

Study of the Cult of Atheism - 2

Luke 18:8

I. Introduction (Luke 18:8)

- A. We are currently watching the decrease in faith of any kind – world wide
- B. For the moment, people are moving away from believing in ANYTHING traditionally spiritual
- C. But that doesn't mean they are living without beliefs
 - 1. Believe in the fairytale of survival of the fittest, and mutations for life (Evolution)
 - 2. Believe in angels, and astrology like never before
 - 3. Believe in **humanism** – that man will only get better and better with time and politicians
 - 4. Believe more and more in themselves and their sufficiency without the need for answering to any absolute higher power
- D. But as far as worshipping and following a 'god' – well, that I out! At least for a while.
- E. It won't last. Four absolute truths about modern society...
 - 1. God made us to worship Him (Colossians 1:16; Rev 4:11)
 - 2. God made people to NEED Him (Acts 17:24,25; Rom 8:20)
 - 3. People will start turning back to traditional faiths – mainly the catholic faith just before Jesus returns (Rev 17 & 18)
 - 4. But almost no one will believe the Bible in the near future (Luke 18:8)
- F. So we are looking at Atheism – the Belief of Non-Belief
 - 1. Where Atheism came from
 - 2. Why is it so popular
 - 3. What it means
 - 4. What are its dangers
- G. And then next time we will look at how to witness to them and win them to faith in Jesus Christ!

II. Some Definitions

- A. **Theism** – the belief in God. Specifically belief in the existence of a god or gods, specifically of a creator who intervenes in the universe.
- B. **A-theism** – the belief that there is no God
- C. **Agnosticism** – just don't know (Acts 17:23) *and don't really care!*
 - 1. Atheism makes absolute statements against everything spiritual and non physical (John 4:24)
 - 2. Agnosticism means 'not knowing' or 'no knowledge.' They say they have looked at the evidence and have concluded there is no God, but they say they are open to further evidence for God's existence.
 - 3. Times of doubt are expected and normal – that's agnosticism

III. Last Time We Listed Some of What Atheism “Believes” – Modern Atheists, New Atheists – especially, Militant Atheists

- A. Check out the notes from last time online
- B. www.biblebc.com Bible Institute

IV. History of Atheism

- A. Not been around as long as they want everyone to think!
- B. The world has always been religious. It is only recently that atheists started gaining in popularity
- C. Most Atheists attribute their history to the Greek and Roman philosophers Epicurus, Democritus, and Lucretius. These philosophers are considered the first Atheist writers, even though they did not state that gods did not exist, but simply said that gods were not involved in the life of humans.
- D. During the 18th and 19th centuries
 - 1. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes started doubting the literal value of religious books. Specifically the Bible.
 - 2. German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) confidently declared that the concept of God was invented by humans.
 - 3. In the late 19th century, Atheism experienced a rise in popularity because of the spread of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and other scientific advancements that questioned religion.
 - 4. Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) declared that God had finally been killed by humanity and so people no longer needed to believe in God.
 - 5. Popular Writers, like Mary Ann Evans (pen name George Eliot) (1819-1880), joined in saying that the Bible contained too much hostility, and so needed to be rejected.
 - 6. The 19th century brought the rise of the SECULARIST movement, which was against the involvement of the Church in government affairs.
- E. The twentieth century experienced TWO WORLD WARS, and about 100 other major wars that shook the world's concept of right and wrong, and religion and politics, so much so that people left their churches by the millions in frustration
 - 1. The Jews were one of the people groups
 - 2. The German Christians – so easily duped into starting and losing two world wars
- F. At the same time, there was a revival of Biblical Christianity all over the world, in Europe, America, China, and even in the USSR!
- G. Today, atheism is popular, cool. There are even atheistic churches!

V. Modern Atheistic Customs

- A. Atheism celebrates the life stages, like birth, marriage, and death, with ceremonies that are personally significant. Not spiritual, or God honouring at all
- B. Atheist naming ceremonies welcome babies into the world. Family and friends attend the ceremony which usually features chosen mentors or supporting adults who promise to support and protect the child.
- C. People get married through a non-religious wedding, which is very personal and devoid of any supernatural presence and religious rituals.
- D. Atheist funerals are not religious, but personal reflections of the person who has died.
- E. They simply attempt to live and die like the rest of us, but without any thought of God or eternity!
- F. FACT: Most people today are atheistic in their customs, and they don't even realise it. They simply do and believe what atheists believe, but have a smattering of 'god' in the middle of it. Sad. That's why, when you have a wedding, make Jesus the centerpiece! When you have a baby, honour the Lord who GAVE you that child!

