

# "Religion is a part of me"... how to deal with that?

Post by "smoothiekiwi" of January 14, 2022 at 9:28 AM

## [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

One understanding of "sin" is that it is the harming or hurting of another person, and all the things that we in a civilized world, understand as "wrong" because they cause pain to someone else. There are different levels of moral understanding: It could be based on fear of punishment - either by the judicial system of society, or by social ostracisation (or fear of getting a bad reputation or disappointing others). Also most people will react toward inflicted pain with some kind of retaliation, or they will no longer trust you. We also have our inner conscience and this will follow us for the rest of our lives in the form of our memories. When you fully understand "pain and pleasure" you see the importance of non-harming. Every person moves toward pleasure and recoils from pain. Why would you do to someone something that you would not want to be done to you? If you cause pain to others, and then justify it in some way, you will begin to attract others to you who also cause pain to others...and this will put you into harms way...and then you will live in fear that you will be harmed.

[Kalosyni](#) , I'm sorry that it took some time for me to answer- but I think that you've made a very good point, and I had to think about it for a while. I remember Epicureanism being described as altruistic hedonism, and your point has only added proof for that: that harming other people will most often draw more harm to you.

Still, I think that there may be- rare- situations where it's necessary to harm other people in order to be individually happy... because if you don't, then that means that it becomes some sort of abstract thought or dogma, like "thou shall not harm thy neighbor". But I also have to admit that I can't think of any example where consciously inflicting pain on someone will bring you more pleasure in the long run... what do you think on that?

Also, there's the issue of love. Just today, I found myself thinking that the thing which prevents me from inflicting pain on someone is altruism and the wish to make their lives better- that's my definition of love. But in that case, one might ask: "why then not choose a philosophy like Buddhism or Christianity, which focuses way more on this topic?" A psychopath can justify killing a person, if he surely knows that he won't be found; but a loving person will never be able. [Cassius](#) , do you know anything on the topic of love in Epicureanism? It seems to me like a natural desire, but I'm not sure if necessary or not. Maybe I'll open a new thread on this, because it seems like a difficult topic.

So- TL; DR- I completely agree with your statement, that it makes sense to create good 😊

## [Quote from Nate](#)

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2335-religion-is-a-part-of-me-how-to-deal-with-that/?postID=15917#post15917>

It's not the writings of Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, nor the ecumenical councils of Imperial Rome, nor the theological debates among Messianic Jewish sects, nor the influences of Hellenistic philosophy that colored the vocabulary of most of the New Testament, nor the wars of the medieval period, nor the tension between the institutions and the scientific findings that they inadvertently facilitated ... it's a gold cross on your neck, familiar smiles in the sanctuary, a fish on your bumper, and coffee and donuts on your day off

@Nate, when I read your lines, I thought to myself "that's what attracts me to Christianity!" Because it really sounds like a lot of fun (and pleasure 😊)- to meet up with like-minded friends, discuss philosophical issues and generally enjoying a day off. And I found myself asking: "What if I can have the same, but without the religious doctrines on it?" It sounds like a dream to me! Even so, wouldn't it make sense to adapt the Christian worldview- at least partly- in order to experience this pleasure, or will it have more pain in the long run?

#### [Quote from Nate](#)

It's not the kind of thing I'd hope for a human adult trying living their best life.

That's a shame :( . But why are there then so many adult Christians?