Communism presents God as the imaginary creation of man's unfulfilled desires and religion as a means of exploitation in the hands of the exploiter. In the words of Marx "Religion is the opium which intoxicates man".

Hence it is very clear that communism holds an anti-religious policy. Church cannot accept the communist views which hold God as man's imaginary creation and religion as toxins.

2. Class War and Violence

Marx thought that the way of love is impractical to reform a social setup, accepted class-war as his way. Communism teaches us that any means can be adapted for success in this struggle. According to this view the rich and the poor are opposite parties and they must fight each other to create a classless society. In this class war communism exhorts to join hands with the

employees and get power and authority through any means and thus establish autocracy. Church opposes the communist stand which posters division and enmity in the society because it is against the teachings of Jesus who taught us to love our enemies and to sacrifice our lives for our brethren.

3. Denial of Right to Property

Marxism denies the rights to private property. Communist Manifesto exerts to fight against the possession of private property which divides haves and have-nots.. But Church never denies the right to possess private property. At the same time Church teaches that private property is also to be used for the common good.

4. Autocracy of the Employees

According to the Marxist view in the process of production, the employees occupy higher position than capital, technologies and all other factors of production. Though they envisage that their goal is to give the employee what he deserves and to set him free from exploitation, Very often, it makes the field of work a warfront and obstructs developmental activities. Church stands to protect the rights of both the employer and the employee and to ensure that their due rights are recognized.

Church, the moral force of the world, cannot keep silence when theories like rationalism and ideology like Marxism, denies God and destroy the unity of human society. She must fulfill her duty to lead the straying world in the right path. That is why the Church is opposes the ideologies and movements that deny faith in God. As Christians, we too ought to be vigilant against such theories and movements.

I. Find out the Answers

1. What are the important false doctrines against faith?
2. Why is communism not acceptable to Christians?
3. What is humanism?
4. What is the view of the Church about the employer and the employee?
5. Why does materialism contradict Christian faith?

II. Let us Discuss

1. What is your reaction to the stand that any means can be used to achieve the goal? A pretty little daughter suffers deadly disease, facing her last moments: "Dad, when I die, where I will go? Who will be with me as my companion? I am afraid". Her atheist father, broke for a moment at the most touching words of his daughter, said: "Dear daughter, from now onwards you hold fast to God whom you have heard about from your mother and do not pay heed to my words". Share your response to this particular situation.

III. Activity

I will move away from all political philosophies that lead to the denial of God and will stand as a corrective force.

IV. Let us Enlighten our Hearts

"Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long" (Ps. 25: 4-5).