

I'm out of town for a long weekend and so away from my books, and have decided to re-post some particularly intriguing (IMHO) posts from many years ago. Here's a hot one.

QUESTION:

You note that fundamentalism is dangerous and harmful. How do you define fundamentalism and why do you think it's dangerous?

RESPONSE:

There are of course actual definitions of "fundamentalism" that you can find in scholarship on religion, but I sense that you're asking more for a rough-and-ready description. Years ago I started defining fundamentalism as "No fun, too much damn, and not enough mental.

When I was a fundamentalist myself (yet to be described) I understood it in a positive way. Originally, in Christian circles, it referred to believers who held on to the "fundamentals" of the faith, which for us included such things as the inspiration of Scripture, the full deity of Christ, the Trinity, the virgin birth, the physical resurrection, and, well, probably a collection of other doctrines. Fundamentalism, for us, was to be differentiated from liberalism, which had sacrificed these basic fundamental doctrines to the gods of modernity. And we would have nothing of it.

The rest of this post is for members only. If you don't belong yet, you can easily join and get access not just to this post but to thousands of others, on interesting and important topics. It's cheap, and every penny goes to charity. Hard to think of a reason not to take the plunge!

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