

Jesus S(l)aves

Kris King – July 23rd 2011

<http://www.rantinaminor.co.uk/2011/07/jesus-slaves/>

A few months ago, I made a list of ideas for subjects that I wanted to cover in future posts and, this week, an old playground song that had become inexplicably stuck in my head reminded me of one of them. The song (well, verse) consists of the following sung to the tune of "The Battle Hymn Of The Republic":

Jesus is the goalie of our local football team
Jesus is the goalie of our local football team
Jesus is the goalie of our local football team
Jesus saves! Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

While the joke works much better if you imagine the last line is accompanied by hands being thrust in the air, to the left then right (as if catching an imaginary football), the point is that it put me in mind of one of the ideas on my list; specifically that Jesus, rather than saving people, in fact makes them prisoners.

Now, when I say "Jesus", I don't mean to suggest that everyone's favourite bearded, long-haired, hippie philosopher from the Middle East is entirely alone when it comes to the matter of enslaving the hearts and minds of his adoring fans. Every major religious figure, from Muhammad to L. Ron Hubbard, has proven inordinately successful at imprisoning each individual believer in an abusive, co-dependent relationship while, at the same time, skilfully manipulating the faithful into convincing themselves that some form of metaphysical redemption lies exclusively within this erstwhile jailer. Despite their confinement, they cannot be disabused of the demonstrably false idea that this supposed "saviour" is their only hope for achieving the spiritual, emotional, or psychological rescue they so desperately seek.

To be fair, though, it's not these icons of faith our attention should be focusing on but the respective religions to which they belong, and those working within them, for gleefully exploiting the massive clout these mythical figures possess in order to frighten and guilt people into joining their club – and joining the club is just the beginning. Once you're all signed up, uncomfortably seated and nervously waiting for a good, hard saving, they start to really crank up the "shame" and "spook" knobs so that the aforementioned hippie suddenly turns into a thoroughly nasty prick promising, as he does, to love you always, but if you so much as fart on his day off then he'll smash your face into the side of a tree forever. Again, it's not actually Jesus doing this (given the complete lack of contemporaneous, extra-biblical references to verify against, he almost certainly never existed), it's his representatives; his PR department.

The idea of the institution, or its designated figurehead, as a singular source of redemption is intrinsic to virtually every religion and cult throughout history. Inculcating the children of your existing members is all well and good as a means to securing the next generation of followers, but it's pointless if you haven't managed to get that first generation of followers to begin with; also, you're bound to lose a few adherents along the way, either to death or desertion, and getting children on-board is a bit of a long-term thing, so it never hurts to have a backup plan. Persuading people that they are worthless, disgusting pieces of sin-soaked trash leading futile, meaningless lives, and whose only means of turning things around is to give themselves over completely to a long-dead, morally-questionable cult-leader is, as far as backup plans go, an astonishingly bloody effective one.

Systematically dismantling the will of an individual in order to re-shape it to a preferred model is something every religion and cult does, to some extent, as it helps create in the individual a deep and lasting dependence on the faith to get them through their lives. If you take christianity as an example (it is, after all, the religion I'm most familiar with) you can see that they're already balls-deep in this practice right out of the gate with the story of Adam and Eve which, and you have to give them credit for this, manages to not only set the stage for the spiritual enslavement of its

adherents, but also succeeds in creating a *two-tiered* system of slavery with the very deliberate positioning of women as untrustworthy, corruptible, inferior beings who owe their very existence to both god and, crucially, man.

Adam is, in no uncertain terms, a slave to god; after all, the beardy sky-gnome created him and is not shy about reminding him (and eventually, the rest of us) of that fact, not to mention of how it's probably best if you don't fuck with him if you know what's good for you. Eve, on the other hand, has to obey both the invisible sprite who does Brian Blessed impressions **and** Adam because, if it wasn't for the fact that he'd gotten lonely and offered up his rib, *she wouldn't even exist*. That's right ladies, as far as this story is concerned, you're only here because man was completely fucking *bored* and he wanted something to play with (or perhaps, more crassly, he wanted someone to play with **it**). Oh, and it goes without saying that the bible was written by men who had nothing to gain whatsoever from putting themselves at the top of the tree of all life on earth. No agenda there then, clearly ...

