



THE PHILOSOPHY OF MY RELIGION

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I have been born and raised a Catholic and will most likely die a Catholic. As such, I have always subscribed to firm Catholic beliefs like: we have been born with the original sin; baptism empowers us to become members of the church; contraception is going against the will of God; Sundays are the Lord's days. There are many other Catholic dogmas that have permeated my life, but for which I have found questions. Can't we adore God without going to a physical church? Which is a bigger sin, contraception or not being able to provide for your children? Is it not possible to commune with God everyday and not just on Sundays with a whole community in attendance?

We Catholics read about idolatry in the Bible, yet how many statues and monuments have we built that we constantly venerate and offer stuff to? Prior to taking certain vital examinations or celebrating special occasions, we advise others to visit this or that shrine to pray for success or a good, sunny day. Don't forget the eggs. My eldest son did just that before taking his licensure exams for his profession. He did pass the exams, though, which has subjected me to another bout of questioning of my doubts. I am thankful, nonetheless, that one simple belief might have been the key. But then again, he did undergo a comprehensive review before the exam period. Hmm....

It's not always easy to go to church regularly on Sundays. There have been numerous times when I simply want to sleep in on Sundays because it happens to be the only break I have for the entire week. I am not complaining here, and I hope the Lord never finds reason to do so in the future and starts being less generous. But knowing the Lord, whose love is unconditional, my life would run out before his love for all humanity does. For this, I find many reasons to be thankful. He has never forsaken me during my times of trouble, my darkest hours. He has never seen it beyond Him to pour His grace unconditionally even unto undeserving sinners such as myself. He has never given up on me, and my faith in Him runs stronger than anything else. That is my one and only way of showing how important He has always been to me.

In our daily lives, let us never forget the essential part that religion plays in our philosophies in life. Religion provides us something we can hold on to, something we can uphold. We might find many doubtful aspects about it, but in the end, religion always finds its strong roots in what we believe in and Who we put as the center of our lives: God.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you belong to any religious denomination or organization? What conspired to bring you to that religion?
2. Can religion save you? Why or why not?
3. Would you discourage/encourage your own child to have religion?
4. Why or why not?
5. What is the challenge for many religious organizations nowadays?
6. Why is it difficult to stick to a particular religion?