

# DOES GOD EXIST?

*A nonprofit effort  
to convince mankind  
that God is real and  
the Bible is His Word.*

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## LESSONS FROM THE BUTTERFLY

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In the beginning God created  
the heavens and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1

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# LESSONS FROM THE BUTTERFLY



One of the more beautiful things in all of the creation is the butterfly. In recent years commercial tourist areas have found that there is an attraction called a “butterfly house” which is very popular with older tourists. I can remember when my wife Phyllis was near her death that we went into one of those butterfly houses where I got involved in a discussion with one of the curators of the facility and he took me to “the ugly house” where the caterpillars were being fed and starting their cocoons. When I got back I found Phyllis sitting on a large rock literally covered with beautiful butterflies. She smiled at me and said “I have finally found a blessing in being diabetic.” Apparently the insects could detect her higher than normal blood sugar, and when she sat still they were attracted to her. She was covered with beautiful butterflies with all kinds of colors and textures. Those colors are actually not pigments, but a special way in which light can be bent and manipulated to give brilliant colors without chemical pigments. Not only are there physics lessons we can learn from butterflies, but there are some messages about our struggles in life that can be learned from butterflies as well.

## LESSON 1—WE NEED TO PUT THE PAST BEHIND US AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE.

Webster defines a caterpillar as “the worm-like, often hairy larva of the lepidopterous insect.” Caterpillars and cocoons are usually pretty ugly. I mentioned that the curator took me to their “ugly house.” This was a very warm room full of milkweed and other plants that the caterpillars of various butterflies eat.



Each plant was covered with a multitude of caterpillars that were munching on the leaves. Webster’s definition is pretty accurate. The caterpillars came in a variety of colors and patterns, mostly for camouflage purposes, but they were covered with hairs and spikes, and their worm-like bodies were tipped with very

nasty looking heads. I am told that in horror movies, caterpillar enlargements are used because they are more vicious looking than any fictitious animal.

When the caterpillar starts to build its cocoon, it leaves all of its past behind. No longer will it eat plants, which was its main activity as a caterpillar. It will lose its entire body and all of its hairs and legs. The transformation is complete and everything that was a part of its previous existence is left behind.

In the same way, when a person becomes a Christian he has to leave everything that has been a part of his past existence behind. Paul said in Philippians 3:12–14 (NIV 1984), “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. . . . I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me . . . .” In 1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV) Paul talks about his past saying, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.” Many of us, including your writer, have a past that they are ashamed of. All of us have a past, and our mistakes in the past can paralyze us if we will let them.

Like the caterpillar we have to leave all of that behind. The beauty of baptism is that it allows us to bury the past. Romans 6:3–11 beautifully portrays becoming a Christian through baptism as an act of dying to sin—the same kind of metamorphosis that the caterpillar goes through. You can destroy yourself and everyone you love by continuing to allow the past to torment you. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) it is stated beautifully, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!” No one

looking at a beautiful butterfly would imagine that it was once an ugly caterpillar. By leaving the past behind and starting new, we can have just as radical a transformation.

**LESSON 2—WE HAVE TO USE WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN US.** Suppose that for some reason a caterpillar decides it does not want to be a butterfly so it starts digging its way out of the cocoon. What would be the result? Have you ever tried to cut open a cocoon? Let me tell you what happens if you do that. You get a mess. You will not see anything you recognize. The caterpillar has dissolved and the makings of a butterfly are not recognizable. You have a gooey mess that is completely dysfunctional.

In the same way, each of us has a purpose for which God created us. Ephesians 4:7 tells us that Christ “apportioned” grace to each of us. First Corinthians 12:4–7 (NIV 1984) points out that “there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” Verse 11 tells us that all of these abilities are the work of God. God takes us where we are and with whatever tools we have in us and uses them in wonderful and incredible ways. Trying to be something you are not and failing to use your talents is a mistake.



**LESSON 3—DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TRUST GOD.** The caterpillar has a rough life. It gets eaten by birds; it is incredibly slow so any journey to another food source is an ordeal; it is constantly bombarded by chemicals both from the plants it is eating and by external sources. In spite of all that, if it survives it will become whatever God intended it to be. Romans 8:28 (NIV 1984) tells us, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” That does not mean that God causes the problems, or that the problems will not be severe. It just says that if we will not cave in to the problems, God will make good things come from our bad experiences.

I can personally testify as to how this happens. In May 2008 my wife of 49 years died. It was a terrible experience, but I have seen God bring incredible blessings and even joy into my life since my wife's death. I trusted God would do this because he says he will, but it has happened in ways that I did not dream were possible. In 1962 our first baby was born with cerebral palsy, blindness, muscular dystrophy, schizophrenia, and mental retardation. The pain and the frustration with that combination of afflictions have been huge, but I know that whatever good there is in my character today has come at least in part from that experience. First Corinthians 10:13 tells us that there are common experiences that we will have in life which will tempt us, but goes on to make the promise that God will always be there and that he will also provide a way out of the temptation we face.

Our analogy with the caterpillar fails in this lesson because caterpillars are not created in the image of God and since they are not sentient beings they cannot choose to trust or distrust God. In a sense, all living things trust God because their instincts are programmed to an end that has been incredibly successful in the history of this planet. In our case, we are not instinctively driven and can choose not to trust God but to try to do things our way. Many people told us to dispose of our son Tim as an



unfit burden that would destroy our lives. There is no question that his problems changed our lives, but that change has enriched us and provided us with a way to grow in our love and trust of God. Trust God to work things out for you. Whatever the problem is, he will find answers for you. It is not always easy, but it always turns out to be good as Romans 8:28 says.

There is no way to get to be a butterfly other than the one that involves being a caterpillar and building a cocoon. There is no other way to live eternally than to become a Christian and to live as God has called us to live. Ultimately the butterfly is free of the things that afflicted it as a caterpillar. It can now fly and move freely at great speeds. The butterfly is a thing of beauty, and a wonder to behold. In the same way becoming a Christian can be done only by God's method, and ultimately the same freedom and beauty will be ours.

—John N. Clayton

# “PRICKLY”

BY CHRISTINE (TINA) BERGLUND



Dad’s favorite flower, he said, was the common thistle. We never knew if this was true, or if he just wanted to solidify his reputation for being a prickly type of character.

“I eat kids like you for breakfast!” he would growl occasionally. Of course we knew that this man who worked two jobs and grew a small farm-sized vegetable garden to feed his eight kids was demonstrating great love most of the time, despite the gruff exterior.

