

Bible's teachings are irrational

A few days ago, there was a letter published in The Battalion that complained about the staleness of the opinion column. Today's column is dedicated to the author of that letter and anyone else who is weary of reading the same old, worn out issues.

I've been reading the Bible for quite some time now, but I've only recently come to the following conclusion: CHRISTIANITY IS IRRATIONAL!

I suppose that any religion which leans on the supernatural has to be irrational. Belief in anything we can't see, touch, hear, taste or smell requires a suspension of reason. But Christianity goes above and beyond the rest in terms of suspending rationality.

Sure, many of Christ's teachings are just common sense: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and "Judge not lest you be judged" and "A house divided against itself will not stand." But why would a man be crucified as a revolutionary for merely teaching common-sense proverbs?

The truth of the matter is that many of Christ's teachings are irrational. He says "You have heard it said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say, do not resist him who is evil, but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also."

This teaching is not only irrational, but it runs contrary to human nature. Self-defense is so much a part of the human experience that it can even be called a reflex. And yet, Christ's teachings



Tim Truesdale
Columnist

demand one to subordinate reflexes to religion.

Christ taught many times on the topic of love. (Anyone who has experienced love will attest to its sometimes irrational nature. This is a very irrational theme to be used as the center of a new religion.) But Christ said: "You have heard it said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

This statement defies all common sense. Common sense says: "The only way to have a friend is to be one." That is, we love people who we want to love us back. But Christ goes on to say "Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great."

What kind of reward is Christ speaking of? Obviously he's not speaking of a reward on Earth, but in heaven. In fact, he tells his followers: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven ... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Get this: Christ says that we should store our wealth in heaven. Down here, we move our money from one bank to another to earn an additional half percent of interest. Every time we look at our bank statements, we know exactly how much is in the account. Our deposit is backed (usually) backed by the government of the United States of America. Yet, Christ calls for his followers to be more concerned with our unseen spiritual account than with our bank account statement.

Christ's teachings cannot be seen as merely a code of common sense. Over the last century, an estimated 300,000 Christians have been put to death each year around the world for the simple crime of following Christ and being baptized.

Yet, Christ teaches his followers not only to restrain from fighting back, but to accept death for Christ's sake as a BLESSING. He commands his followers to love and pray for the very people who are persecuting them. And he claims that his followers would be better off saving up wealth in a repository which cannot be seen but which must be accepted by faith.

As the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer once observed: "When Christ calls a man to follow him, he bids him come and die." Truly, Christianity is absolutely irrational!

Tim Truesdale is a graduate student in urban planning.

EDITORIALS

Editorials expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

Evans library needs improvement

With a \$3.2 million reduction in our budget, cuts in classes and delays in programs, this is a time for reassessing our priorities. Which programs are worth keeping and which are worth expanding are difficult decisions that will have to be made. One part of the University that should be high on our list of priorities for continued support and even expansion is the Sterling C. Evans Library.

Possible effects of the House Bill 10 budget cuts for the library have been estimated to include a 23 percent reduction in operating hours and a loss of 2,100 journal subscriptions.

In a recent issue of "The Chronicle of Higher Education," the Evans Library was ranked 51st among university libraries. The estimation was based on number of volumes, volumes added, current serials, total staff and total expenditures.

However, this same library serves the research needs of a University with the seventh largest student body in the nation, and many smaller universities are ranked ahead of A&M in terms of volumes in their libraries.

The University administration is considering a student fee to pay for a new recreational sports center. If we are going to pay an added fee, it should go for something essential to the education process.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Chinese people want more viable democracy

As a group of concerned students and staff originally from Taiwan, Republic of China, where we have spent more than 25 years, we are strongly offended by three false statements in the letter printed in The Battalion on April 16.

The letter stated that "During the past 40 years of Nationalist domination in Taiwan, many Taiwanese became missing ... it was the way Nationalists wanted to suppress our aspirations for democracy and self-determination ..."

Over the past 10 years, the people and government of Taiwan have been completing the difficult process, started years earlier, of shaping a more mature and realistic democracy for our nation.

This includes the freedoms of speech and press, the unshackling of martial laws and more recently, the proposal of the Constitutional Amendment. Is this an example of a government's way of suppressing its people's "aspirations for democracy and self-determination?"

