**Book Title: Why Punish Me?** *Augustine’s sinful lust unwrapped*

**Scheduled for publication 28th September 2021**

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**SUGGESTED QUIZ**

**What do you know about religious teaching in schools?**

About 89% of Britons identify as non-religious or notionally Christian and many will be unaware of the privileged influence enjoyed by religions in the education of our infants.

How many of the following questions on education in Britain, can you answer correctly?

1. What proportion of state funded schools are paid to teach pupils their own exclusive beliefs?
2. How many state schools in Britain teach St Augustine’s ideas on sin and guilt?
3. Are Augustine’s doctrines, taught in schools, a good standard by which we can judge morality?
4. Are all children in Britain covered by the legal requirement to attend school?
5. Are schools able to exclude prospective pupils on the basis of their parents’ wealth or religious beliefs?
6. Are faith schools bound by Equality Regulations, e.g. can they discriminate against job applicants?
7. Can faith schools teach ideologies that directly contradict British values?
8. Do faith schools promote friendship and good neighbourliness?
9. Do faith schools provide the choices needed to protect parents’ religious freedom?
10. Do faith schools achieve better results than other schools?
11. How many times does the CofE service admit sin and beg forgiveness?
12. Which bishop in the House of Lords advocated the law (prevailing today) that allows the physical punishment of children?

**QUIZ ANSWERS:**

**Religious Teaching in our Schools**

1. A third of schools are faith schools and permitted to teach any belief (except creationism, as a valid theory). Some schools ignore the law and teach religious beliefs as scientific theories, which they are not.  Other maintained schools in the UK are required to promote basic human values, but the Government permits faith schools to "teach in accordance with the tenets of their faith," even when these conflict with British values.
2. All publicly funded schools in the UK are required by statute to teach Christian beliefs such as Augustine’s ideas on sin and guilt. Many schools flout the law, but most primary schools comply.  Private schools tend to teach Christian beliefs by choice.  Thus, most adults schooled in Britain have not been permitted an education free from religious interference.  *Why Punish Me?* details multiple studies that show how this training negatively influences our British culture.
3. Many of the values espoused by faith schools contradict British principles of decency and fair play. On women’s rights, child abuse, restorative justice and equality issues, faith schools often teach beliefs contrary to enlightened values.  Prayers said in collective worship frequently teach questionable moralities.  The Penitential Act, recited by pupils in many faith schools, admits wrongdoing and begs for mercy and forgiveness, but the victim is ignored.  If I harm someone, the right course of action is to ask that person for forgiveness, directly.  It is for me to resolve my wrongdoings honourably face to face with the person I harmed.  Going behind the back of my victim to ask forgiveness of a third party is craven.
4. A loophole in the law removes the requirement for ‘home-schooled’ pupils to be registered with the authorities. In 2018, the Department for Education publicly acknowledged this issue for the first time, but no effective action has yet been taken.  In 2019, Ofsted revealed that close to 6,000 pupils are being educated in illegal schools, most often faith schools.  Because these schools operate outside the law they are unregulated.
5. Faith schools are allowed to select or reject pupils on any basis connected to the school’s ethos or beliefs. In addition, a Runnymede Trust study shows how faith schools often use unfair admissions practices, such as probing parents’ ability to contribute to school funds.  All of their running costs and up to 90% of building costs are funded by taxpayers.  Furthermore, the religious body usually gets to own the building for contributing 10% of the cost.  The CofE is one of the wealthiest landowners in the UK, and capital gains on land sales by churches are free of tax.
6. Faith schools enjoy exemptions from the provisions of the Equality Act. They can discriminate against teachers applying for work on the basis of religion without needing to demonstrate any occupational requirement.  Applicants who are otherwise suitable, can be rejected and staff barred from promotion if they do not share the beliefs stipulated by their potential employer.
7. The content of most subjects taught in Britain are regulated, but religion is different. Faith schools can teach that abortion is wrong, although it has been legal for 50 years in Britain.  A faith school might advocate heterosexual marriage as the only morally sanctioned form of sexual expression, although same sex marriage was legalised in 2014.  Faith schools can and do teach outdated ideas of guilt and shame which might contribute to making some young people vulnerable.
8. Faith schools are effective in promoting goodwill amongst their followers. However, a wealth of robust evidence has been amassed confirming that faith schools often foster division and intolerance in a multicultural society.  Despite Britain’s experience of religious tension in Northern Ireland, the proportion of state funded faith schools, propagating divisive religious ideas, is expanding.
9. Faith schools are ‘By far the most systematic inhibitor of free choice’ according to a Paper to the Accord Coalition and All-Party Parliamentary Groups. Selection on the basis of belief disadvantages those unwilling to change belief (or pretend to change).  49.7% of places at Church of England secondary schools could be filled through religiously discriminatory selection criteria. The figure for Catholic schools was 99.8%.
10. Because faith schools hand pick their intake, less able children get excluded and tend to be dispersed to other schools. The children that faith schools select would likely have done well regardless of what school they went to.
11. The current Church of England Common Worship Eucharist for every Sunday service cites sin 24 times, and calls for mercy or forgiveness 26 times. Catholics make 18 admissions of sin and 25 pleas for mercy or forgiveness.
12. Peter Forster the 55 years old Lord Bishop of Chester, spoke in May 2004 in favour of allowing the beating of children as ‘reasonable chastisement.’ Alone among the world’s civilised nations, Britain, a mostly non-Christian population, still permits the physical punishment of children in the home, despite compelling evidence of harm.