

Unpopular Essays

BASSEY EKPO BASSEY



TODAY, this column is given to a guest writer to discuss the issue of belief. Th's, we hope will be the first of a great many contributions from our readers to this column. The major qualification is that your message must not be on the ordinary side. Another consideration is your ability to argue out your view point.

HUMAN beings are by nature, evil. Just turn your back and the next man wants to do you in. How can they live without a myriad number of eyes at every corner of the body? Physiologically, that's not possible. So they created God who is all-seeing, and all-knowing, the final arbiter who deters all men from harming each other.

loped in knowledge and technology, people went forth met and lived with others — either through war or through peace. Co-operation meant sharing — sharing of knowledge, tools, technology and God. God through the ages has therefore grown from the individual god to the village god, clan god, tribal god until today we can conceive it as a universal God.

The more society has grown, the less vindictive, the more embracing and more diffused that God has become. Why? The growth of society has always inferred the growth of knowledge. As our knowledge has increased so has our ability to explain phenomena. And less is our need to ascribe mysteries — unpossessed knowledge — to God.

Furthermore, knowledge has made us less distrustful and fearful of each other. It is therefore sad, but true, that God is dying. Infact since his creation, God has been dying, because with each step forward in knowledge, God has taken a step backward towards oblivion (?)

You would therefore ask, where lies salvation for man? In science? No, I do not believe in science. I just take knowledge as it comes. With knowledge there is no need to believe. I just know so far as we keep living on this earth, so also will our knowledge increase. Whenever I act, I do so only with the knowledge I possess.

Again you may ask, do I then believe that human being will eventually possess all knowledge? I answer that I do not believe I know that the human being has knowledge. Other questions are irrelevant to his living.

ledge not yet possessed) have made him fully aware of his smallness. His conceit has led him to think that if he, the top dog of the universe,

cannot explain the mysteries then somebody else must be so capable, but that person must not and cannot be in the universe. He must be God.

by
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(Guest Writer)

But we need not harbour this fear and conceit. One thing that has been observed is the interrelatedness of knowledge and God. The concept of God is a function of the knowledge level of society. As knowledge increases God decreases. How?

In primitive society, not the stone age when man could not have developed the conceptual capacity, God was more personal. People were less accommodating and more distrustful of each other. No man in such a society could afford to share his god with another. But as society deve-

of such irrationality — fear. Human beings are by nature, evil. Just turn your back and the next man wants to do you in. How can they live without a myriad number of eyes at every corner of the body? Physiologically that's not possible. So they created God who is all-seeing, and all-knowing, the final arbiter who deters all men from harming each other.

The second reason why people created God is

God. I think they do so because of fear and conceit. Why fear? Why conceit? As far as St. Thomas Aquinas was concerned, God is the primary mover which itself remains unmoved. St Thomas arrived at this conclusion by

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a resort to logic and finally, to belief. I am sure St. Thomas could, by himself, see the irrationality of his conclusion.

My main concern in this article is the basis

conceit. The human being has always held himself as the top entity of the universe. But the unfathomed mysteries of the universe (mysteries because they are know-

Man Has Made God In His Own Image

WRITING for a column like this puts me under great strains. I am forced to ask "To hurt or not to hurt?", "To impress or not to impress?" "To be honest or lie?" The best solution for me has always been to hurt, impress and be honest to myself, not you, the reader. If in so doing, I get you to agree with me, fine; if not, then later. I definitely will not want to convince you. I am not a preacher. You see, I do not believe.

Quite honestly, I do not believe in believing. One of the things that have always struck me is the morbid desire of humans to believe in some thing—God or science. Nobody wants to leave any question unanswered. Such questions as "who made the world?" "who made man?" "Is the universe finite?" "Is knowledge infinite?" "Is there life after death?" "Reincarnation?" invariably leave us believing one way or the other. But I ask, is it necessary to believe? I do not think these questions are relevant to living, hence there is no cause to try to answer them.

I have always asked why people believe in