Over the years I, too, have grown to love thistles. Not only do they attract fritillary butterflies for their nectar and goldfinches for their seeds, they are downright pretty. I have not yet bought the extra thick, long gloves necessary to gather a bouquet of them. Seriously, I really have wanted to do that!

How serious am I about being around prickly people? Not so much as I am about the spiny flowers. Nobody wants to be hurt. It is hard to love people who will not love you back.

People who rub you the wrong way are always going to be part of your life. Yes, and there will always be a few really painful thistle types, too.



My challenge is to see the beauty in the thorny people in my life. It is said that the pessimist complains about roses having thorns, while the optimist rejoices that thorn bushes bear roses. It is the same principle as the glass being half empty or half full, depending on your perspective.

While we are on the subject of perspective, I wonder; how prickly do I seem to others? Do my words sting? Does my attitude and demeanor cause people to recoil in fear of being stabbed? Maybe they



cannot see my soft purple center because of the sharp barbs that characterize my nature.

Some of our prickliness, however, is a matter of perspective from a worldly standpoint.

“For there has already been enough time spent in doing what the pagans choose to do: carrying on in unrestrained behavior, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and lawless idolatry.

So they are surprised that you don’t plunge with them into the same flood of wild living—and they slander you. They will give an account to the One who stands ready to judge the living and the dead” (1 Peter 4:3–5, Holman Christian Standard Bible).

We may seem prickly to people who do not understand the reason we live the way we do. But it is our responsibility to try not to jab folks on purpose!

When they get close, they will be pricked, as the consciences of the audience at Pentecost were in Acts 2. That is not a bad thing, and I do not apologize for it. We all need to be an influence for good, however uncomfortable it may be for our neighbors and coworkers.

Paul warns us that if we are criticized it should be for being good, not for being like the world.

“But even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear or be disturbed, but honor the Messiah as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. However, do this with gentleness and respect, keeping your conscience clear, so that when you are accused, those who denounce your Christian life will be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil” (1 Peter 3:15–17, HCSB).

Prickly, but beautiful.



# IT'S NOT SCIENCE VERSUS FAITH... IT'S NATURALISTS VERSUS THEISTS

by Jeremy Jinkerson

Editor's Note: Each year \$1000 scholarships are given to young people who write and submit an essay on the theme "Science and Faith Are Friends, Not Enemies." These are memorial scholarships in memory of Connie Parsons (John Clayton's aunt), Phyllis Clayton, and Edith Lawson (Phyllis' mother). The following essay is by our 2012 winner, Jeremy Jinkerson of Memphis, Tennessee.



## THE (SO-CALLED) HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

Since before I first began reading *Does God Exist?* in 2001, John Clayton has used the tag-line "It's scientists vs. preachers, not science vs. the Bible." In many ways, he is right. The science versus faith dialogue typically starts with the assumption that science has upheld common-ancestry evolution over creation in explaining the history of the universe. "Faith" is offered as a non-fact-based belief system that involves accepting the presumably-false account that God created the universe. "Science," on the other hand, is put forth as a system of facts that has proven neo-Darwinian evolution. It is often culturally accepted not only that science and faith are incompatible, but that in the search for truth, science has defeated faith. Fortunately, this statement is only a presumption, and it is one that we can understand.

The viewpoint that science and faith are enemies is generally endorsed by scholars as propaganda developed in the nineteenth century (Berger, 1999). It was first articulated in John William Draper's *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science* (1874/2012). Draper was a chemist who favored applying physical science to history, and as he interacted with Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, Draper came to believe that religion (which was to him strictly Roman Catholicism) was incompatible with science. His book is riddled with outright falsehoods, and it is generally understood as an exam-

ple of prejudice against religion (D’Souza, 2007). Andrew Dickson White made the conflict viewpoint commonplace in his *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896/2011). Although both of these documents have been identified as misleading and baseless, their effect has been tremendous. They are sources which can quickly be cited to support an atheist viewpoint with hope that the reader will not evaluate the historicity of the cited text. Given that such citations are generally made by atheists to other atheists, there is little reason to check sources. In reality, clashes between science and religion have been minimal and notably overblown; even the Galileo trial is typically embellished. The fact is that science actually developed out of faith and a desire to understand God’s natural world more completely (D’Souza, 2007).

### **THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**

The careful reader may notice that I am not using science to refute the position that science and faith are enemies. That is because it is not a scientific proposition. It is a philosophical position—one borne of man’s thought. But philosophy and science are sometimes mistaken for each other. For instance, Richard Dawkins (2006) opened his best-seller *The God Delusion* with the statement that philosophy no longer produces knowledge, and that all future truth will come from science. In doing so, Dawkins fails to realize that he is making a self-refuting statement—because that statement is a philosophy about how he views science. Science itself does not make statements of philosophical import such as “There is a God” or “There is no God.” Rather, science is concerned with better explaining the natural world through the accumulation and organization of facts. Specifically, as a means of increasing knowledge, science is considered to be empiricism plus logic. That means that science takes observable facts from the natural world, and then thinks about how they fit together. Science, by its nature, is precluded from making metaphysical statements. It has no comment on issues like the existence of God. As Mr. Clayton notes, science is not the enemy, but it is sometimes mishandled by scientists—or as you will see, a particular kind of scientific philosopher.

### **PREACHERS AND SCIENTISTS**

As to the debate between scientists and preachers, first let me note the problem with preachers being antagonists. Historically, when preachers have attempted to enter into the debate between so-called scientists and Christian apologists, they have fared poorly. This is because they are attempting to enter into an academic world in which they are untrained, and they often make the mistake of using the Bible as an authoritative source in an arena where it is not considered absolute. Even worse, preachers sometimes use scientific specula-

tion or conjecture to support conclusions that they have presumed prior to entering the discussion. I must confess that I was guilty of the same misguidance when I applied for this scholarship some years ago (Jinkerson, 2005).

But let us not make the presumption that preachers are the only ones who have



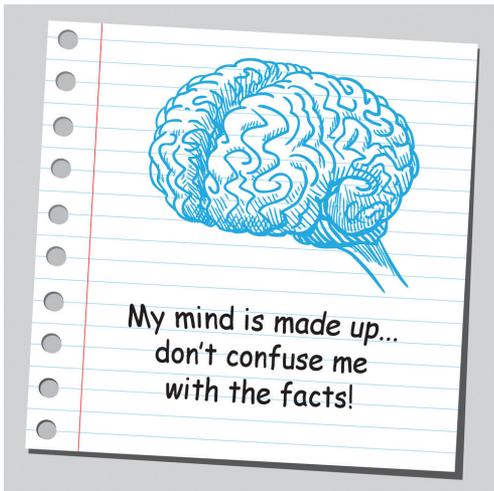
preconceived notions. When it is “scientists” attacking faith, they are often not behaving as true scientists. Scientists, at least theoretically, follow the scientific method. This means that they form research questions, develop hypotheses, objectively test the hypotheses, and then form new research questions and hypotheses accordingly. Put another way, scientists adjust their belief systems based on what they find to be true. In our current dialogue between “scientists” and preachers, we instead find ill-trained philosophers masquerading as “scientists.” As I earlier noted, the historical battle between science and faith is fictional, but it is fiction that has been well-accepted.

