

Reaching The Atheist & Secular Humanist

“The Path Of The Fool” (National Atheist Day: April 1)

Autonomy – “I am, god isn’t”

Genesis 3:5 “...you will be like God...”

Isaiah 14:14 “I will make myself like the Most High.”

Ezekiel 28:2 “In the pride of your heart you say, ‘I am a god. I sit on the throne of a god... but you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god.’”

Exodus 5:2 “Who is the LORD that I should obey him...?”

Psalms 10:4 “In his pride, the wicked does not seek him, in all his thoughts there is no room for God.”

Psalms 12:4 “We own our lips, who is our master?”

Psalms 14:1-3 “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God...” (Ps. 53:1-3; Rom. 3:10-13,18)

Psalms 36:1,2,4 “There is no fear of God before their eyes. For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin. Even on his bed he plots evil; he commits himself to a sinful course and does not reject what is wrong.”

Psalms 55:19 “Men who never change their ways and have no fear of God.”

Psalms 59:7 “Who can hear us?”

Psalms 74:8b “They burned every place where God was worshiped in the land.”

Psalms 78:22 “For they did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.”

Proverbs 1:7,29,31 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” “Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD... they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.”

Job 8:13-15 “Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perished the hope of the godless. What he trust in is fragile; what he relies on is a spider’s web. He leans on his web, but it gives way; he clings to it, but it does not hold.”

Job 24:15 “No eye will see me...”

Job 34:27 “They turned from following him and had no regard for any of his ways.”

Isaiah 29:16 “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘He did not make me’...”

Isaiah 47:10b “...Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, ‘I am, and there is none besides me’.”

Jeremiah 17:5 “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord.”

Romans 1:18-22 “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who **suppress the truth** by their wickedness. Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, but became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **Professing to be wise they became fools...**”

Romans 3:18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

I Corinthians 1:18,20,21 “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.”

I Corinthians 2:14 “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

Ephesians 2:12 “...having no hope and without God in the world.”

Colossians 2:8 “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”

Hebrews 11:6 “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him **must believe that he exists** and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Atheism

Atheism is the deliberate denial of the existence of God.

(Christmas add: "No god – no problem")

(Bus campaign: "There's probably no god, now stop worrying and enjoy your life.")

- There is no God, supernatural, or life after death. (no angels, demons, heaven, hell)

Willful rejection of God

Atheism –v- Agnosticism

Absolute knowledge about no god –v- One cannot know for sure about god

- Everything can be explained naturally/materially.
- Religion is irrational, repressive, and superstitious.
- Denial of God is related to moral sin, not ignorance.

(Ex. 20:3; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37)

<http://www.atheists.org>

<<http://newatheism.org/>>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbefo7aQtB8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuyUz2XLp1E>

<http://richarddawkins.net/>

<<http://www.hitchensweb.com/>>

<http://www.collisionmovie.com/>

<http://www.samharris.org/>

<<http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/incbios/dennettd/dennettd.htm>>

"What On Earth Is An Atheist" Madalyn Murray O'Hair

"We need a decent, modern, sophisticated and workable set of standards by which we can get along with ourselves and with others. We atheists... try to find some basis of rational thinking on which we can base our actions and our beliefs, and we have it... We accept the technical philosophy of materialism. It is valid philosophy which cannot be discredited. Essentially, materialism's philosophy holds that nothing exists but natural phenomena... Materialism is a philosophy of life and living according to rational processes with intellectual and other capabilities of the individual to be developed to the highest degree in a social system where this may be possible... There are no supernatural forces, no supernatural entities such as gods, heavens, or hells, or life after death. There are no supernatural forces, nor can there be. We atheists believe that nature simply exists. Matter is. Material is."

Secular Humanism

www.americanhumanist.org

www.humanism.org.uk

<<http://www.secularhumanism.org/>>

"Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism (God) affirms our ability and responsibility to lead meaningful, ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity." "Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. Affirming the dignity of each human being, it supports the maximization of individual liberty... standing for human rights and social justice. Free from supernaturalism, it recognizes that human beings as a part of nature and values... have their source in human experience and culture... humanity must take responsibility for its own destiny."

