

Puff the Magic Dragon

The song “Puff the Magic Dragon” has been the subject of controversy from the time it was performed by the folk singers Peter, Paul, and Mary. It was purported to be a drug use song which was promoting the use of marijuana because of the references to “traveling down the cherry lane” which made reference to the glowing ember at the end of the “joint” or marijuana cigarette, and the name “Puff”[1]. Consequently, many of the people who were of “the establishment” at the time were extremely critical of the song thinking that it would impair the development of the youth.

Those who did not adhere to this theory, myself included, felt that the song was only a statement about how fleeting and tenuous not only childhood but also life itself is. I use as support of this theory the faces on the crowd when Peter, Paul, and Mary perform this song in televised concerts. The children sing with glee at the thought of a mythological creature named “Puff” who reaches out to touch them at their own level and will carry them on his back as they together frolic “through the autumn mist in the land of Honolee”[2]. Adults, in direct proportion to their ages, usually have tears of poignant reflection in their eyes as they reflect on the transience of the life they have been loaned, and the judgment which awaits us when this loan come due[3] by our Creator.

The book of Ecclesiastes reflects upon how everything has a place and a purpose. It states that as we travel through life’s mysterious throughfare, we become a part of the opposing elements of life. As a result of this set of circumstances, we find ourselves feeling eternity in our hearts and have to admit that God has, through this gift of His, made everything beautiful in it’s time[4]. We are but ephemeral cogs in the autumn mist of the flywheel of time. We have, however, a responsibility to solidify our God given abilities in order to reach others, not with a song of lamentation over the passing of time, but with a message of the salvation which is available through Jesus Christ in lieu of this urgency.

We now must realize that through all the theosophical shifting around of our attitudes, we are here for a purpose. The first two chapters of Ecclesiastes tell us about the vanity of a self serving directive in life. It also reflects on the meaninglessness of the material things we concentrate on as adults who live in a materialistic society. Christian adults are supposed to mature, grow, and develop into loving, caring, and giving beings. When Jesus came, He differentiated the life of the thief who comes but to steal and rob, from the life of The Good Shepherd who comes to protect and lead His flock[5].

In this case, the flock has gone astray into sin.[6]It has been given a death sentence because of this[7]. Christian adults can go on blithely ignoring the plight of the flock as we frolic in Honolee or we can put Puff the magic dragon behind us as we follow Jesus Christ, helping to lead the flock out of Honolee into Salvation.

[1] Wikipedia reference “Puff the Magic Dragon” on the internet

[2] Song “Puff the Magic Dragon”

[3] Hebrews 9:27

[4] Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

[5] John 10: 1-18

[6] Romans 3:23

[7] Romans 6:23