### **THE SCIENCE OF BELIEF**

To understand why such falsehood is accepted on so grand a scale, it is necessary to offer some consideration to the science of belief. The psychology of belief is a field unto itself, and I will not attempt to do it justice here. Instead, I would like to make some general statements that will help frame our understanding about the belief of science being in conflict with faith. Despite what many scientists would have you think, or perhaps even what you find most palatable, our most fundamental beliefs do not come from logic, empiricism, or authority. Rather, our most simple beliefs are formed prior to engaging in science or speaking with our parents. Such premises are called “properly basic beliefs” (Plantinga, 1985). These beliefs would include items like “I am a self,” “There is an external world,” and “Other people have minds.” For many of us, belief in God is a properly basic belief. Developmental research has shown us that we often engage in specific experiences to have our own beliefs reinforced (Pomerantz & Thompson, 2008). That is, our beliefs are fundamental and shaped by our earliest experiences; they are also difficult to change. In one such supportive study, Westen (2007) found that people are willing to persist in their pre-conceived beliefs about their political candidates being good men, even when such men are empirically shown to be liars and buffoons. The phenomenon can even be studied neurologically. When one encounters a strong belief that is in opposition to his

own previously held belief, one experiences fear/panic, which can be tracked in the amygdala of the brain. As the fear is logically combated, it is resolved with activity in the left frontal lobe (but not the portion involved in reason). What is incredible about this process is that there is an “inoculation” effect in which people are less threatened by contradictory information the more often they have made up their minds with regard to a certain idea. They form psychological defenses against new beliefs. In practice, this means that it is incredibly difficult to convince an atheist that God exists because the atheist has rejected statements about God so many times. Paul describes such a process in Romans 1:28 (NIV), stating, “God gave them over to a depraved mind.”

Some scientists have gravitated towards atheism, and it has not helped the theists’ case that many preachers make statements that



are patently untrue. So these scientists believe that common ancestry evolution explains all of natural history, and with equal import, they believe the common axiom that intelligent people believe in neo-Darwinian evolution. When preachers make statements about the origins of the universe that are not in keeping with modern scientific fact (i.e., age of the earth), this further reinforces the scientist’s idea that people of faith are

ignorant. So these scientists are trained to believe that common ancestry evolution has incredible explanatory scope, and that people of faith are ignorant. The very viewpoint then compounds upon itself, as atheists tell each other that religious people are ignorant. Such is reminiscent of what Paul’s description of people who “gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear” (2 Timothy 4:3, NIV).

## NATURALISM

Underlying the belief that religious people are ignorant is a belief much more insidious: the presumption of naturalism. Naturalism is the philosophy that nothing can exist or be understood besides the natural world. Most of the atheistic scientists are naturalists at heart. Let us consider the difference. A scientist gathers facts and attempts to understand the natural world. He or she follows information to its

logical conclusions. A naturalist who is employed as a scientist will do much of the same thing—except he or she will never lend any credence to a supernatural hypothesis. This is because the existence of a supernatural world has been ruled out prior to engagement in science. This is the root reason that many scientists refuse to have discourse with Christian evidence and argument. They may claim that they have followed evidence to atheism, but in many instances, these naturalists became atheists through personal history, like exposure to false religion or family deaths. Typically, the most fundamental viewpoint that they bring to the scientific situation is not one of objectivity but of philosophical bias.

This is the reason that they will not rationally react with the very compelling arguments for God's existence which are backed by empirical evidence. When naturalism is presumed before the fact, the naturalist is forced to accept another doctrine besides God to explain the history of the world. Historically, this belief has been that the universe is eternal (Sagan, 1985). However, after information has increased about the origin of the universe and its apparent fine-tuning, naturalists have been forced to give up this point and have instead grasped at speculative hypotheses.

Let us give consideration to what these so-called “theoretical” scientific models really are. Although Webster provides a disturbingly limited and inaccurate definition of “faith,” Paul provides the following one: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1, NIV). Under this definition, naturalism can be seen as a sort of faith, in that it is a belief pattern that is “hoped” to be true and cannot be seen. Naturalism is not something that can be empirically verified. In fact, it is a totally unfalsifiable proposition, but it is still endorsed by many people. In this light, naturalism can be understood as a faith. So it is not science versus faith, but faith versus faith. (Although I grant that naturalism is not based on evidence whereas Christian faith is, I find it helpful to frame the conflict as “faith vs. faith” to bring out fundamental assumptions and thereby level the playing field.)

Many hold that the existence of God cannot be proven absolutely, but I have just noted that naturalism itself is beyond proof. How then, can one approach belief? In some scientific fields, it is often assumed that nothing can be proven definitively. Instead, when enough scientific and logical/theoretical fact mounts, one begins to believe a truth. So I pose the following question: How much data and understanding is necessary to reject atheism and believe in God?

## **ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD**

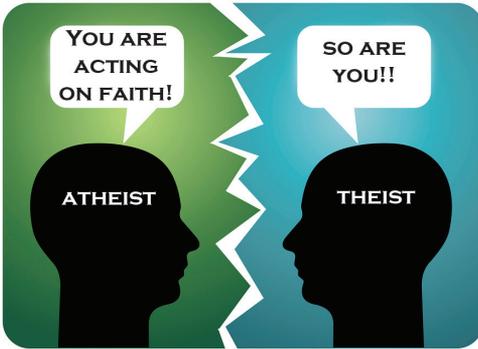
As I have noted earlier, the existence of God is less a scientific question and more a philosophical one. As such, the arguments for

God's existence have changed little during the last two centuries. However, their articulation has improved, and empirical evidence to back the arguments has increased. For the remainder of this article, I will review two of the major arguments for God's existence as well as consider them in terms of scientific fact.

