



Freeing God From Religion

By Clifford Ratzlaff

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If you tend to shake your head when you read religious literature, please read this book. I invite being disagreed with; I welcome debate and do not object to being told I am wrong. The question remains: Who has the right religion? Despite being an octogenarian when presumably all should be settled and nailed down, I now challenge the theology I nodded to so vigorously in a previous time of my life. What I once assumed as truth is now open to the kind of tough scrutiny I had never dared engage in. My theological life scripts were deeply rooted and beyond challenge. Born and raised in a fundamentalist Mennonite conservative evangelical community, doubting and questioning were considered acts of sin. Even though we were good ethical people, we were repaganized every year by visiting English speaking evangelists and getting saved was an annual event. I know; I did it three times before I was fifteen. I include a simple caveat. Once you start critiquing and investigating your beliefs, even the most cherished, you will find that you cannot go back. The very act of questioning intensifies the importance of the question. Millions of books exist about God; every book written by a human being (mostly men). Over twenty five miles of shelves with books about God are in the archives under the Vatican. I had fifteen shelves with many books that talk about God.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

On February 23, 1929, I was born as the twelfth child in the home of John Andrew Ratzlaff/Thiessen and Elizabeth Schmidt/Unruh. Our home was situated six miles north west of Waldheim, Saskatchewan; a Mennonite village that was named after a village in Southern Russia from where my great-grandparents emigrated in the late 19th century. After the usual completion of elementary and secondary school and after earning a B.A. degree in Psychology from the University of Saskatchewan, I began independent life as a school teacher in Saskatchewan as well as 10 years of teaching in Zimbabwe, Africa. During furloughs and after disconnecting from the NGO (TEAM) that sponsored us, I completed requirements for another undergraduate degree, a B.Ed. in Educational Psychology, also from the university of Saskatchewan, an M.Sc. from Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia and a Ph.D. from Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, U.S.A. Just before my last year in B.A. studies, on Sept 12, 1953, I married Jeanette Violet Anderson, who already had earned a B.A. in medical technology, and who graciously allowed me to carry on studies while she earned food and rent money as a laboratory technologist in Saskatoon City Hospital. After graduate studies I worked for 2 and ½ years as an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon campus, and then worked for the federal government as chief psychologist in a mental hospital associated with federal Corrections in Abbotsford, B.C. Then followed thirty five years of work in our own psychological services clinic situated in Abbotsford, B.C. Canada.

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