

The Trinity

The teacher was talking to her junior class about God and how hard it was to know about God. 'Where is God' the teacher asked. 'I know where God is' called out one little boy, he's in our bathroom. 'In the bathroom' the teacher replied. 'Yes every morning my Dad goes to the bathroom door and he shouts, 'My God are you still in there'.

Yes God is in the bathroom because he's everywhere. Our happiness as human beings lies in acknowledging His existence and living by His commandments.

The OT tells us that at the foot of Mount Sinai the Israelites fashioned a Calf out of Gold, called it God and then worshipped it. This happened as Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments from the true God at the top of the mountain. Now, the first of these commandments is: 'I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange gods before me'. So, in obedience to the Lord, the golden calf was smashed to pieces.

Are there any Golden calves in our society which seem to be encroaching on God's domain? Life and death issues come to mind. The Pope was in Auschwitz last year where his fellow countryman the notorious Dr Mengele decided who should live or die. Are we that much different from him if we, as a society, condone, tolerate, or even turn a blind eye, to medical experiments on human embryos after which most are discarded. In these cases are we not 'playing God' deciding who should live or die.

Of course we would never, as believers, condone these things but being tolerant of others who 'play God' in this regard is a kind of passive agreement. Yes people do get away with murder but when they go before God they will have to answer for what they've done like we all will.

Other people put the blame on God for all wars and disasters. However, the breaking of the First commandment is what causes the entire world's pain - not God. Even many natural disasters are caused by man's greed.

Breaking our addictions to false Gods is what salvation is really all about. But we can also invent a caricature of God and be addicted to it.

The renowned philosopher, Nietzsche, said that God was dead but it was Church people who had killed him. How often has God been portrayed as manager of this club called the church filled with

"respectable" people who come from "stable" families? This same God would have little or no time for those who may come from so-called dysfunctional families. And yet, Scripture tells us that God sent His Son to seek out and save that which is lost. Are we like Him in this regard? Do we try and help people get on their feet or see them as being forever losers.

Another image of God which we need to be wary of is what spiritual writers call 'cuddly bear God'. This is a sugar-coated God who is falling over Himself to smooth out all the ruffles of life. This caricature of God keeps us wrapped up in 'cotton wool' and shields us from every pain. And yet, how many people have found the true God only in the pain? How many people have turned from false Gods only in the midst of difficulty? I think the cuddly bear God should have no place in our thinking

The Book of Genesis says that God made man in 'his own image and likeness'. Have we ever been tempted to refashion God in our own image and likeness? If so, it's time for us to let God be God and us to recognise our creaturely dependence on Him.

Questions

Q1. Are there any golden calves in our society which we need to stop worshipping?

Discuss.

Q2. Is teaching basic sex-education to five-year-olds a step too far?

Discuss

Regardless of whether people think it morally right or wrong, why are these programmes for small children foisted on to schools without proper consultation? Discuss.

Q3. In the groups opinion why are some people able to overcome addictions of one kind or another while others are struggling? Discuss

Q4. Is there a tendency even among church-going people to write off and avoid people who are struggling with sinful addictions and call them derogatory names like 'smack heads' or 'crackheads' or 'drunks'?

Discuss