In rational history, God was considered to be the causal agent explaining the origin of the universe. However, as atheistic naturalism began to develop, the origin of the universe became distinctly problematic. The cosmological argument that most people will be familiar with is the Leibnizian cosmological argument, which holds that it is remarkable that something exists rather than nothing at all. The argument poses that the existence of a universe which has no inherent need to exist is itself evidence of a Creator existing outside the scope of the universe. Although this is a reasonable and convincing argument, naturalists were able to argue against it by claiming that the universe itself is eternal (Sagan, 1985). Although the reader will note my citation as being relatively recent, this "steady state" universe model suffered serious damage when the classic big bang model was introduced. Evidence has steadily mounted that the universe began at a proximal, singular point. As was cited in this very journal, universal background microwave radiation and red-blue starlight shift are stark indicators that the universe is expanding (Lowery, 2012). Given that time itself can be measured according to these phenomena, observers are able to track the chronological history of the universe. That is, the expanding universe itself attests to the universe's origin.

William Lane Craig (1994) has argued the same thing we learned in junior high, that nothing comes into being without a cause. This would also likely be a properly basic belief for many of us. He then contends that the universe came into being, which is consistently supported by extant and developing science. The conclusion is that the universe had a cause. The first premise, that nothing comes into being without a cause, is consistently accepted in all situations by all peoples except when it is with consideration to the origin of the universe. The presumption that the universe is baseless appears to be a deliberate attempt to avoid supernatural implications. Since it is difficult to debate the first premise, naturalists have instead decided to attack the second: that the universe came into being. Hartle and Hawking (1983) attempt to avoid the origin of the universe by claiming that a historical sequence of universes has been bending in space/time, and that at the origin of our universe, we fail to see the previous universe that bent into it. They accomplish this feat with imaginary numbers; however, when imaginary numbers are removed, the origin-point of the universe returns (Craig, 1994). It is almost impossible at this point to deny that the universe came into being.

There is a notion among naturalists that common ancestry evolution completely explains the *history* of the universe, but it can do nothing to explain the *origin* of the universe. Furthermore, it cannot explain why the universe should continue to exist after the big bang. For a life-sustaining universe to exist post-singularity, an incredible number of variables have to be almost perfectly aligned. One of these is the velocity of the universe. If a universe expands too slowly, it will contract upon itself, whereas if it expands too quickly, it will hurtle out indefinitely, and planets will never form. The ratio of protons to electrons, the gravity constant, the universe's expansion rate, and the energy in empty space must all be within very distinct ranges for the universe to allow solid matter to exist. These arguments are similar to the ones that have historically been associated with intelligent design. The difference is that arguments for intelligent design (like the distance of the Earth from the Sun, the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere, and the amount of water covering the Earth) are convincing but are distinctly applicable only to our solar system. The arguments of the apparent "fine-tuning" of the universe apply to the entire physical universe.



What tends to be so crippling about the fine-tuning argument is the odds that are stated along with it. For instance, the chance that a ratio of protons to electrons that would allow for physical matter is 1 in  $10^{37}$  (Craig, 1994; Deem, 2011). To put that in perspective, it is equivalent to throwing a dart into space at random, having it travel 100,000 light years, and then scoring a bulls-eye on a small target. It is also equivalent to turning the Milky Way galaxy into dimes and then grabbing the one correct dime at random. And that is the smallest number related to fine-tuning. The odds that the correct amount of empty space energy could have been produced by chance are 1 in  $10^{120}$  (Deem, 2011). It is beyond staggering; it can barely even be conceived. What is most likely then—that the universe sprang into existence and continued to exist, or that there was a cause and the universe was fine-tuned? The possibility that the universe was created by God is dramatically more reasonable and has greater explanatory scope. The only logical reason to fail to believe that there was a Creator and Guide of the universe is the presupposition that there cannot be any supernatural explanations for natural phenomena. This is intellectual bias, and it is the stuff that naturalism is made of. In addition to clinging to an unwillingness to consider

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alternative hypotheses, you see the attempts that naturalists make to fit the universe into their understanding: using imaginary math, imagining multiple universes, and giving evolution more explanatory scope than it merits. These are the tricks of desperate people—fools who have declared that there is no God.

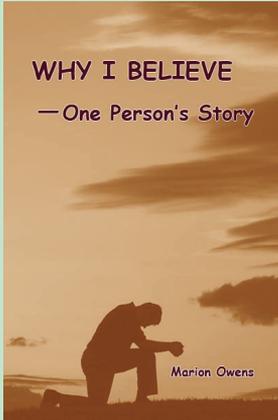
We could go on from here. I could tell you of the moral argument, a favorite of many Christians because it is so difficult to refute. I could speak of the facts surrounding the resurrection of Jesus, and show you how atheists have attempted to avoid these facts as well. But I suspect by this point, you realize the same thing that I do. I am sure there are few career atheists (those who make a good living maligning faith in God) who wish to consider the evidence logically. Where these evidences and arguments are beneficial in assisting the truth-seeking person, many people seek not truth. Instead, please consider what I have offered you here: information that will help you refute the idea that smart people do not believe in God and that science and faith are antagonists. This is information that you can use with your friends, family, and colleagues. Show them that these so-called “scientists” simply engage in another sort of faith—one that is on much more shaky ground as the evidence mounts.

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# DOES GOD EXIST?

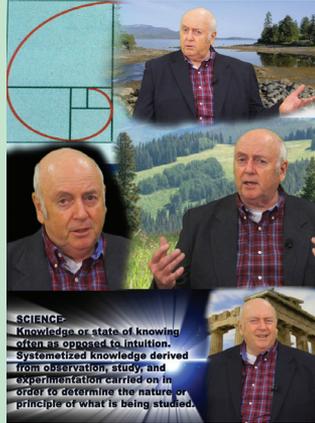
## New Resources



**Why I Believe**  
Book by  
Marion Owens



Marion Owens met a Sunday school teacher and was shocked to learn that the man was an atheist! That encounter caused Owens to examine the basis for his own faith in God. This booklet deals with the answers Owens found.



**Does God Exist?**  
New video series  
with John Clayton



John N. Clayton has an updated new series of 32 video programs exploring the topic of "Does God Exist?" These videos are available on DVD from the sources below. You can also watch them online at [DoesGodExist.TV](http://DoesGodExist.TV).

**Available online from [PVPowerStore.com](http://PVPowerStore.com)  
or from  
Does God Exist?  
PO Box 2704  
South Bend, IN 46680-2704**

# GREAT SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's Note: There are many writers who claimed that good scientists and intelligent, well-educated people do not believe in God. This simply is not true. Tihomir Dimitrov (<http://nobelists.net>) has been researching the statements of the greatest scientists of all time, and we are reproducing some of their statements in this column.

