

Welcome to Smokey Mountain Bible Institute Established Spring of 2009

“My carma just ran over your dogma” That is one of many stickers I saw on the back of a car I had the privilege of following recently. A car I might add that seemed badly in need of much mechanical attention and as it was winter, some of its un-designed ventilation openings should have been plugged up. (i.e. rust holes)

But this sticker got me to thinking of how popular it has become to make irrational dogmatic statements. Those who make these statements do not seem to realize that they contradict themselves by making the statement. First, we must define “Dogma.” While there are many definitions, I feel the clearest from www.Dictionary.com is: *a doctrine or code of beliefs accepted as authoritative*. It is easy to throw stones at those who stand on a wall. In other words, it is easy to poke fun at or criticize those who stand for something especially if it has a well-defined doctrine or stand on what truth is. However, those who criticize do not realize that their criticism contains assumptions that are also doctrines and therefore their statements are also dogmatic.

So what is a dogmatic statement? Some, you may be familiar with are: “God is Triune,” “God is Omnipotent,” “God is Omnipresent,” “God is Omniscient.” These dogmatic doctrinal positions are held by most Christian Churches and many pagans proclaim some of these attributes for their gods.

My point is that in condemning the position of someone else, you are taking a position, and therefore making a dogmatic statement. So, to condemn dogma with a cute bumper sticker that says “My carma just ran over your dogma,” is in fact a dogmatic statement. To say that dogma is bad, is a dogmatic position. Other examples of self nullifying or contradicting irrational statements are:

- There is no such thing as absolute truth....

That is an absolute statement....or is it ☺

- The only thing that is intolerable is intolerance.....

That is an intolerant statement, promoting tolerance....

This same sort of thing is used to dismiss stands on biblical truth so that we can all hold the position we are most comfortable with and say that our position is biblical. Statements like “that is your interpretation.” This statement implies that we can hold opposing positions on what the truth in scripture is, and both be correct. God does not contradict himself and neither does his inspired word.

Another favorite of the politically-correct and oh so tolerant is “All paths lead to God.” I find it hard to believe that a true adherent (believer) of any faith group could make such a statement. Because in so doing, they are saying that the god they believe in is equal to all other gods and in so doing, nullify the claims of their faith. I think a more correct way to say this is “all but one path leads to destruction.”

This is actually the first in a series of newsletter articles I have decided to write. We believe in the one true God that I described dogmatically earlier. We know Him as He has revealed Himself to us in His word, through faith given to us by the Holy Spirit. This short sentence is packed with dogmatic assumptions and I would like to unpack these dogmatic assumptions and many others with you over the next few months or years, however long it takes. I feel that one of the biggest sources of misunderstanding is when we try to apply reason where faith belongs and by trying to apply faith in places where reason belongs. I am convinced that the confessional position I stand in is one of the only that unapologetically and clearly proclaims God’s truth and rightly divides mystery and reason. Holding this position allows us to accept whole-heartedly all the truths that God has clearly laid out for us, while not getting wrapped around the axle trying to explain what God does not.

This is a pretty large subject to attack, so it may take a while. I look forward to kicking this off next month by discussing the Topic of God or The Bible. Either way, it should be fun.

A quote often attributed to Alexander Hamilton but belonging to an English journalist (by the name of Alex Hamilton) is, “Those who stand for nothing will fall for anything” I feel this to be an appropriate conclusion to this discussion. We do not have the option in life to be bystanders—we all must make choices and when we choose not to choose, we have chosen poorly. In God’s creation there are only playing fields—no bleachers for fans. So, we must all get in the Game.

In Christ
Pastor Portier

I wrote this article over a decade ago and have still not completed the project. However, the end is in sight. I have addressed many scientific disciplines and am currently answering the question; Pastor what is the difference in religions? I suspect it will take about a year to answer that question. After that I plan to address the Social sciences. So my current estimate on when the Smoky Mountain Bible Institute will be completely built is late 2022 or early 2023.

Happy Reading.