

## The Importance of Intellectual Honesty in a Spiritual Quest:

Source: Vol IX, A Study of History, Arnold J Toynbee

“Souls that have once had the experience of intellectual enlightenment\*\* can never thereafter find spiritual salvation by committing intellectual suicide; and though the quest of recapturing their lost faith is in itself both intellectually and morally legitimate, agnostics who embark on this quest will not find themselves able to worship God again in spirit and in truth if they seek to open for themselves a homeward spiritual path by deliberately closing their mind’s critical eye and by making a virtue of refusing henceforth to follow an argument fearlessly wherever it may lead them. In a would-be return to Religion, the path of intellectual dishonesty can lead only to worshipping we know not what; for Reason, like Faith, is a goddess with whom man cannot take the liberty of playing fast and loose-as though these mighty *numina* were cringing curs whom a capricious human master could break into complying slavishly with his wayward mood. Faith and Reason cannot be alternately dismissed with a kick and then called back to heal with a whistle to suit man’s volatile fancy of changing convenience.”

\*\*Intellectual enlightenment, as used here by Toynbee, must necessarily mean, ‘the light of intelligence’, after it has been ‘switched on’ through an awakening. Such a person, needs no guidance, and can see through things.

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