

Religion of Peace? It depends what you mean by ...

Peace – But Not As We Know It

Perhaps it is not inappropriate that this first article since AtF was restored should be about the Third World War, which, in Pope Francis's words, now seems to be engulfing us. Everywhere, but particularly in the Middle East, extremist Islam seems to be attacking the West and its interests and influences, non-violent or moderate Muslims (including those of the "wrong" Islamic persuasion), and Christians everywhere; and often Islamists seem to represent a not-dissimilar threat to that of the militant atheists and secularists, to which they are clearly, on occasion, strangely allied. This is a very perilous time for the Church, and Judeo-Christian/Western civilisation, indeed.

It was George W. Bush, apparently, who first called Islam "The religion of peace", and no doubt he thought it was, or thought he had reason to think it was; but for him, the word *peace* surely meant exactly what it does to most of *us*, and no more: non-violence, mutual respect, the ability of people of all faiths and none to live together in harmony with shared values and acceptance of a common law and legal system, and living that is involved with the political/administrative processes and organisations that keep everything in place.

Many times the Koran and Islamic writings and pronouncements refer to *peace*, as Western leaders and the Establishment often remind us. What they don't realise is that within Islam, a very different understanding of peace obtains, one having little to do with Western ideas. There, it means, and can only mean, the peace that is achieved when everyone – people, and above all rulership – is totally under the sway of Allah and his religion and rulership. In the past (and seemingly, in the jihadists view, today) such a thing was only achieved by conquest.

Muslims – true Muslims, in this view – are, and can only be, those that *strive* towards this end, the only real or realistic end; and the means seems to be restricted to one means only. Those many, many Muslims who do *not* act upon such a view may be "good" Muslims – but this is within a Western/Judeo-Christian understanding of "good", such that "good" Christians are those who follow (rather than fall away from) Jesus's requirements as recorded in the New Testament.

Those Muslims who do not follow the Koran's injunctions to spread the faith of Allah by the sword are *bad* ones in Islamic terms of the word "good", as any Islamist will confirm, and realistically so.

Western politicians and leaders who tell themselves and us that the *real, true*, Islam is that of "peace", not that of the jihadists, are either deluded, or seek to delude the public, perhaps with an eye to the ever-burgeoning Muslim vote; at the same time, they wage war with the Islamic State in the Middle East, not seeming to know, or care, that until they fully acknowledge the real problem – the essential nature of Islam – there can be no success or victory of any kind; admission *must* precede improvement, success, or any victory, in so many situations.

Also, there must be full admission of the reasons for the West's decline; all the militant atheists are achieving is to clear the ground, in the West, for militant Islam's takeover, and if they *really* don't know that that is what they are doing, then Richard Dawkins and the others are nothing like as clever as they would have us believe they are. Only full admission, as I have suggested, and realistic acknowledgement of the real causes of our approaching twilight, can make possible anything but defeat in the Third World War.

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