RENE DESCARTES

1596-1650

Founder of Analytical Geometry  
and Modern Philosophy



“I have always been of the opinion that the two questions respecting God and the Soul were the chief of those that ought to be determined by help of Philosophy rather than of Theology; for although to us, the faithful, it be sufficient to hold as matters of faith, that the human soul does not perish with the body, and that God exists, it yet assuredly seems impossible ever to persuade infidels of the reality of any religion, or almost even any moral virtue, unless, first of all, those two things be proved to them by natural reason. And

since in this life there are frequently greater rewards held out to vice than to virtue, few would prefer the right to the useful, if they were restrained neither by the fear of God nor the expectation of another life.”

“And thus I very clearly see that the certitude and truth of all science depends on the knowledge alone of the true God, insomuch that, before I knew him, I could have no perfect knowledge of any other thing. And now that I know him, I possess the means of acquiring perfect knowledge respecting innumerable matters, as well relative to God himself and other intellectual objects as to corporeal nature.”

# Cynthia's Corner

## FROM ONE PARENT TO ANOTHER



Sometimes religious people talk too much, meaning they talk about what they believe more than they show us what they believe by how they live. We have all heard the saying “I’d rather see a sermon than hear one.” Certainly there is a place for both, and I am not minimizing the necessity and importance and joy of telling others about God’s love and mercy. However, unless one is living the way God tells us to live in his Word, our words are shallow and our example dishonors and discredits God (Romans 2:21–23). Not only that, but our bad example can do much damage to the faith, or budding faith, of others. This is especially true within families, with the people who know us the best.

Most Christian parents want their children to grow up to love God and follow him. What do they do to accomplish this? Hopefully they take their children to church services with them regularly; but, if that is all they do, many children stop going when they leave home. Why does this happen? In many cases it is because what they hear at church about God, Jesus, and the Bible is not being put into practice at home. Home is where they need to “see the sermon.”



There are numerous lists of sinful behaviors versus godly behaviors in the New Testament. Galatians 5:19–23 is just one. What are children seeing and hearing at home? Is there yelling, arguing, bad language, anger, conflict, discord; or, maybe, more subtle sins such as selfishness, selfish ambition, greed, materialism, jealousy, envy,

gossip, ill will, and unforgiveness? Or, are they seeing parents who practice kindness, gentleness, patience, self control, generosity, forgiveness, and infuse the home with joy, love, and peace? Our actions and words reflect what is in our hearts. If we truly love God, we will show it in our actions, words, attitudes, and the choices we make.

John talks about scientific evidence for the existence of God, but he and I agree that the best evidence children see for the validity of Christianity is the power and love of God revealed in the lives of consistent, dedicated parents.

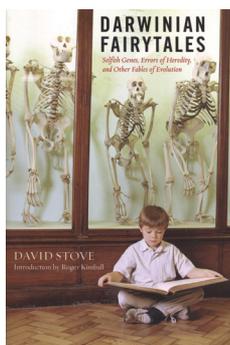
—Cynthia Clayton



The books that are reviewed in the Book Review section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

### **Darwinian Fairytales**

by David Stove, Encounter Books, © 1995,  
345 pages, \$18.95 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1-59403-200-4



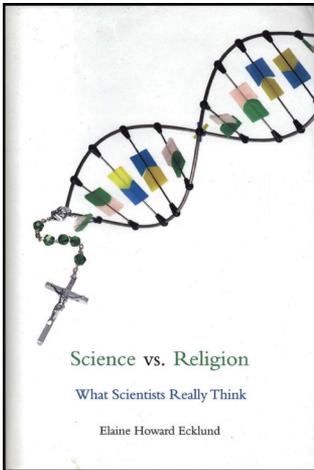
In the debate between creationists and evolutionists, there has been very little credible material produced by someone who does not have an ax to grind. Creationists try to discredit Darwinian evolution for religious reasons. Secular writers view themselves as defenders of Darwin with very little attempt to deal with the subject factually or logically. Many atheists believe if they can propose any model that might eliminate God that model must be right. This book shows the fallacy of that kind of thinking.

The late David Stove taught philosophy at the University of New South Wales and the University of Sidney and was considered an expert on the work of David Hume. He was not a creationist or even a Christian and says that he is of “no religion.” Stove writes, “this is an anti-Darwinism book” and that his object is “to show that Darwinism is not true” and especially is not true of humans. Roger Kimball in his introduction says that Stove “shows that, when it comes to the species *H. sapiens*, Darwinism ‘is a mere festering of errors.’”

The book is actually a collection of essays that are handled like chapters. The material is not so much about specific scientific issues as about the illogical and philosophically unsound conclusions that have been drawn. Stove uses massive quotes from Darwin, Malthus, Dawkins, E. O. Wilson, and a variety of other experts in genetics and evolution. Those readers who have wanted to find a book that deals specifically with the religious nature of evolution will find this book very worthwhile. It is a great book to give a college student struggling with evolutionary issues, but for the average lay reader it will be a hard read because of the complexity of the discussion.

## Science vs. Religion: What Scientists Really Think

by Elaine Howard Ecklund, Oxford University Press, ©2010,  
228 pages, \$27.95 (hard cover), ISBN 978-0-19-539298-2



One of the difficulties faced by ministries like **Does God Exist?** is the lack of research into what scientists really believe about God and religion. Vocal atheists like Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris tend to lead the public to believe that all scientists who are really good scientists are atheists, and some fundamentalists tend to condemn all of science as atheistic in tone. For over five years we have had a column in this periodical in which we quote Nobel Prize winning scientists who express strong faith statements in opposition to these stereotypes.

Elaine Howard Ecklund is a member of the sociology faculty at Rice University, and this book is a survey of 1,700 scientists and interviews with 275 of them. The first 155 pages of the book discuss what Ecklund feels the data shows and the remainder of the book contains the data, notes, a bibliography, and an index. The book explores the personal faith of scientists and what is happening in secular educational institutions in the area of faith and religion.

I suspect that no one will be happy with this book. Atheists will not like it because it shows that nearly 50% of elite scientists are religious and a very small minority are hostile to religion. Christian leaders will not like it because the definition of “religion” is so broad that almost any belief system is considered on par with belief in Jesus Christ. The book does point out the role of unfortunate denominational traditions in creating unnecessary opposition from the scientific community; but no attempt is made by the author to filter out the extremists on both sides. The last two chapters of the book deal with how dialogue might be established, and what Ecklund calls “myths believed” by both sides. The failure to include the role of apologists and the impact some modern apologists are having is unfortunate, but there is much to learn from this book.

This is a book for college professors and students, people in the church who are employed in scientific areas, and ministers working with well educated people in technology-related fields. It is not positive nor is it negative in its conclusions. While it is well written it is not particularly useful in apologetics or in helping young people deal with faith issues on a personal level.