VI. NO One is Born an Atheist (Romans 1:21; Eph 4:18)

- A. There are no atheists at birth!
- B. All people worship something or someone

- C. People are born with a **dark** understanding, but not a non-believing individual
- D. As a matter of fact, people worship LOADS of different ‘gods’ (powers, idols) throughout their lifetime
 - 1. Their superhero
 - 2. Santa
 - 3. Some saint
 - 4. Money
 - 5. Science and scientists – no one is going to correct their ‘gods’ of Dawkins, and Carl Sagan, and Bill Nye the Science Guy, and Neil deGrasse Tyson
 - 6. And atheists definitely worship their **belly** (Philp 3:19)
 - 7. So, all you are doing when witnessing to them, is you are dealing with an idolater
- E. Atheism is just another form of **idolatry** (Philp 2:21; 2Tim 3:2)
- F. All Atheists BECAME atheists – were not born that way
- G. Choose to depart from the faith (1Tim 4:1-5)
- H. The question is WHY?

VII. Four Main Reasons Why People Become Atheists

A. Summary –

1. **Atheists have a faulty view of God**
2. **Have experienced failure trying to believe in a god**
3. **Demonic Oppression - Are filled with a spirit of hatred towards God and all things spiritual (2Thes 2:4)**
4. **Have had few or even no good Christian people to test and verify**

B. Faulty View of God

1. They group all gods together and say they **ALL** are false
 - a. Believe all gods are just the same idea with different faces. God is mixed in with: astrology, ESP, ghosts, vampires, levitation, yoga, Zeus, and made to be stupid to believe in.
 - b. Group Islam in with Fundamentalist Christians
 - c. Group Hinduism and Shintoism and Biblical Christianity together
 - d. Refuse to allow that there are many things called gods (1Cor 8:5-7; 2Cor 4:4)
 - 1) The god of this world is Satan himself
 - 2) The false gods of other cultures
 - e. Reject the idea that there could be only one true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as described in the Bible
2. Because ‘God’ does not act and do as THEY think he should, they reject Him
3. They are guilty of the very thing they accuse religions of – making God in their own image
 - a. Believe God should be only be good as far as they think good is – their own personal good – like a Genie who would never allow anything bad to happen
 - b. Believe God would never create a place called hell, and would never send anybody there
 - c. Believe God should serve mankind, and that man should be allowed to live as he or she pleases and still be accepted by Him
 - d. Believe God cannot be absolutely known, so no one can speak for him or her
 - e. Believe God should change with society – evolve

C. Experience Failure Trying to Believe in a god

1. *God didn't work for them*

- a. When they prayed
- b. When they tried to do religious things instead of lustful things, and they failed
- c. When they believed in a charm, or a chant, or a meditation, and nothing happened:
i.e., pray this novena 9 times, and you will receive money in the mail...

2. *The Bible does not make sense to them (1Cor 1:18,23; 2:14)*

- a. Some of it will easily make sense – the Gospel, the people of the Bible (that's why most people LOVE the stories and people of the Bible)
- b. But much will not make sense – the cross, the depths of our sin, the future, the why's
- c. So, when skeptics read the Bible, all they see are roadblocks, confusion, high walls...
- d. And God wrote the Bible that way for a purpose (Acts 26:26-28)
- e. So that proud, religious people would choke on their own pride (Rom 1:22), and simple, dumb, ignorant people, who just simply believe, will be saved!

3. *God let them, or someone they loved, get hurt*

- a. The Job dilemma
 - 1) Loss of his children
 - 2) No apparent reason, purpose
 - 3) Usually causes the strongest to quit on God (Job 2:9)
- b. The Disciple Dilemma
 - 1) Their Messiah was crucified
 - 2) Their 'faith' (what they thought they should be believing) wash dashed (John 20:25)

4. *Their faith didn't change them – still struggled with sinful nature, desires, memories, depression, etc (This is one of the biggest issues with atheists)*

- a. First of all, people expect MORE of faith than they should
 - 1) It is NOT a spell you cast
 - 2) It is not a magical formula you say over and over
- b. Most people come to God in times of need – great need
- c. But they expect of God to take away their problem, their flaw, their failure
- d. And when he doesn't, they get angry and quit on Him
- e. Faith is more than just accepting that something is true
- f. Faith is trusting something enough to act on it – rest on it
- g. Like getting ON an airplane instead of just believing IN airplanes
- h. Faith in God's word will always result in trust in God's word – to the point where you obey it, even when it doesn't make sense

5. *They found that Culture and Experiences are more powerful than their Faith*

- a. Faith is quiet rest
- b. Culture and Experiences SCREAM and PUSH and DRIVE the world
- c. How can faith overcome such "power"?
- d. Only when believed (1John 5:4)

6. Evidence for God is not clear-cut

- a. People want things simple
- b. They want God to prove that He is there
- c. They want God to have a special day where he steps down from heaven and let's everyone examine Him and test Him, and verify that he is the real deal
- d. Kind of funny
- e. All that rejects all the evidences that God has already given us
 - 1) The prophecies of the Bible
 - 2) The miracles of the Bible
 - 3) The very incarnation of GOD in the Flesh
- f. So, even if God came down once again, as a Man, and allowed people to test him, and examine Him, they would kill Him as fast as they could!!!

