

OBSTINACY, NOT STUPIDITY, IS BELIEVERS' ACHILLES HEEL

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MEMO: Letters to the Editor

In response to the Oct. 11 Accent article "We're Christians. And we are not stupid," by The Post's religion writer, I would propose the possibility that intelligence is not the issue. Nor is faith. Nor is it a particular version of a religion. Problems begin when faith is perceived by the faithful as infallible, Godlike certainties.

As a retired philosophy professor, I recall many bright students and a few colleagues of various religious heritages (and none at all) who could not think empathetically, analytically or independently about many personal and academic issues. They had reached the point not of informed faith but of arrogant certitude. No longer did they profess "I believe" but, instead, "like God, I know for sure." Evangelical atheists omit "like God." Their personal relationships were limited either to their own kind or to belligerent attempts to convert others to their faith. In philosophy courses, such fervent students were generally unable to comprehend viewpoints other than their own.

It was particularly disheartening to run into gifted Christians, Jews, Muslims, fanatical atheists and others who failed miserably to distinguish among God-like certitude, informed faith and "schools of thought" in all areas of academic inquiry. A waste of intelligence.

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