# DANDY DESIGNS

## POSEIDON'S APOTHECARY



One of the positive suggestions of the “Intelligent Design” movement has been the idea that if God designed the world for human habitation, he would have built into it a large number of devices to assist humans living on the planet. There is no place where it is more obvious

that this has been done than in the medical applications of things found in the sea. The sea provides an almost unlimited supply of cures for the things that ail us.

The Bahama sponge makes discodermolide, an affective immunosuppressive agent that prevents tissue rejection after organ transplants. The moss animal contains Bryostatin B, a cancer fighting compound. The sea squirt produces Didemnin B that arrests cancers including leukemia, melanoma, and a variety of other cancers in the ovary, breast, and kidney. The dogfish shark produces squalamine which is a potent antibiotic. The gray encrusting sponge produces manoalide which stops the inflammation and pain of everything from bee stings to arthritis. Red algae produces carrageenans used to treat peptic ulcers. The horseshoe crab has blue blood which is used to detect a variety of bacterial conditions.

Not only do we have chemicals that are found in sea creatures, but in some cases animals are designed to fight certain conditions common to animals and humans. The sea squirt has been found to have a way to avoid kidney stones. Sea squirts get crystals of calcium oxalate in their kidneys and they have bacteria in their renal sack that metabolizes the crystal concretions so that they stay in solution. This bacteria is 20 times more powerful at inhibiting kidney stone formation than what is found in humans and may ultimately solve this painful human condition.

You can assume that somehow there is an evolutionary connection that allows such uses to come about, even though the link between a sea squirt and a human seems to be rather distant. Perhaps you can assume that there is an Intelligence that designed the entire system to allow us to manage the earth to provide for mankind's needs. We would suggest the latter. Source: *Popular Science*, May 1995, page 62.

# THE GIANT ANTEATER



One of the lessons that mankind has had a hard time comprehending is that in nature there has to be a balance between plant-eating animals and the rest of the ecosystem. In our area of southern Michigan we are seeing this played out as our deer

population is out of control because of the lack of predators. The result is that the deer are wiping out their food supply and that means that not only are they invading our yards and gardens, but they are not healthy animals.

There is probably no area more important to mankind than the balance of insects and the rest of the environment. Insects are important to the survival of life systems on the earth. They pollinate, get rid of waste, process earth materials, prune plants and produce materials useful to man. Too many insects however, would wipe out life on planet earth. The phylum Arthropoda is numerically the biggest phylum on the earth as it is, and animals like the giant anteater are vital for the ecosystem to stay in balance.

The giant anteater is found in South and Central America. It has a body about the size of a German shepherd, a brain the size of a pea, a body temperature of less than 90 degrees, and a curved tubular snout with a tiny puckered mouth and no teeth. Its tongue is two feet long and it can thrust it into an ant nest at 160 times per minute sucking out thousands of ants in the process — usually about 30,000 ants at one sitting. It has massive salivary glands that produce a glue-like saliva which neutralizes the sting of fire ants and prepares the stomach to digest the ants.

Providing a balance in nature is always of utmost importance, and sometimes we find an animal that is so ideally designed to control one population that it cannot survive anywhere except where that population is dominant. The giant anteater is a classic example of this, with no capacity to eat anything but insects and no equipment to adapt to other environments. Designs such as this show the intelligence and purpose that God has in all he creates. Source: *National Wildlife*, June/July 2003, page 34.

# News and Notes

**ORIGIN OF LIFE STUDIES.** Two scientists have proposed that the whole approach of science to the question of how life came into existence is misguided. Dr. Paul Davies and Dr. Sara Walker have released a study titled “The Algorithmic Origins of Life” (available in the December 12, 2012 issue of the Royal Society Journal Interface.) The authors argue that working on the chemical basis of life’s origins gets bogged down in the early chemical stages. They suggest “the transition from non-life to life is unique and definable ... by its distinctive and active use of information.” Using a computer analogy they suggest life will not form without a program and data, suggesting that the distinction between non-life and life is “the way that living organisms manage the information flowing through the system.” For many years we have suggested that the complexity of DNA shows an intelligence programmed the system to achieve the ultimate result of life itself. The more science studies the way living things function, the more the incredible design that allows life to exist becomes obvious. For more on this subject go to <http://www.scientificcomputing.com/news-DA-The-Algorithmic-Origins-of-Life-121412.aspx>.



**A COMMENT ON THE NEWTOWN MASSACRE.** One of the things that always happens when something tragic takes place, is that everybody wants to weigh in and give an explanation for why it happened and who should be blamed. The tragic murder of innocent children cannot be brushed aside, but the ultimate cause is Satan, and the tools he uses are far more complex than one simple explanation can give. Christian author and commentator William J. Murray blames the church saying that the failure of ministers to preach the reality of hell is the cause. Many are blaming shooter Adam Lanza’s mother and the divorce that separated him from his father and brother. The NRA blames the lack of guns in the hands of people who run the schools. Some want to blame the NRA and guns as a whole. Lanza’s preoccupation and saturation with violent video games and violent movies needs to be explored, and might be a warning to parents. Everyone recognizes there is a real problem

with mental illness and our failure to meet the needs of people like Adam Lanza. Many of us know someone who is mentally unstable and who might be capable of performing an act as horrible as this one, but how can we see that they get help before this happens? When the time came for the ringing of bells to remember the children and their teachers, the question of how many bells to ring came up—26 for the victims or 28 for the victims and their killer and his mother. Dr. Greg Sterling, who is dean of the Yale Divinity School and who has been a mentor and advisor to this author for many years, came up with a meaningful suggestion. He rang the bell 26 times for the victims, said a prayer with the people in Newtown and then rang the bell two more times and prayed for the Lanzas. Christians need to work together at all levels of need in our culture, no matter how horrific Satan's attacks on us might be.

**ARSENIC-BASED LIFE DEBUNKED.** Two years ago it was claimed that scientists had found a bacterium that could live on arsenic in place of phosphorus. It has now been shown that the bacterium can tolerate more arsenic than other forms of life, but cannot live on it. Those who have maintained that life can exist on other chemical systems will have to back up on their claims. Apparently life needs phosphorous as well as carbon and oxygen to exist. Source: *Science News*, December 29, 2012, page 31.

**COMET COMING.** At the end of this year we may all be marveling at a comet that could be as luminous as the moon and one of the brightest ever seen. Comet Ison which is now between Jupiter and Saturn should be visible in December 2013. You can be sure there will be those tying this comet to the end of the world or to alien visits like Marshall Applewhite who convinced followers to commit suicide in late March 1997. But this is a normal part of our solar system and not something to fear or tie to extraterrestrials. It will be a beautiful reminder of the complexity and nature of space and the creation around us.

