

December 2006

Living With Other Gods: My Mom, My Dad, My Grandmother, and Me

Timothy Crumley
St. John Fisher College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum>



Part of the Religion Commons

[How has open access to Fisher Digital Publications benefited you?](#)

Recommended Citation

Crumley, Timothy (2006) "Living With Other Gods: My Mom, My Dad, My Grandmother, and Me," *Verbum*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 1 , Article 10.

Available at: <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum/vol4/iss1/10>

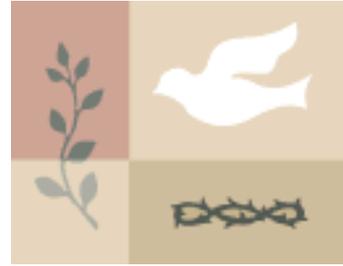
This document is posted at <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum/vol4/iss1/10> and is brought to you for free and open access by Fisher Digital Publications at St. John Fisher College. For more information, please contact fisherpub@sjfc.edu.

Living With Other Gods: My Mom, My Dad, My Grandmother, and Me

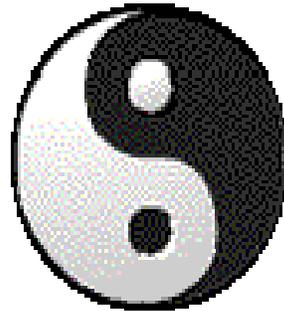
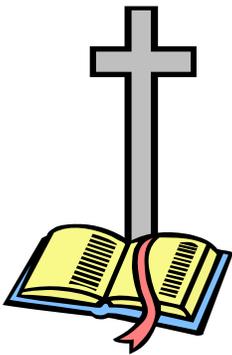
Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The notion of "*living with other gods*" applies to my family. Living with other gods means that people with different beliefs live with one-another peacefully. When applying this notion to my family, one can relate it best to the religious relations that are between my father and me and that are of between my mother and grandmother. My name is Timothy Crumley; I'm 14 years of age, I'm in the 9th grade, and I attend a collage-prep school called The Harley School. My father seems to have no belief in God and this is seen many times when he talks to me about something important: An example would be when he talks about life or where we as humans have come from: there is no mention of God. My mother, however, is different. When talking about where humans came from with her, God is mentioned, but so is science. My grandmother, being from a "conservative Christian" generation, is open minded about science but, when asked or talked with about how life began or where humans came from, mostly only Adam and/or Eve are mentioned. Talking about how life started is only an example, but it is a significant one. As one can see, these three people in my life have different ways of looking at where life came from, so one can easily figure that they must have different views of where life is going."



Living with Other Gods



2006

Winners



Living With Other Gods
My Mom, My Dad, My Grandmother, and Me

By: Timothy Crumley



The notion of “*living with other gods*” applies to my family. Living with other gods means that people with different beliefs live with one-another peacefully. When applying this notion to my family, one can relate it best to the religious relations that are between my father and me and that are of between my mother and grandmother. My name is Timothy Crumley; I’m 14 years of age, I’m in the 9th grade, and I attend a collage-prep school called The Harley School. My father seems to have no belief in God and this is seen many times when he talks to me about something important: An example would be when he talks about life or where we as humans have come from: there is no mention of God. My mother, however, is different. When talking about where humans

came from with her, God is mentioned, but so is science. My grandmother, being from a “conservative Christian” generation, is open minded about science but, when asked or talked with about how life began or where humans came from, mostly only Adam and/or Eve are mentioned. Talking about how life started is only an example, but it is a significant one. As one can see, these three people in my life have different ways of looking at where life came from, so one can easily figure that they must have different views of where life is going.

My mother, not being able to really *feel* the Christian faith of her mother joined the Bahai faith. The Bahai faith is a faith which is based on world unity and world peace. This faith is very peaceful. This faith, for years, “fit” my mother and me. She had been in it for most of her life so when I was born she thought it best to expose me to it; I grew up with it. The religion that my mother had not liked much that was and still is her mother’s belief is the Christian faith. The Christian faith, even though it has not been my religion, still has been in my life. When my Father left my Mother, my Grandmother stepped in (literally) and she started living with us. She still lives in an apartment above us to help out. My father moved out when I was one year old, and she has lived with us since. This is how the Christian faith has been, in a sense, “planted” into my life. Now my father, with all of these religions coming from my mother, from me and my grandmother, has also tried to teach me his outlook which includes not really looking up to a God but looking at things as they are. He knows there is something that is more powerful than we are, but he doesn’t think of this power as a God but more of something (universal/scientific) that we can’t (for now) understand. My mother believes in God and did, for most of her life, believe in the Bahai faith which didn’t believe in hell or heaven,

and the faith didn't see Jesus as the *only* prophet. My grandmother believes in God and the faith of Christianity and does believe in hell and heaven, and that Jesus was the greatest prophet. My father does not look up to God and needs to see something in order to believe it. A couple of years ago my mother stopped being a Bahai, for they were against women's rights in some cases. Today she is Unitarian/Universalist for she still believes the same things about peace, unity, and being open minded. The Unitarian/Universalist "faith" welcomes all ideas. How does my family "get along"? How does the notion of "*living with other gods*" apply to my family?

There is an "understanding" in my family. This understanding is a kind of respect. This respect is between my grandmother, my mom, my dad, and me. We have all had arguments with one another about "what to believe" or about which religion or which path in life is best. Even with these arguments from time to time, there is still that respect; that respect that accepts others' differences. This respect comes from there being the understanding that we all want the same goals: we just have different paths for getting to these goals. These "goals" include happiness, love, and affection. My father has given me the feeling that believing in God is silly or a waste of time at times; yet, in the end, he seems to understand my mom's and my beliefs. This same acceptance applies to my grandmother except that she firmly believes in one God. In the end, yet again, she too comes to an understanding with my mom and me. So, how does the notion of "*living with other gods*" apply to my family? There is an "understanding and respect" in my family when it comes to religion. We all have the same destination, just different ways of getting there.

This is how I have interpreted my family in terms of religion. Knowing that everyone has the same goals but just different ways of getting there is what has kept our respect for each other when it comes to religion. I have good reason to believe that this understanding, this respect, is what has not only kept my family together in a religious stand point, but hundreds of thousands of families together all across the globe. I've seen this understanding in many other families and in many other relationships. This understanding is a good thing, for I along with millions of others, want to get to these goals that have been mentioned. As for my personal beliefs, I am open minded, but ever since my mom and I left the Bahai faith I have seemed to have drifted into the Unitarian/Universalist religion (like my mom). Being part of this religion gives me the freedom to not have to believe in God and I'm able to look at life in any way I desire (unlike when I was a Bahai). I respect other's beliefs and I don't think of any other religion being wrong or right; I believe any one (or more than one) religion could be right or wrong. I, along with most people, will keep trying to figure out what is "right" or what "truth" is, but I also know that I will probably never get to the real "truth" or to "what is *really* right". In the meantime, we need to understand each other: if we ever want to get anywhere. We as a people need to respect each others religions; we must stick together. This is the case in my family; United we stand, divided we fall.