



RH BILL: Church versus State: The Battle over Responsibility

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It is just funny how things turned upside down with the emergence of the RH Bill controversy. Funny, in the sense that concerned authorities from both the church and the state are giving their all to outwit each other. Funny, because this issue has already dwelt into the deepest part of each other's emotions unveiling a lot of pride, throwing a lot of foul words, evoking a lot of anger, causing a lot of disappointments and even shedding a lot of tears from either side. After all, we are still humans and are capable of many emotions.

The lawmakers had proposed a bill that would answer to the growing problems of violence against women, overpopulation, pre-marital sex, poverty, abortion and the like. But the clergies and other anti-RH Bill groups opposed to it with all their might since accordingly, it can aggravate to the growth of the problems instead. The rationality of the lawmakers was countered by the suspicion of the clergies.

Now, who really owns the responsibility of taking good care of the herd? Who really has the sincere concern for the masses? Is it the church or, the state? If the church has done something to prevent pre-marital sex, unwanted pregnancies and abortion, then why is it that the Philippines, based on reliable surveys, still recorded a high rate of pre-marital sex cases, unwanted pregnancy incidences and abortion? Isn't it worth the skeptical questioning considering that most of the involved are Catholics? What an irony! If the church has taught decent and moral living to these people, then there must something be wrong with their teaching. So if the church can't handle it, the state should take over but still in accordance with the moral precepts taught by the church.

Now, what does it mean if the RH Bill is enacted as a law?

Does it necessarily mean proliferation of premarital sex cases? The answer is NO! Why it proliferates if it is happening already? Instead, if the bill is enacted as a law, it provides reproductive health education to the youth of appropriate ages. It was never mentioned in the bill that the teacher should encourage or even compel his students to do pre-marital sex. As a Christian, I believe that the teacher will never ever do that even if the bill is approved or not.

Does it necessarily mean upholding the culture of abortion? The answer is NO! Why it upholds if abortion is happening already? The bill maintains that abortion should still be considered a crime except for the few necessary abortion cases done by doctors. Does it necessarily impose two-child policy? The answer is No! Instead, families are encouraged to control. The bill will never force or compel families to bear only two children.

Does the rejection or disapproval of the RH Bill means salvation of all from the raging fire of hell? The answer is NO! The approval or disapproval of the bill does not guarantee your salvation. Salvation is individual, it has never been collective. The way we lived our lives on earth is the sole basis for our salvation whether you support or reject the RH Bill. The incessant battle between the lawmakers and the clergies about the RH Bill has become a challenge to all of us. It has made us think and weigh things carefully. It has led us to different possibilities.

But, there's one thing that should be considered. The RH Bill is a perfect shield to address the threat of the growing pre-marital sex cases, unwanted pregnancy incidences and abortion rates. These problems have been existing, and are transparent. Thus, it can never be answered by ignorance alone. The proponents are just trying to combat the problem in a perfect way of skirmishing it. Nonetheless, the state did not, and will never deny the Christian teachings. In fact, the bill was polished according to the Christian's standard of morality. I hope everybody will understand it.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Based from the essay, what makes the RH Bill funny?
2. Why is it that the other Christian religious denominations favored the passage of the RH Bill?
3. Aside from teaching and preaching, what can the church do to prevent the problems of pre-marital sex, unwanted pregnancies and abortion?
4. If you were to change the title, what could it be and why?
5. Get the main points of the essay and comment about it.