

## The Grumpy Disciple #1

# Who Owns God? They Do! Don't They?

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Anger. Fervor. And prayers that sound like marching orders. Dead bodies which mark the trail of sincere losers who believed differently.

Somehow this world spins so fast and yet we don't feel it. With our feet on the ground we travel 1,000 mph – in circles – constant circles. The velocity neither moves the drunk or homeless in the alleyways nor those on their knees before a deity of their own choosing. We are unshaken as our massive home uncontrollably turns.

Those who follow the Deist theory see the endless spin as the result of a curious sort of god. Like winding a string around a toy top, with a thrust and jerk back, this divinity sprang Earth into orbit. After that he sat back in his La-Z-God recliner, propped his feet up, and read his celestial newspaper concerning matters in other parts of the galaxy and beyond. Oh yes, this creator occasionally glances over the pages to see what we're up to. (General disinterest prevails.) And he doesn't seem to be saying much these days. The news in other galaxies must be quite intriguing.

If true, who would want a god that never answered the phone? Why would anyone kneel, pour their lives out to try and get personal? Is that faith or folly?

I have two propositions. First, it seems that each religion has leaders who claim to possess an embedded microchip, put there by God himself. They insist they are the chosen ones. Their job is to inject the same religion/God microchip into as many people as possible. These benevolently represent and interpret the Creator for us.

Second, religion can be compared to the children's game musical chairs – but, in reverse. A chair is added, not removed, when the music stops. A waiting multitude vies for the empty chair. And so on. It never ends. Old and newer spiritual groups manifest, evolve and vie for place.

I say, religion(s) certainly must be set apart from God. If visitors from outer space looked at our world, what would they see? Might they think that "God" was still a work in progress – surely not a settled affair?

Every spiritual and religious organization emphasizes what they've got – they've got God! So, behind every smiling or angry face...well? They have a chunk of – or all of – the *real* thing. And apparently, God is comfortable here, there and everywhere. But then...He must be

quite comfortable in numerous places, at the same time, right? (Where are you, God?) The chaos birthed by religion has a fairly quiet divine umpire making the calls.

I visualize a person who owns a lot of dogs. When it's time for a walk, he has all of the different breeds of canines on leashes. This requires the grip of two strong hands. Each dog has his own agenda. People pass by and wonder why so many animals, and how the person lives with them – quite a lot of care, attention and food – too much work!

This brings us to a different idea, I call: The Mistaken. Perhaps, those visitors from outer space would label humanity as The Mistaken Kind. Surely, living a devout, but mistaken and unnecessary religious lifestyle blankets our worldwide populous? How can conflicting religions all *own* God and still be correct? You're right...they can't.

I wonder if the space travelers' name for our planet might be titled: Planet Controversy. Or perhaps, Planet of the Mistaken Kind.

This brings up a further notion I think should be called Religious Russian Roulette. The notorious game of chance, with its deathly element of risk-taking, is generally played voluntarily. Yes, true, it's illogical and self-destructive. Not a sport, and surely will never make it to the Olympics. While targeting themselves, every player can be a winner or a loser. But it seems to me that the devout, yet mistaken multitudes, daily engage in this activity. The reverse, similar to the reverse of musical chairs, is that one doesn't know if he or she is right until the bullet has passed through the brain. Is a religious life slow-motion martyrdom? In the afterlife everyone will know who owned God.

In the 1600s, the Deist idea of the Creator came into written history. Later, Deism spring-boarded across Europe to North America with the Age of Enlightenment. The good ship Intellect rose above the reasoning within the Heart, and off loaded that cargo – the helmsman was Progress. The first mate, Reason, helped shove off from the shore of Spiritual Supplication.

I can see how smart men, even godly people, liked the distant Creator spin. Deism meant a watered-down, diluted, more easily managed God.

At that time, two or three hundred years ago, little did Europeans know of the entirety of civilizations/religions around the world. If they had, such an encyclopedia of wide and conflicting beliefs might've changed Western culture even more.

Yet, from what they did know, I must think that it grew too much for them. Perhaps, defending their beliefs in God became embarrassing? Mankind was ripe for the battleship Science to repeat the process of representing and interpreting Creation. Scientists started dispensing new and improved micro chips to the young and old. The child born to Science "Technology" just might impress those space aliens next time they buzz around!

Who owns God? Gee, that's one question a thousand of answers.

*These Things Make Me Grumpy!*