Beginning Of Secular Humanism: The Renaissance

- "Man is the measure of all things" (man is the ultimate standard)
 - potential/optimism of man / de-emphasized god
- Deism

- Belief Systems Which Hold To Humanism: (Naturalism/Existentialism/Communism)

Beliefs Of Secular Humanists: (Humanist Manifesto 1,2,& 3)

1. No God/Supernatural - only naturalism/physical reality.
2. The universe is self-existing and was not created.
3. Man resulted from continuous evolutionary process.
4. Man is basically good by nature.
5. Man is self-sufficient.
6. Man has the potential to solve all of society's problems.
7. Right and wrong is based on each situation. (situational ethics)
8. Man is a product of his environment.
9. There is no life after death/no soul/no heaven/no hell
10. The mind is a physical function of our body only.
11. Religion is obsolete.
12. Anything that hinders man's progress must be changed.
13. Socialism/one world order/global community
14. Man is ultimately responsible for his own human destiny.

Implications Of The Atheistic World View:

If I believe there is no God, how does that effect my view of...

Where I came from? (origins)	Accidental
Where I am going? (future/hope)	Random
Why I am here? (life's purpose)	Accidental, Subjective
How I should live? (right and wrong)	However I please, Relative
Who says? (authority)	I do
What happens if I'm not moral? (accountability/judgment)	Nothing eternal, Cultural

Atheistic History:

Descartes (1595-1650) (knowledge comes by reason)

Hume (1711-1776) (everything has a natural explanation)

Kant (1724-1804) (agnosticism/one can not know for sure)

Hegel (1770-1831) God is not sufficient in Himself - he is dependent on his creation - therefore unnecessary.

Comte (1798-1857) God is an irrelevant superstition

Feuerbach (1804-1872) God is a myth invented in the mind. There is no objective religion or God. All religious belief is subjective, projected from man's inner needs and desires.

Marx (1818-1883) Religion is the opiate of the people and the enemy of progress. Religion must be destroyed.

Engels (1820-1895)

Kierkegaard (1813-1855) (existentialism/subjective truth)

Nietzsche (1844-1900) God is dead. Religion paralyzes the potential of human beings

Dewey (1859-1952) There is no eternal truth outside personal experience. (public education)

Heidegger (1889-1971) No one will save you... you must save yourself.

Stalin (even on his dying bed clenched his fist at God)

Russell (1872-1970) (life is a contradiction/meaningless)

Sarte (1905-1981) Man creates his own destiny. Each man has only himself as the sole justification for his existence. There is no ultimate, objective, eternal meaning to life. Life is absurd.

Huxley -"I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning... there is no valid reason why (I) personally should not do as (I) want to do... the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation - sexual and political."

Faith Of The Fatherless, Paul Vita

Many of the most influential atheists of the 1600-1900 were men whose own fathers were either abusive or absent. (Nietzsche, Hitler, Hume, Russell, Sartre, Camus, Freud, Voltaire, Stalin, Mao Zedong)

- * Many of these men had religious upbringing.
- * Most lived meaningless, empty lives full of drunkenness, divorce, and sexual immorality.
- * They died in poverty, debt, loneliness, and despair because of their view of life without God.

Those who had a good example of a God fearing father influenced culture for good (Pascal, Burke, Wilberforce, Schweitzer, Barth, Mendelssohn)

- Our view of our earthly father directly effects our view of our Heavenly Father.

Can Man Live Without God And Life Still Make Sense?

Is God relevant?

Does life make sense with out God? Is life livable apart from God?

If you remove God out of life, what are you left with?

"Can man live without God? Of course he can, in a physical sense. Can he live without God in a reasonable way? No! because such a person is compelled to deny moral law, to abandon hope, to forfeit meaning, and to risk no recovery if he is wrong. Life just offers too much evidence to the contrary." (Zacharias)

"Living without God, if consistently carried through, will make life plainly unlivable within the limits of reason or common sense."

What do you say to a person who is about to take their own life (suicide) to try to convince them life is worth living?

Result Of Living Life Apart From God:

- despair/emptiness/anguish within the human heart
- nihilism (nothingness)/anarchism (lawlessness)
- meaninglessness - loss of significance/worth/purpose
- futility/foolishness/useless thinking (debased mind)

Romans 1:21,28

1 Corinthians 1:20

Ephesians 2:12; 4:17-19

1 Peter 1:18

Psalms 14:1

"In our search for morality and happiness outside of God, we have effectively lost all three - God, morality, and happiness."

"If God is dead, somebody else is going to have to take His place." "We have lost our moral point of reference because we have forgotten that most empirically verifiable part of human experience - the depravity of man." (M. Muggeridge)

Anti-theistic World View

Logical contradictions/incoherent thought/Unlivable

They borrow from the Christian worldview to make sense out of atheism.

Devastating consequences

"There is nothing in history to match the dire ends to which humanity can be led by following a political and social philosophy that consciously

and absolutely excludes God." "He who refuses to learn from history is forced to repeat its mistakes."

