

The Seduction of Pentecostal Fundamentalism

Many members of Pentecostal fundamentalist religions were first seduced into it because it appeared to them to be a comforting religion. It promised to the person who felt lost in a society that is not perfect that, yes, there are simple answers to complex problems.

Many people find it hard to cope. They see that the universe is not only complex but it is dangerous. There are diseases and death, floods and hurricanes, earthquakes and catastrophes. The poor frightened human, able to understand the danger but neither able to accept it nor do anything about it, finds that the presence of the Supreme Boss is extremely desirable -- especially if the Boss can be manipulated by magical signs and incantations.

But it will ultimately occur to the Pentecostal fundamentalist that anyone or anything which denies the existence of the Boss threatens the safety, even the very survival, of the believer. The infidel must be brought into the fold or, at least, prevented from acting contrary to the values of the Pentecostal fundamentalist.

It is at this time that the Pentecostal fundamentalist is in the greatest danger of gradually becoming part of a religion of violence. The first promise of fundamentalism has disappeared. It has become a religion that turns its members into irrational followers whose hatred for much of this world is now the most basic part of their personality. Little did these converts realize that they were in danger of becoming believers who religiously violate the basic standards of the religion.

Day by day, the scripture has become the Pentecostal fundamentalist's only source of knowledge because it is the very word of the Boss. By definition, the bible must be literally true. "The Boss said it, I believe it, that settles it."

The Boss must be understandable, so the believers create a being that looks like them and talks like them. The Boss even has many of the same limitations that they have. Then they define the Boss as omnipotent which also brings the dream of their own omnipotence a step closer.

The world of the scripture is not without its hazards, though. It is filled with demons, witches and evil spirits. The Pentecostal fundamentalists feel that they are in direct contact with these magical beings, possibly even under attack by them. These evil creatures are more real to them than, say, the existence of an old dinosaur fossil is to us. But the Boss will protect them.

Because it often contradicts scripture, secular knowledge is rejected as unreliable and even false. Therefore, anything or anybody who denies the literal truth of the scripture is working for the devil. In fundamentalism there is a three-track road to knowledge: (1) faith (2) the scripture and (3) direct communication with the Boss. Pentecostal fundamentalists do not have opinions, rather they have revelations. Anything which conflicts with the revelation, since it did not come from the Boss must, therefore, have come from Satan.

Finally, even thinking about one's own values becomes blasphemy because thinking requires questioning of a personal revelation from the Boss. Reality has disappeared. The Boss protects the Pentecostal fundamentalist but, at the same time, the Pentecostal fundamentalist protects the Boss. Anything which threatens the Boss's universe must be destroyed.

When the believer has reached this level, logic is Satanic because it is not based on scripture and knowledge is evil because it leads to questioning. Now, everyone must think and act as the Pentecostal fundamentalist does because that's the way the Boss wants it to be. Now you understand why these people can kill in the name of the Boss.