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Personally, I do believe that religion does have answers to life's very complex and crucial questions. From my perspective, as a Christian, the teachings of Jesus and the sacrifice he made to show the world that God is a God of love is anything but out-of date.

The challenge has always been putting into practice the teachings and example of Jesus. For instance, this coming Sunday, I am preaching a sermon entitled: "Self-Denial: The Unwanted Solution." This comes straight from a conversation Jesus had with his disciples as found in Chapter 8 of Mark's Gospel.

I do believe that the human predicament is the same as it has always been. Which is to say, we human beings continue to be self-centered and selfish to the point that we are unwilling to make the kinds of sacrifices that will benefit the whole of humanity.

Also, we cannot leave out the fact that even the best religious teaching is subject to the complex filters of the human mind and heart. This is not to be so naïve as to think that the church and we Christians have not contributed to the negative perception of religion. We must be and do better. However, from my perspective, to say religion is the problem is to speak from a fantasy that has far too long been held by we humans.

The fantasy that we are our own gods and we can solve it all on our own. Well, just look at us now. Again, Pogo, was right, "I have seen the problem and it is us." No, again, from my perspective, it is not Jesus' fault. We just continue to refuse to really put into practice his very strong teachings about inclusiveness and love. Hope we can do better!