- Meaningless is the unavoidable consequence.
- Lawlessness/Moral bankruptcy (autonomies in collision)
"I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality.... I want young people capable of violence - imperious, relentless and cruel..." (Hitler)

Darwin predicted a slippery slope of violence if evolutionary theory were translated into a philosophy of life.

Dostoevsky wrote of the hell that is let loose when man comes adrift from his Creator's moorings and himself becomes god.
"If God is dead, everything is justifiable."

Pursuit of individual happiness as a fundamental right for all individuals at the cost of the collective good.

The categories of right and wrong emerging from a secular viewpoint find no common ground with cultures whose ethics and political theories are born out of their religious commitment. Reason alone has not served as a point of commonality.

Law without a Lawgiver/Virtue without standard

- False concept of man/nihilism
- Facade of self-assurance/individual pride/invincibility
- Living with a double standard (no God - yet still meaning)
- Collapse of all reason

Things that cannot be defined or explained without God:

Morality (what is right)	Beauty
Goodness/Virtue	Justice
Liberty/Freedom	Truth
Equality/Human Value (rights)	Logic/Reason

- **the problem of evil** (defining evil without a standard)
(What is evil? What is good? If this is not a moral universe, why position the question morally?)
- **the search for hope** when confronted with the reality of pain, suffering, and death. (If death delivers from desire and suffering - why isn't suicide an option? Death becomes the ultimate good.) (A philosophy that espouses no belief in God cannot even justify the question of suffering, let alone provide an answer except for the hope of extinction.)
 - Why long for something beyond the grave? (1 Thess. 4:13-18)
 - Wishful thinking
- **the hunger for significance** (Why does my life matter?)
- **the search for meaning** (Where did I come from? Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?)
- **answer to the "why" and the "who" questions.**
- **explanation to our sense of wonder**
 - * reduction of all of life to something chemical/mechanical
 - * the transcendent value of human life
 - * the loss of gratitude (Who do you thank? Why look up?)

- **moral principle or virtue** (Law without Lawgiver)(virtue w/o ideal)
- **sensibility of human limitation**
"We delude ourselves into believing these finite minds of ours not only can know, but should know everything about everything."
- **the search for Truth** (and the hypocrisy of our search)
 John 18:37,38; Romans 1:18-21,32; John 8:32; 14:6; 17:17
 - truth is absolute/truth is knowable
- **explanation for love** (self-sacrifice/devotion/commitment/compassion)
- **man's desire to worship** something greater than himself.
- **man's fundamental nature**
 - what is inherent (the depravity of man)
 - problem of the will to choose
 - problem of the heart (Matt. 12:34,35; 15:18; Jer. 17:9)
 - problem of comparison/who's standard governs
 - problem of accountability/blame
 - result = alienation/separation
- **question of human worth/dignity/equality/tolerance**
- **explaining unity in diversity**

Paul's Letter:

Dear Will,

I am writing to explain what I have decided to do. If you can understand, then maybe you won't blame me. And then maybe you can help Mom and Dad understand that I don't really blame them either.

Some people will say that I couldn't cope with the pressure of college, that I was flunking out and couldn't handle failure. Some people will say that I couldn't handle it when I lost Karen to another guy. They'll say I couldn't stand on my own feet, that I couldn't deal with rejection. Some people will say that I drank too much. But if that's true, then so do half of the people I know.

*I'll be the first to admit that **I've really screwed up my life**, but that's not the real problem. **The real problem is there's no reason to fix it.** Believe me, I've searched for one, but somehow I have come face-to-face with life and **it is meaningless and empty.** We have all been sold some kind of promise about success and happiness; so we work our tails off so we can live in the right kind of house, in the right kind of neighborhood, drive the right kind of car, take the right kind of vacation, and send our kids to the right kind of school, so they can grow up and do the same thing all over again. But it's all a stupid, empty lie. It's as if our life is a movie; images fade in and out, people come and go; but when the movie is finished, all that's left is an empty screen - a big zero - nothing!*

*We are all just a highly evolved bundle of dust. We're born, we live, and we die. And in between **we do the best we can to fill the emptiness, with people and things (mostly things).** And maybe for a moment we can **avoid the emptiness, fooling ourselves into thinking it isn't there.** But it doesn't work, not in the long run. You can see it in people all around you. They're hollow, just existing. They're marching toward a mirage, but they never get there. They just keep marching. I seem to be repeating myself, and really, I am so disgusted with repetition. It's a waste, and **it all comes down to one question: Is there a reason to choose living (it that's what you want to call it) over dying? Is there a reason to prolong this meaningless existence?***

*Your brother,
 Paul.*