**STEM CELLS NOT AN ISSUE.** The medical uses of stem cells to treat disease has moved forward by leaps and bounds in the past five years. Because the embryonic stem cells are harvested from human embryos which were destroyed in the process, there have been ethical concerns about stem cells and their use. In 2006 Dr. Shinya Yamanaka received a Nobel Prize in medicine for discovering a way to generate stem cells from skin cells, but the method was slow and not very efficient. Researchers at Stanford University and the University of Auckland, New Zealand, have now found a way to produce stem cells efficiently and in large numbers without the use

of human embryos. Ethical issues always have other options than simply plowing ahead without regard for what is moral and right. We need Christian young people training to do this work and do it in a way that does not violate the value and sanctity of human life. Source: *Popular Science*, January 2013, page 35.

**MAYAN APOCALYPSE AND POLITICS.** It is pretty obvious that the world did not end on December 21, 2012. What escaped the media was that scientists working at a Maya site called La Corona knew what the calendar prediction was all about. An inscription was written in 696 by a ruler, known as Jaguar Paw, of a nearby Maya city. In a battle in 695 Jaguar Paw left inscriptions linking himself to a distant date when the calendar cycle would end—December 21, 2012. This was a political move to prove that the ruler would be in control for a very long time and had no connection to the end of time at all. Source: *Science News*, December 29, 2012, page 32.

**10,000 MICROBE SPECIES ON YOUR BODY.** The government's Human Microbiome Project announced on June 13, 2012, that they have identified more than 10,000 different species of microbes on the human body. This is a \$173 million project believed to be a stepping stone to understanding what happens when we get sick. What it shows us is that your skin, your intestines and all other parts of your body teem with organisms that have to be dealt with or used in some positive way. The complexity of what our bodies are made of and how they function is incredible. Source: Associated Press in the *Times Record News*, Wichita Falls, Tex., June 14, 2012.

**ANCIENT ARTISTS AND ANIMATION.** French researchers studying the art work in Chauvet Cave have found drawings superimposed on each other to show a bison running, tossing its head, and shaking its tail. They have also found drawings of a pride of lions shown in a way that gives depth-perception to the lions as they approach a fleeing bison. Another find has animals engraved on disks that when spun rapidly made the creatures appear to move—a form of animation. These drawings are of great age, and what they show is incredible artistic ability and great aesthetic concerns for what the artist was representing. Artistic ability did not evolve, it was present in man from his earliest creation in the image of God. Source: *Science News*, December 29, 2012, page 29.

**KELLOGG EXPERIMENT AGAIN.** When I was in college in the 1950s and 60s there was great attention given to an experiment done by an Indiana University professor named Dr. Kellogg in which a chimpanzee (Gua) was raised in a human family environ-

ment alongside Dr. Winthrop Kellogg's son Donald (Clayton, *The Source*, Does God Exist? 2011, page 227). The idea was to see if all that makes us human is the way we are raised. That experiment has been tried over and over including a program called "Project Nim." In 2011 a documentary on this project was produced which won several awards, and it was shown on HBO in December 2012. One of the problems in this kind of exercise is what you will accept as being human characteristics. In Project Nim, the emphasis was on language and signing was taught with the chimp learning dozens of signs. Other experiments have involved tool making or ability



to solve puzzles. From a biblical standpoint, what defines a human is being created in the image of God—meaning his capacity to create art and music, to worship, to feel guilt, to be sympathetic, to have compassion, etc. In Nim's case the experiment ended when the animal became abusive and dangerous. It is hard not to anthropomorphize an experiment in this area, but we would suggest man's nature has little to do with what scientists

tend to measure. The soul cannot be weighed or photographed, but is revealed in behavior that is indeed unique to humans. Humans can act like animals, but animals cannot act like humans. Source: *The Week*, December 21, 2012, page 24.

**MORE GENETIC DATA ON NEANDERTHALS.** We have resisted attempts to suggest that there have been many species of humans. Some religionists and some scientists have maintained that there were humanoids present in the past that were different from Adam and Eve (modern humans) to such an extent that they were a new species. Neanderthals have sometimes been selected as the alternative species. As more and more DNA samples have become available, it is becoming increasingly obvious that all of us have Neanderthal DNA in our genetic make up. In an article in *Science News* (December 29, 2012, page 26) data is given which suggest that European's DNA is 2.5 percent Neanderthal; and 3 percent of Chinese DNA is from a Neanderthal source. We are all related, no matter how physically different we look. A pygmy and a Swede might not look as though they are the same species, but the fact is they are. The Bible indicates a common origin to all humans, and scientific evidence supports that view.

**MARRIAGE LONGEVITY.** One of the interesting spin-offs of the same-sex marriage controversy has been the studies by soci-

ologists of how long unions of all kinds last. It is hard to get good data, because the belief system of researchers can affect what they observe. If you sample very young couples your data is going to be different than if you sample very old couples. Even geography has an effect with people living in North Dakota having different numbers than those living in the urban areas of the Northeast. However, the numbers available at this time are astounding. The number of cohabiting heterosexual couples in the U.S. has grown from 500,000 in 1970 to 7.5 million in 2010. The rate of break-up in these people is huge with some 25 percent of the relationships dissolving during the two-year study compared to under 3 percent of married couples. The population of same-sex couples is too small to be statistically significant, but married same-sex couples tend to stay together at a rate similar to heterosexual couples. The break-up of unmarried homosexual couples seems to be somewhat higher than heterosexual couples. The percent of births to unmarried women has risen from 5 percent in 1960 to 40 percent in 2008. The median age of men when they get married in 1960 was 22.8 and is now 28.7 while women's median age has risen from 20.3 to 26.5. We maintain that God's plan for marriage works, and that alternatives do not. However, serving our communities means taking people where we find them and helping them achieve the kind of relationship God wants for them which will bring them the greatest happiness. Being aware of these numbers is critical to such an effort. Source: *Science News*, December 15, 2012, page 16.

