

No wishful thinking,  
this analysis  
of the relationship  
between . . .

# Man and Religion

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by

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AS ONE man said: . . . "A man who puts aside his religion because he is going into society, is like one putting off his shoes because he is about to walk upon thorns."

True religion, as many wise men have said, is the foundation of society, the basis on which true civil

government rests, and from which power derives its authority, laws their efficacy, and both their sanction. It is equally the basis of private virtue and public faith; of the happiness of the individual and the prosperity of the nation. Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political, social or financial prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. How vain would one claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can

prevail in exclusion of religious principles. Civilization, law, order, morality, the family, all that elevates woman, or blesses society, or gives peace to the nations, all these are the fruits of Christianity!

If we make our religion our business, I believe God will make it our blessedness. To love God is to make Him dwell with you and to obey God is to make Him reveal to you the truth of His deepest teachings. A pious man loves religion while the atheist fears it. We can have no trust in a man who has no religious principles as an atheist. Religion's home is in the conscience and its highest joy is in doing God's will. We need the assurance of being a good Catholic to be completely happy with God and to turn to Him for spiritual satisfaction, for none but God alone can satisfy the longings of the immortal soul; as the heart was made for Him, He only can fill it. The teachings of Christ reach and change the heart, which no other

religion does. Religion is the fear and love of God; its demonstration is good works; and faith is the root of both, for without faith we cannot please God; nor can we fear and love what we do not believe. Religion is the answer to that cry of reason which nothing can silence; that aspiration of the soul which no created things can meet; that want of the heart which all creation cannot supply. It is only religion, that great bond of love and duty to God, which makes any valuable or even tolerable. It was religion, which, by teaching men their near relation to God, awakened in them the consciousness of their importance as individuals. It was the struggle for religious rights, which opened their eyes to all their rights. It was resistance to religious usurpation which led men to withstand political oppression. It was religious discussion which roused the minds of all classes to free and vigorous thought. It steeled the great christian martyrs and patriots of old.

True religion teaches us to revere what is under us, to recognize humility, poverty, wretchedness, suffering and death, as things divine. Where true religion has prevented one crime, false religions have afforded a pretext for a thousand.

"The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant, when the Soul hath shaken off the cumbrous shackles of this mortal life, shall quickly receive from the Great Law of God, a just and everlasting compensation, according to their works.

"Then shall the wicked learn and make compensation in course of time; but the heart of the righteous shall rejoice in His rewards.

"Let us respect God, therefore, all the days of our life, and walk in the paths which He hath opened before us. Let prudence admonish us, let temperance restrain, let justice guide our hand, benevolence warn our hearts and gratitude to heaven aspire us with devotion. These shall give us happiness in our present state and future one and take us to the mansions of eternal felicity in the paradise of God."