The letter also said: "The Nationalists will have to kill us all to stop us ..."

This is definitely untrue and confusing. If you look in any newspaper from Taiwan, there are reports of false accusations, unregulated activities, childish fist fights and even personal intimidation in public toward government officials from opposing parties.

Even in our Congress, a number of the radicals often resort to violence and destroy public property, only to satisfy their political ego.

Yet, we have never heard of any one of them being killed or arrested. Their voice merely represents a very small portion of people.

The majority of the public does not agree with, nor approve of, their ridiculous words but still has to tolerate

Dr. Edmond Chang
Reader's Opinion

this radical bombardment on a daily basis.

Lastly, the letter stated, "We lived fearfully every day ..."

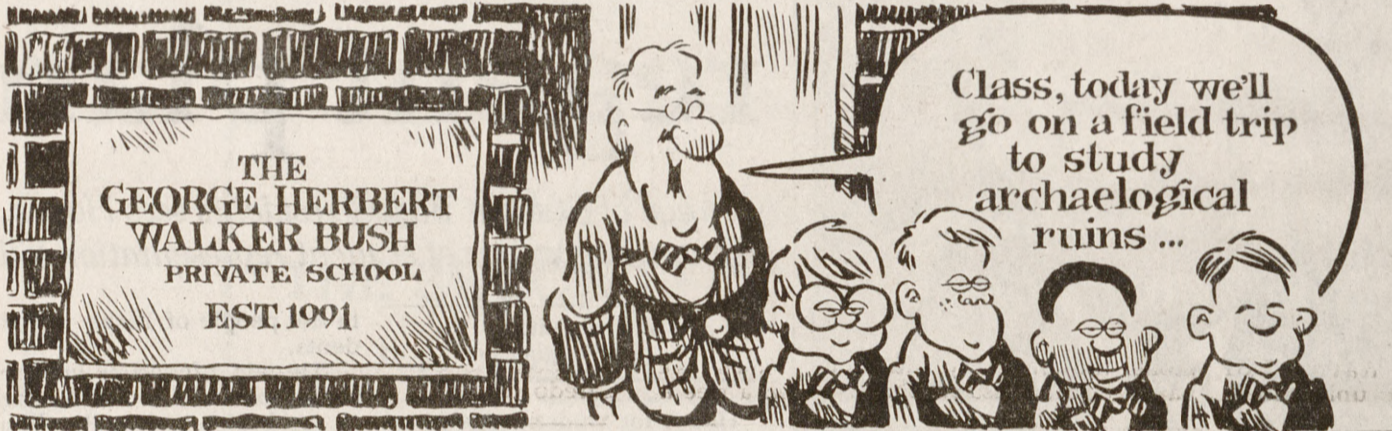
Taiwan has been (and still is) a part of China since the beginning of mankind. With the exception of a few hundred native inhabitants, all the people from Taiwan are immigrants from the mainland throughout history with clear Chinese origin.

Most people on that beautiful island are hard-working, productive and peace-loving and their voices often remain unheard.

These people have worked so hard to achieve better living through economic reform and democratic stability and deserve a stable nation through a peaceful and mature democratic process.

Chinese people everywhere are optimistic about our future and want continuing quest toward a more viable democracy. Unlike those few radicals who proclaimed that "Taiwanese" are not "Chinese," we do not live in fear.

Dr. Edmond Chang
accompanied by nine signatories



MARGULIES
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MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Thanks to Andy Yung

EDITOR:

I would like to extend my gratitude and rapport to Andy Yung for his recent articles against abortion, Israeli government policies concerning Palestinians and the U.S. government's lack of effort in peaceful negotiations of a resolution to the Iraq/Kuwait crisis.

Yung seems to follow the "seamless garment" thesis of respect for human life on all issues.

I commend him for his concern for human life, pre-born and even those perceived our enemies.

Dr. Alan Palazzolo
associate professor

Is there anybody, out there?

EDITOR:

We just wanted to see if you would print this.

P.S. Does anyone know what the hell is happening on "Twin Peaks"?

Chris Burke '91
Richard Szelsy '91

The Battalion

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