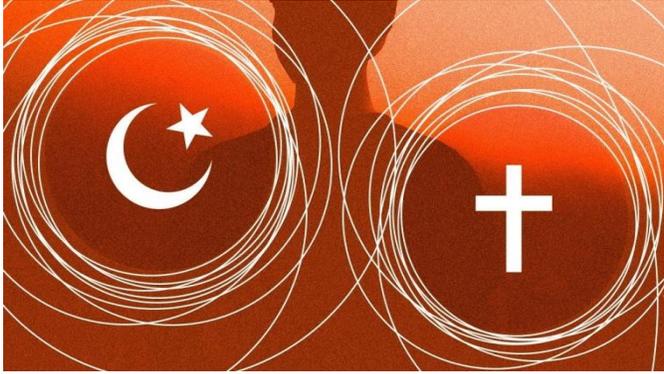




ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY February 24 & BEYOND”

“Do You Think Karma Is Kristian?”



The word ‘karma’ has been in everyday West coast vocab for 50 years, and then spread from there all the way back to Hindu India from whence it came. I say Hindu India, because from a religious perspective there are many Indias, including Christian India.

That’s an illustration to show that there are differences between the concept of karma and the Christian understanding of what is taught in Luke chapter 6, as we will hear on Sunday (2/24/2019). It's a good time, then, to talk about the difference, because Karma and what it sounds like in the Bible are not the same.

Karma is the belief that good and bad experiences in this life are the sum result of deeds done in both the current, and previous (!) lives. Karma is supposed to help us make sense of why we may be going through certain situations. It also gives us rationalization for the cycles of birth and death. Essentially, what a person reaps in this life can be a consequence of what they sowed in their previous lives. What a person sows now, they will reap in a future life. And karma can accumulate, giving you a chance to balance out positive or negative consequences.

On the Jesus side of things (which Christians believe is nothing but the Truth) he said, ***“For the measure you give is the measure with which you shall receive.”*** The Gospel for Sunday is full of such statements. And in another place, such as the Letter to the Galatians, St Paul echoed Jesus, saying, ***“What you sow, so shall you reap.”*** Measured giving and receiving, and sowing and reaping in a Christian’s life of faith relates to the eternal implications that faith has on the Kingdom of God. It can thus be applied both to the Christian’s life on earth as well as in eternity. However, it’s different from Karma in this way: faith in Jesus Christ is a major component. Without the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the discernment of the Holy Spirit, I believe we could easily mistake one for the other. However, both of these principles have very different effects on our beliefs and ways of thinking.

Obviously, then, the sources are different. Karma originates from the Hindu tradition, first mentioned in the oldest known Hindu text. But like I mentioned earlier, there are many religious Indias, so there are many Hindu sub-areas and differences, too. Once you know that there are over 1000 identifiable gods in the Hindu system of belief, that seems obvious. But this is also true even on just one topic, such as Karma. Over time, different cultures and traditions have taken the concept of karma and have added different details to it, so, the law of karma ranges depending on geographical area.

To the contrary, the principle of measured giving and receiving, sowing and reaping is a biblical concept found all throughout the Holy Scriptures.

“Do not be deceived: . whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” [Galatians 6:7-9](#).

Now let's dig a little deeper. And as we do, we find that Karma, from the basis of its foundation, is something that speaks against what we learn from the Bible.

In the principle of karma, the good or bad things that a person does will impact them both now and in their next life. There is the belief that if we do certain things through goodwill, acts of charity, and our personal service to mankind, we can store up goodness for ourselves. Karma makes us believe that if good (or bad) things happen to us, we deserve it because of something that we've done either in this life or a past one.

To the contrary, Scripture teaches us that *“God gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good...,” [Matthew 5:45](#). According to scripture, we cannot simply do good and expect only good to happen to us (or the reverse), whether we are believers in Christ or non-believers. The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament speaks about this same phenomenon,*

“It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrificed and him who does not sacrifice...,” [Ecclesiastes 9:2](#).

Because both good and bad happen to believers and non-believers alike, faith in Christ for an eternal hope is the major dividing line between karma and sowing and reaping. Karma teaches that there are multiple lives (reincarnations), and thus, multiple chances to do good, atoning for the bad that has been done. You are not helping yourselves or others if you speak Karma over our lives; you are deluding yourself and providing a false blessing, saying that we can earn our way into a good or bad life. Why? Because you are on your own to accomplish it! Faith in Christ, and following the measure of giving our lives to HIM, and sowing into HIM, means

liberty from such a system of succeeding or failing based on my own actions. This is GOOD NEWS: with the concepts of measured giving and receiving, and sowing and reaping, we see that Jesus Christ did the work for us. By His one-time Incarnation, He then went on and paid our price to enter into eternity with him in heaven on the cross. There is nothing more that we need to do other than live a faithful life.

With great help from Britnee Bradshaw at her blog, [On The Way Up](#).

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Sixth Sunday of the Epiphany

Genesis 45:3-11, 21-28 Psalm 37:1-10, 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-5
Luke 6:27-38

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Seventh Sunday of the Epiphany

8:30a Low Mass (Church)
10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY Societies of Mary Day of Devotion
11:00am Rosary (St. Mary's Chapel)
11:30am MASS (St. Mary's Chapel)
Noon Pot Luck Lunch (Parish Hall)