



WAYPOINTS -

GUIDEPOSTS FOR FELLOW TRAVELERS

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The Truth Fairy

"You've got me blindly giving all that I have to you."

Mother's Finest

Are there any actual truths or are there merely facts? To say that a thing is true is to definitively and confidently declare it both undeniable and incontrovertible. To cite as one's source for such "truths" an ancient anthology of stories, screeds and scriptures, all of which are subject to great debate and drastically differing translations, seems to me both silly and pointless.

Several of today's most contentious social issues are grounded in differing ideas and opinions of a single book: the Christian Bible. Views on abortion, homosexuality, the definition of marriage, and which fried chicken sandwich restaurant to visit, are generally determined by the depth of one's belief in the sanctity, veracity, and infallibility of said book. But does a passionate, reverential and heartfelt acceptance of biblical scripture necessarily mean that the views contained therein are universal truths?

Take tattooing. Personally I don't care for the practice, but at the same time would never attempt to deny the right of any legally-recognized adult to make their own choice in the matter. You won't find me, with crudely lettered placard attached to a broomstick, parading in front of a tattoo parlor, admonishing perspective clients that inking their skin was proscribed by the Bible, and that doing so will immediately and irrevocably assign them a First Class berth on the Hell Train. And yet, according to some, that is indeed what the Bible dictates.

Some would take me to task, insisting that a comparison between tattooing and, say, gay marriage or family values, is ridiculous. I would agree. My point isn't about the issue itself, but the *source of a belief about the issue*, and the degree to which such beliefs are *irrevocably true*. I willingly recognize and lovingly support each individual's right to her opinions and beliefs – That is the heart of freedom and liberty. I only request, that in light of those choices and beliefs, they also provide the same respect to those whose beliefs and opinions diverge from or even potentially refute their own.

The Christian Bible is a source of great comfort to many. So is the Koran or the writings of Lao Tzu or one of countless other religious or secular texts. As for me, I prefer the writings of Emerson and Thoreau, or *The Little Prince* by St. Exupery. So what? Big Deal! Whether inspired by divine authority, a quest for understanding, indignation over governmental abuses, or a sense of awe and wonder at the marvels of life, all books are written by man. And men are frequently flawed and often wrong, despite their aims or motives. So hold tight to your cause and by all means fight with passion and fervor for that which you believe to be true, but at the same time allow a little room for understanding and acceptance. And keep an open mind. Remember, many things once considered truths turned out to be anything but - Think Galileo, but at the very least...

Think about it!

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