

3-Day Ceremony: What is your reality? What have you created?

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January 3, 2018

Intrinsic - Extrinsic: What is your reality? What have you created?



Things don't change much for some. The charge of cannibalism against Christians arose from a false understanding of the Christian Scripture and liturgy. The Eucharist, "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you," could be misread in a literal, cannibalistic sense by a reader ignorant of the metaphor. Epiphanius of Salamis (315-403) supported this idea adding heretical gnostic sects proclaiming themselves to be Christians who were said to gorge themselves with food and engage in sexual orgies.

Of late sacramental rites, in our times have come under similar charges. The 'indemnity ceremony' and the 'three day ceremony,' for example, are commonly charged with obscurity, charges of ritual sexual malpractice and violence, whilst actually being a rite of spiritual passage. People who come away from that report feeling ashamed, guilty, angry and some respond to the indemnity ceremony with the cry, 'God is not violent.' There is no spiritual acumen here as to what such

sacraments mean nor I suspect any rational for telling us what God is or is not.

Entering in to a sacred rite without understanding what it means, without orienting oneself voluntarily, or without adopting a deeply internal and personal orientation and understanding of one's own faith towards such proceedings is obviously a cause for shame, guilt, and anger. That is a logical outcome.

Gordon Allport 's work on intrinsic-extrinsic religion , his psychological studies on religion, reports these dimensions of faith deal with maturity and immaturity and is based on the assumption that some people hold more mature religious belief than others. Simply put, an intrinsic religious orientation is described as being a more mature more internal and bound more maturely to a personal orientation to what is viewed as sacred.

In contrast, an extrinsic religious orientation is immature and is more of a means to some other end, a belief which is motivated by external factors e.g., social acceptance, advancement, obedience, acceptance through group norms, and would view sacraments in a very limited way or worse as the indemnity ceremony is posited by some as an act of violence rather than a gift of grace from a loving God who seeks to liberate his children from the suffering of sin.

To approach and to participate in such sacramental acts without understanding commitment and personal maturity is a serious problem whereby the internal sacred meaning is lost and the external acts become all that remain. The problem is not in such ceremonies Christian, Unificationist, or other, rather in the failure of growth and in the lack of intrinsic and mature orientations.