

Taboo #2

I received a number of comments on my last article. Most of them were positive but some were not. One individual felt that I had gone against my own rule and did become political. I guess it all depends on your respective points of view on the types of political philosophies you support. On thinking about this I decided to write something on religion but try not to be religious and to be, as far as possible, non partisan.

A little background, if you like. My mother was raised in the Church of Ireland (Anglican) and so I was baptised in St. Simon the Apostle Anglican Church in Toronto. Subsequent to this my Father and later my Mother were ordained as ministers in the Pentecostal Church. I was used to going to Church three times on a Sunday and to Young People's on Friday evenings. On Sunday, worship service was at 11:00 a.m. and concentrated on teaching one the details of Bible and Christianity, Sunday school was at 3:00 p.m. and the evening evangelical service at 7:00 p.m.

I do not intend to discuss the mythology of religion or dwell on the similarities in the lives of ancient gods to current Christian beliefs or the practise of extracting specific verses or occurrences in the Bible to support one's views while ignoring others that do not. Suffice it to say as I did in my last article, my views are my own and I respect yours to the extent I wouldn't push mine.

But, there are some aspects of being a preachers kid that were perhaps not funny at the time of occurrence but in hindsight are to me humorous.

My Father went full-time into the ministry when I was six years old. He established a new Pentecostal Church in Scarborough in an old church building that had once belonged to the Salvation Army. One feature of this church was a concrete tank under the platform floor that was used for baptism, which in the Pentecostal tradition is done by total immersion,

Soon after the church opened a big baptismal service

was planned with candidates coming from other congregations and with a senior preacher from a downtown church as the guest minister. Our church was small and I had never seen a baptism so up close. I was quite excited to be there in the front row, The service progressed and as you can imagine the sermon was based on the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. As the minister got more and more into the sermon and became more and more animated he began to move around the pulpit. At one point where he described John plunging Jesus into the river and said "And he went down under" he stepped back, and fell into the baptismal tank! Well! As you can imagine I was at first surprised and then pleased at the 'show' as were the rest of the congregation.

In a discussion later in our home, having dried out, he reminisced with my Father about other baptismal 'occurrences - one of which has remained with me all my life. In one service he had a number of candidates and things were progressing well until a woman of

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