

Reno Faith Forum Presents Bishop Savoy's Words



Gene Savoy Jr.

PHOTO: Rebecca
Willis

The "Faith Forum" in the Reno Gazette-Journal has been inviting local Reno clergy to present their views on controversial topics for the past two years. Views of major religious denominations as well as secular academics have been posted weekly in this Saturday column since 2011. For the first time in these two years, Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. was invited to present his view alongside those of local Eastern Orthodox, Bahai, Evangelical Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Roman Catholic, Buddhist, LDS, and religious scholars.

This is the question posed in the Faith Forum for April 21, 2013:

American philosopher Dr. Daniel Clement Dennett III stated, according to the BBC website, that "religion is a bad virus ... a lot of people are really afflicted by their religion and I would love to see them cured ... it is a drug that you take and ingest by the eyes and ears." What do you think?

Here is the posting of Bishop Gene Savoy Jr's response:

RELIGION MUST BE PROGRESSIVE

***Gene Savoy Jr., International Community of Christ Bishop,
guest panelist***

The nature of religion is the key to this question. Religions are founded as dynamic and charismatic movements by inspired and holy figures ordained of God who have been chosen to receive new prophetic or revelatory information that offers fresh perspectives and insights into man's spiritual quest to know the divine. Such was the case with Abraham when he established a new Covenant in Canaan, with Gautama Buddha when he adopted the Middle Way, and with Jesus the Christ.

If the original teachings of religious movements are lost, watered down or become dogmatic, then religion suffers stagnation. In these cases, religion might hamper rational thought as it no longer serves the spiritual needs of an ever-evolving human species. Then, religion becomes stuck in the past. If, on the other hand, religion remains vibrant, evolutionary and progressive, then, to the contrary, religion serves to elevate the thought of man and woman.

[Read the entire Faith Forum article for April 21, 2013 online at rgj.com.](#)