7. God is basically illogical

- a. That is a REALLY funny thing
- b. For an ANT to look at my life, and say, that "I" am stupid, and that "I" don't know what I am doing...
- c. Well THAT is what it is like for some puny human to look up into the heavens, and see all the creative work of God, and say, God doesn't make sense!
- d. WELL, OF COURSE GOD DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! Stupid! (Rom 11:33; Job 37:23)
- e. If God made sense, it would only prove He was as smart as YOU – which wouldn't be very smart at all!

8. The Bible is too inflexible for them

- a. If it doesn't change like everything else, then it must be wrong
- b. Absolute truths are not allowed to be believed
- c. They HATE rules, and cords, and limits (Psalm 2)
- d. They do not seek to know the Author
 - 1) Don't want to learn HIS ways
 - 2) Only want a god who does things their own way

9. Have seen mainly inconsistency in world religions

- a. Expect to see a whole lot of people worshipping the same god, the same way
- b. But even Jesus did not expect this!
- c. The fact that they are many religions, and many flavours even of Christianity does not mean there is no such thing as a god
- d. It means we ALL are searching to know something and someone greater than ourselves
- e. But the BEST thing is that the very God of the universe has given the world, ONE Book, telling ONE Gospel, about ONE Saviour, who can perfectly fix our ONE problem (sin)

D. Demonic Oppression - Are filled with a spirit of hatred towards God and all things spiritual (2Thes 2:4)

1. Satanic dominion (2Cor 4:3,4) - The god of this world has blinded people
2. Atheists are basically angry against ONE God – the God of the Bible (Psalm 2:1-3)!

- a. They know there is no such thing as Santa but have no interest in stopping him from being believed in
 - b. They don't care about the Tooth Fairy, Santa, the Easter Bunny, Bugs Bunny, Astrology, Tarot Cards
 - c. They HATE the Bible!
3. People LOVE their sin, and are not yet worried about it
- a. No spiritual awareness of their own spiritual condition
 - b. No fear of God
 - c. Don't care about homosexual marriage, about right or wrong – just as long as they are left alone!
4. Atheists are very active and very aggressive in destroying everyone's faith in a god – very evangelistic! Very demonic. Not even JESUS wanted anyone to be killed for their wrong faith!

E. Have had few or even no good Christian testimonies to test and verify (see Acts 26:28)

1. No good examples of Christianity – living by the Bible
 - a. Most Christians are practical atheists
 - b. Most hide their Christianity
 - c. Most people only know of abuses in religions, and in Christianity
 - d. Media give attention mainly to extremists
2. The Modern Church is mainly about entertainment instead of holiness and following Jesus
3. Christians are invisible today – when we are supposed to be the LIGHT set on a hill! You can't find them!
4. Christians are scared, and timid, and worried about their reputation and popularity

VIII. Conclusion**A. NO One is Born an Atheist (Eph 4:18)**

1. All Atheists BECAME atheists – were Not born that way
2. Choose to depart from the faith (1Tim 4:1-5)
3. The question is WHY?

B. Four Main Reasons Why People Become Atheists

1. **Atheists have a faulty view of God**
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C. That LAST point needs to be corrected

1. Your co-workers, your family needs some good examples of Christianity – living by the Bible
2. Let's make sure our churches are NEVER about entertainment instead of holiness and following Jesus
3. Let's be very visible, very vocal today –we are supposed to be the LIGHT set on a hill! People ought to point at you and say, CHRISTIAN!!!

4. Let's forget about reputation and popularity – and worry about souls – especially atheistic souls, who need to be saved and CAN be saved
 - a. Like Lee Strobel – former avowed atheist & Journalist for Chicago Tribune was converted by his own journalistic research intended to test the veracity of scriptural claims concerning Jesus. He is the author of such apologetic books as "The Case for Faith" "The Case for Christ"
 - b. Like Ray Comfort – ex-agnostic
 - c. Like Kirk Cameron – ex-agnostic
 - d. Like Josh McDowell – ex-agnostic who now is the author or co-author of some 115 books. His best-known book is Evidence That Demands a Verdict, which was ranked 13th in Christianity Today's list of most influential evangelical books published after World War II. Other well-known titles are More Than a Carpenter, A Ready Defense, and Right from Wrong.
5. WHO could be saved from the devil's grip – and who could change the world, if only we acted, and became what we profess to believe!