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Universism: A Religion of Know Nothings?

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Universism: A Religion of Know Nothings?

No! This is not as the headline suggests a religion born out of a book titled *Religion for Dummies*, it is a faith based on 'uncertainty' concerning matters of religion. Universists haven't a clue about the numinous, but their religious practice says let's talk about it anyway. Finally, at long last some 'agnostics' have founded a church! What is their creed (i.e., their essential articles of religious belief)? Apparently only this, **"I confess that I know that I know nothing!"** While this is brief and to the point, one wonders how the Universist can confess that he/she is certain that he/she is uncertain? Does the Universist know this uncertainty with absolute certainty?

Leaving philosophical problems aside, what could be the driving force behind such a novel view of matters of the spirit? The soon to be physician and founder Frank Vox opines, "Universism seeks to solve a problem that has riddled mankind throughout history: the endless string of people who claim that they know the truth and the way." It is the illusion of religious certitude that divides humanity into warring camps and Vox has the 'prescription'. The budding young medicine man has the perfect pill for humanity, the ailing patient, namely a strong dose of uncertainty regarding matters of faith and religion.

While quite ready to admit the sinful failings of followers of revealed religion (Osama bin Laden immediately comes to mind), I for one can't see how replacing the certitude of belief with 'religious agnosticism' can unite humanity? It seems to me that agnosticism about matters of religion must ultimately extend to agnosticism about the basis for societal morals and ethics as well. How would this possibly "unite the world" as Universists' hope? It can only lead to confusion.

The Universist seeks a religion without "blind faith in prophets or their writings." As a professor, an academic who studies (and believes in) one particular set of prophets and their writings found in the Bible, I state for the record that I don't exercise only blind irrational faith. These prophets have provided cogent and even impressive evidence for my beliefs about God through the medium of historically fulfilled prophecy and the founder's (Christ's) historical resurrection from the dead.

Instead of an online Sunday School class of rambling chats about the meaning of life, let me suggest a more excellent way for the Universist. Rather than embracing religious uncertainty, test the spirits of the prophetic religions. Examine them carefully and see if you can find one that is willing to predict 150 year before the fact as Isaiah did, the coming of Cyrus the Persian and then await historical verification of his words.

"Who saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid." (Isa. 44:28)

In response to Vox's Universism, I'll take Christianity as a 'rational religion' of 'Know Somethings' any day and I ask the Universist to join me.

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P.S. A story in the Religion Section of the Lynchburg, VA *News & Advocate*, March 4, 2006 is the basis for this article.