



NTCOF: BEING THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE

“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

-Ghandi

This is the vision and the purpose of the NTCOF as it relates to Freethought. We want to see a world where church and religion do not mean that you have to believe in impossible things and stand accused of being a bad person if you do not. We want to see a world where people’s minds are not obsessed and manipulated by belief in and fear of the supernatural. We want to see a world where people are not made to feel that it is wrong to question, to doubt, or to exchange their opinions for what they believe are better ones.

But it is in the nature of churches to engage in positive action to promote and promulgate their views and the NTCOF is no exception. Again, we are being the change that we wish to see. For we want a world where people do care – deeply and honestly, and not simply in appearance or ceremonially – about right and wrong, about our responsibilities as human beings to ourselves and others, and about the meaning and purpose(s) of our lives. We want a world where rational people can become involved with others to learn and explore ways of understanding and applying a reliance on facts, reason, and goodwill when it comes to religious questions.

We want a world where these efforts are a part of and can gradually become the preponderance of support for a constructive social and cultural life. In 2011 we plan to continue to serve as a beacon for Freethought, an alternative to churches that either insist on belief in the supernatural or accept or encourage it as harmless or inevitable. Ignorance, it is said, is bliss, but knowledge brings a singular satisfaction that cannot be had in any other way, however hard it may, at times, seem. The NTCOF intends to continue to make it possible for Freethinkers to travel this road and experience its special joys together.

Quoting Ghandi again:

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

And:

“You may never know what results come of your action, but if you do nothing there will be no result.”

THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

from *The Future Of An Illusion* by Sigmund Freud

Let us consider the unmistakable situation as it is to-day. We have heard the admission that religion no longer has the same influence on people that it used to. (We are here concerned with European Christian civilization.) And this is not because its promises have grown less but because people find them less credible. Let us admit that the reason—though perhaps not the only reason—for this change is the increase of the scientific spirit in the higher strata of human society. Criticism has whittled away the evidential value of religious documents, natural science has shown up the errors in them, and comparative research has been struck by the fatal resemblance between the religious ideas which we revere and the mental products of primitive peoples and times.

The scientific spirit brings about a particular attitude towards worldly matters; before religious matters it pauses for a little, hesitates, and finally there too crosses the threshold. In this process there is no stopping; the greater the number of men to whom the treasures of knowledge become accessible, the more widespread is

the falling-away from religious belief—at first only from its obsolete and objectionable trappings, but later from its fundamental postulates as well. The Americans who instituted the ‘monkey trial’ at Dayton² have alone shown themselves consistent. Elsewhere the inevitable transition is accomplished by way of half-measures and insincerities.

Civilization has little to fear from educated people and brain-workers. In them the replacement of religious motives for civilized behaviour by other, secular motives would proceed unobtrusively; moreover, such people are to a large extent themselves vehicles of civilization. But it is another matter with the great mass of the uneducated and oppressed, who have every reason for being enemies of civilization. So long as they do not discover that people no longer believe in God, all is well. But they will discover it, infallibly, even if this piece of writing of mine is not published. And they are ready to accept the results of scientific thinking, but without the change having taken place in them which scientific thinking brings about in people. Is there not a danger here that the hostility of these masses to civilization will throw itself against the weak spot that they have found in their task-mistress? (continued next page)

(Freud, continued from page 1)

If the sole reason why you must not kill your neighbour is because God has forbidden it and will severely punish you for it in this or the next life—then, when you learn that there is no God and that you need not fear His punishment, you will certainly kill your neighbour without hesitation, and you can only be prevented from doing so by mundane force. Thus either these dangerous masses must be held down most severely and kept most carefully away from any chance of intellectual awakening, or else the relationship between civilization and religion must undergo a fundamental revision.

EINSTEIN ON GOD AND RELIGION:

“The fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science. He who knows it not and can no longer wonder, no longer feel amazement, is as good as dead, a snuffed-out candle. It was the experience of mystery - even if mixed with fear - that engendered religion. A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestations of the profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty, which are only accessible to our reason in their most elementary forms - it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute the truly religious attitude; in this sense, and in this alone, I am a deeply religious man. I cannot conceive of a God who rewards and punishes his creatures, or has a will of the type of which we are conscious in ourselves. An individual who should survive his physical death is also beyond my comprehension, nor do I wish it otherwise; such notions are for the fears of absurd egoism of feeble souls. Enough for me the mystery of the eternity of life, and the inkling of the marvelous tructure of reality, together with the single-hearted endeavour to comprehend a portion, be it ever so tiny, of the reason that manifests in nature.”

from The World As I See It

**COMING NEXT MONTH:
GOOD WITHOUT GOD!
It's not just a slogan!**

**PLUS: Moment of Science, Love
(Feb 14 is Valentines Day!) and more**

**YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS
TO THE NTCOF ARE NEEDED,
APPRECIATED,
AND TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!!**

All NTCOF events can be found through our website calendar (yes, website needs and will get an update!), or through our meetup page, from which you can RSVP, at:
- www.meetup.com/church-of-freethought -
JOIN THE NTCOF MEETUP GROUP to get email updates too!

Social Luncheon: Today, immediately after our Service, join us for lunch and discussion at the Golden Corral Buffet and Grill in Grapevine, located just across from the Grapevine Mills Mall, at 2605 E. Grapevine Mills Circle, phone (972) 874-7900. To reach Golden Corral from the Wyndham, take the SOUTH exit from the parking lot (turn your head left as you walk out the main entrance), then drive across Esters Blvd onto John W. Carpenter Freeway (114). Then take the first exit RIGHT onto International Parkway (121), then Grapevine Mills Parkway exit. Turn LEFT on Stars and Stripes Way, continuing on to E. Grapevine Mills Circle.

Freethought Salon: Get together to discuss today's service topic or other conundrums of interest to Freethinkers. Second Sunday monthly, over breakfast, at the Hilton Vineyard in Grapevine this month; see the meetup site!

Game Night: The regular game night crew meets nearly every Friday night at the IHOP on 2310 Stemmons Trail (I-35), near Northwest Highway (Loop 12). Plan to arrive at about 7:30 PM, and stay late playing Risk, Rummikub, and other fun games!

Secular Singles: Freethinkers have met their life-partners with whom they have begun families through the Secular Singles group. Check the meetup site for the next date, time and location!

“A ‘NO’ uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a ‘YES’ merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble.”
- Mahatma Ghandi



DFWCOR

Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason

The North Texas Church of Freethought
A Fellowship of Unbelievers

Presenters: Dave Burgess and Merlin Michaud
Music (usually) by “Faithless Companions”
Jay Purrington, Ed McGuire,
Cathy & Kevin Smith and Scott Williams
Welcome Coordinator Mark Barnick
Equipment Wrangler: John Hendricks
Videographer: John Gauthier
Minister: Dr. Tim Gorski

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