But, don't worry, because it gets so much worse. In a thinly-disguised attempt to paint all women as cock-obsessed whores, Eve is tempted by a snake (yes, go on, think about it) to eat from the tree of knowledge – she then, in turn, tempts Adam and they discover their nakedness; god then shows up, gets pissed at the two of them for defying him, and promptly throws them out of the garden of Eden. To add insult to injury, they're no longer immortal, they don't get manna from heaven, and Eve has to deal with the fun of bearing children. From this one story we have man becoming a slave to work (god tells Adam he has to toil the fields), to the ticking clock of life (expelled from the garden we're no longer eternal), and to god himself (don't piss him off because, well, look what happened when these two dickheads tried it). Women, incidentally, are also now slaves to childbirth, menstruation, and man himself because, here's the kicker, it's all *Eve's* fault. Do you see what they did there? It's both genius, and grotesquely inhuman.

If Eve hadn't been such a cock-hungry slut (oh come on, see through the metaphor, seriously), both of them would be living forever in paradise, never having to work or, in Eve's case, endure the agony of bleeding every month or squeezing a bowling ball through something the size of a small lemon. It's a disgustingly brilliant way of enslaving women to men by making everything *their* fault for leading man astray with *their* sinful lust. It teaches man that he needs to keep his woman under control because she cannot be trusted, and that his downfall came because his progenitor took his eye off the ball and stupidly allowed himself to be persuaded by some tart's patently dumb idea of ignoring the boomy-voiced bloke upstairs. It teaches us, with the whole tree thing, that we should avoid knowledge at our peril; there are clearly things that god does not want us to know, and it's far better to remain a slave to ignorance.

It teaches the appalling and morally bankrupt idea that we must all somehow pay for the sins of our forebears who, through their mistakes, became the architects of our misery (it turns out that the reason we have to work for a living, and will eventually die, is because some bitch ate an apple, apparently). It teaches us that we are born broken, and we need to give ourselves over completely to the (allegedly) perfect being who broke us in the first place by exercising the human characteristics **he** gave us. He created the conditions, the system, the very *mechanism* of our own enslavement to him by endowing us with the free will and curiosity required to fall right into the trap that *he* himself created. The cheeky fucker even has the front to blame *us* for ending up at the bottom of the pit that he dug! It's like the worst form of entrapment, only in this case our jailer is forever demanding we apologise for being susceptible to gravity (which he invented).

There are few things more revolting and dehumanising than teaching someone from a young age that they were, through no fault of their own, born wrong, and that they must be repaired before they can be considered a proper person. The idea that we can be punished for the actions of some ancient ancestors (who, let's face it, didn't even exist) is vile, as is the notion that the creator of this gross miscarriage of natural justice threatens us with eternal torture for simply being exactly the way he created us. What kind of parent would shackle a child to this rotten ideology from the moment they emerge from the womb? Who would ever raise their kid to believe that they need to spend their one and only life bowing and fawning before a being they haven't seen, and will never see, lest they burn forever? Who would fill a young mind with the idea that salvation lies only with the malicious bastard who threw you overboard to begin with?

And while we're on the subject, salvation from *what* exactly? The best I can work out from their foggy book is that they believe we need to be saved from *ourselves*, from our own human propensity for sin. Well, excuse me, but didn't the almighty tyrant in the sky *make us* like this? If he didn't want us doing a nice bit of sin every now and then, why did he even allow us to have that choice? "He

gave us free will”, the apologists answer wrongly, “and it’s up to us as to how we exercise that – it’s our *choice* as to whether we obey or defy god”. Bollocks! If that’s true then it’s **still** his fault because he *gave* us the means to choose and then *condemns* us for choosing (in his eyes) incorrectly. And, by the way, giving us a choice between “his way or the highway” isn’t a choice but a total lack of options – if we have to use our free will to do as he says or suffer for eternity, then it’s not free will but merely the *illusion* of it. Matt Dillahunty of [The Atheist Experience](#) has a great analogy for this, and that’s of a mob boss demanding money with menaces – sure you can *choose* not to pay for his protection, but you’ll probably end up with a couple of broken legs.

Sin is at the heart of the religious idea of salvation, and their definition of it is, to be fair, a gigantic steaming pile of crap, because it’s only ever really about self-interest. It’s all about protecting those in authority, particularly religious authority, and ensuring that their hegemony is never challenged. That’s why, in most faiths, especially the monotheisms, failure to believe is considered the worst sin imaginable – they *must* assert their absolute position by saying, “we are unquestionably right, and not believing that we’re right is a ticket to Torture World” ... if they don’t, the game’s up. With a few exceptions (notably those actions that we all, independently of faith, consider to be morally iffy), the behaviours that religions generally regard as “sins” are those that have the greatest capacity for helping to emancipate oneself from the chains of faith.

Think about it – religion needs to keep you on a tight leash in order for it to survive, and it can’t have you doing anything that takes you, or anyone else, away from the almighty prison warder on high. Not believing in god, or believing in another god entirely, cannot ever be tolerated because it’s one less bum on the pew this sunday; apostasy, heresy, and blasphemy all exemplify a distancing between the individual and the church and, god damn it, the pastor cannot keep his fridge full of Bollinger without your help! Sexual promiscuity, fornication, abortion, contraception (in some cases) or, heaven forbid, homosexuality, must be opposed and stopped at all costs because they’re far less likely to produce the next generation of gullible christ-tards whose sole responsibility is to ensure that the pastor’s kids can still have Bollinger in *their* fridge when they follow in their hypocrite’s footsteps.

Religious salvation is a con – there’s no other way to describe it because, in reality, the only saving anyone would actually require is from the religion itself. Blind belief in the unproven, evidence-bereft assertions made by the varying faiths, their “holy” men and books, is nothing more than wilful, voluntary enslavement of your heart and mind to someone who will demean and dehumanise you for their own self-interest. Religions don’t free anyone, they imprison them in cages of delusion and ignorance, shutting down the critical thinking faculties nature has allowed us to develop over the multi-billion year evolution of life on our planet. They close off all avenues of enquiry and instead replace them with revealed “truths” that are anything but. We are not permitted to question our spiritual masters, for they know best; we are not permitted to criticise our masters, no matter what they do, for they are *always* right; we are not permitted to disobey our masters, for the rules they lay down, regardless of how we may suffer as a result of them, are for our own good.

Christians who refer to themselves as “born again”, always amuse me; first of all, I was under the distinct impression that I was born right the first time (how pitiful that these people have such a poor opinion of themselves that they need to restart their lives from scratch), and second, given the complete lack of any kind of uterus or birth canal in the body of Jesus (through whom they claim to be reborn), the poor fella is going to end up with a nasty stomach ache for nine months, followed by an unholy stinging pain in the arse. Fatuous bum jokes aside, I find it sad that so many people are in possession of such low self-esteem that they feel they have to seek help from the very source of their insecurities and fears, like a battered wife turning to her abusive husband for medicinal aid because the bruises he cruelly delivered are making her face hurt.

Never forget that it was the religion you seek comfort from that made you feel worthless in the first place; it was that wretched book and its champions that told you you were a bad person, that you were no-good scum, and that you needed to be saved from your own ineptitude at being a decent human being; it was faith that said you were a rotten, stinking sinner, depraved and undeserving of the gift of life that their god bestowed upon you; it was their preachers and their Jesus that rounded you up, herded you into their clubhouse, and made you get down on your knees and beg for forgiveness for simply being human. Don’t listen to them – they don’t care about you – you’re just animals to them, pack mules, work horses, and you’re here to carry their shit for them and grovel on all fours for having the audacity to be yourself.

Throw off the chains of faith, and you can be free ... free at last ...

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