**ROBERT BALLARD JOINS ARK QUEST.** Robert Ballard is best known for finding the *Titanic* and the *Bismarck*. He has been sponsored by National Geographic and uses advanced robotic technology to do most of his research. Recently he had an interview with ABC's Christiane Amanpour in which he stated that he had found evidence to support the work of William Ryan and Walter Pitman who in the 1990s claimed that they had found evidence of a major flood in Turkey that happened some 7,500 years ago. Ballard's work involves finding a submerged ancient shoreline which would indicate a massive local flooding. He plans to go back to Turkey to continue his study this coming summer. Source: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/10/evidence-noahs-flood-ark-real-robert-ballard-archeologist-titanic\\_n\\_2273143.html?1355183096](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/10/evidence-noahs-flood-ark-real-robert-ballard-archeologist-titanic_n_2273143.html?1355183096)

**THE ARK.** In related news, there are two arks being built to duplicate what Noah did. One is in Dordrecht, Netherlands, where Johan Huibers has built an ark 450 feet long — longer than a football field. Earlier he had built an ark (picture on next page) half that size. This time he wanted to make it the size of Noah's ark. Mr. Huibers is

a Christian and says he did it to make people think about their purpose on earth and perhaps find salvation. The other ark being built in Kentucky will be 510 feet long and cost \$21 million. It will be part of a theme park operated by “Answers in Genesis” which owns the Creation Museum near Cincinnati. This ark is designed to support dispensational millennialism and a young earth view. The theme park will also have a Tower of Babel and other tourist attractions associated with it. The craftsmen doing the work are Amish builders from Indiana. The



Kentucky ark project is being built on an 800-acre plot of land in Williamstown, Kentucky, 40 miles south of Cincinnati. This is all big business and even has received tax breaks from the state of Kentucky.

We would wonder if the money being used to promote a westernized denominational view of the flood account could not be better spent in relieving hunger in Africa. Sources: *The Atlantic*, December 2012, page 21 and *The Winnipeg Free Press*, December 11, 2012, page A-12.

**ANIMALS SUE FOR RIGHTS.** A group calling themselves “The Nonhuman Rights Project” plans to sue the United States to “procure freedoms like protection from captivity previously granted only to humans.” The group specifically lists dolphins, chimpanzees, elephants, and parrots which they claim show capabilities uniquely human including “language-like communication, complex problem solving, and seeming self awareness.” There are so many problems with such an effort that it is difficult to know where to start. Can you imagine the results of making it illegal to confine elephants? The biggest losers in such a situation would be the elephants themselves, but the fundamental problem is the devaluing of humans. If you do not believe that humans are created in God’s image, then all animals are of equal value. That means that a human and a cockroach are equal and should be protected in the same way. When such vague descriptions as “seeming self awareness” are used, there are some humans who do not fit. God’s command to “take care of the garden” and to “have dominion” meaning to take care of all of God’s creation is what needs to be followed. It is wrong to make an animal suffer, but it is equally wrong not to manage their situation so that they are not endangered individually and collectively. Source: *Popular Science*, January 2013, page 37.

**AMERICAN ATHEISTS AND 2012 BILLBOARDS.** In Times Square every year for several years now, the American Atheists have had billboards ridiculing Christianity and promoting atheist secularism. This year there was a billboard that had a huge picture of Santa Claus with the label “Keep the Merry,” and under it a huge picture of Jesus on the cross with the label “Dump the Myth.” Another billboard read “37 million Americans know Myths when they see them ... What myths do you see?” and with it were pictures of Jesus, Santa, Poseidon, and the Devil. Equating Christ to Santa is a rather ignorant position, but the main thing these ads do is to allow Christians to explain why we believe what we believe to a public that is basically ignorant of the whole issue. David Silverman who is the current president of American Atheists said “We know that a large population of Christians are actually atheists who feel trapped in their family’s religion,” and for some people that observation may be true. Source: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/11/american-atheists-christmas-billboard-times-square\\_n\\_2273314.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/11/american-atheists-christmas-billboard-times-square_n_2273314.html)

**ACLU AT IT AGAIN.** It is hard to believe the nature of the causes that the American Civil Liberties Union embraces. So many times they bring a stop to things that meet needs rather than work to bring equity to the situations involved. Recently in Cranston, Rhode Island, the ACLU managed to stop a father-daughter social function because a mother complained that since she was a single mom her daughter had no one to take her to the dance with. The ACLU took on her case and succeeded in canceling not only the father/daughter dance, but also was able to cancel the mother-son baseball outing. One would wonder if “Big Brother Big Sister” programs will face the same fate. Source: *Citizen*, December 2012, page 9.

**BOURBON STREET BANS BIBLE.** In November 2012, we spent several days in New Orleans in and around the French Quarter. New Orleans continues to be a city with enormous problems. The workers in the hotel where we stayed warned us about not being in certain areas of the French Quarter after dark because of the probability of robbery and assault. When you walk around that area you can see just about anything. Voodoo is still a rage in New Orleans, and any notion that prostitution, drugs, and pornography are controlled in any way is misguided. In 2011 New Orleans city officials passed a law banning religious speech on Bourbon Street. Several street preachers have been arrested since the law was passed. This is a law that is sure to be challenged in court on constitutional grounds. In the meantime it seems that the areas that need to hear about Jesus the most are the same areas where politicians work to try to keep away those who have real help and answers.

**PRISON PROBLEMS CONTINUE.** In that same vein, we are finding more and more obstructionism in prisons. We have some 10,000 men and women studying with us through the mail. A large percentage of these are in Texas and Oklahoma. Prison officials there recognize the value of teaching prisoners how we know there is a God, and what we should do to establish a relationship with him to get our lives on track. In many prisons in other states we find prison officials opposing teaching of any kind from those outside the prison. Arizona has been especially difficult. We provide all materials and pay the postage both ways, but in some Arizona prisons they will only allow post cards. In several states they will not even allow metered postal return envelopes, making physical contact with prisoners in follow- up difficult. We are working with Buck Griffith, James Curry, and Don Umphrey to correct all of this, but it is an uphill battle. The one thing that can truly change a man or a woman in prison is being denied because of political and legal maneuvering.

**ATHEISTS JUMP ON TRINKET BANDWAGON.** One thing that atheists have always complained about is that religion tends to be a money-making enterprise and that no one does anything in religion unless they can make money at it. That generalization is frequently true, but now it turns out that atheists are doing the same thing. Amy Roth, a Los Angeles atheist, makes ceramic pendants designed by Josh Timonen, and the pattern is now being sold in earrings, rings, necklaces and T-shirts. It has a red letter “A” and is called “The Scarlet Letter” after Nathaniel Hawthorne’s book about an adulteress in the Puritan days of America. In 1992 two Colorado atheists took the Christian symbol of a fish with the name “Jesus” in the center (called the Jesus fish), and replaced the word Jesus with the word “Evolve” and attached legs to the fish. Now they have a company called “EvolveFish” which has had \$500,000 in annual sales and employs six people. *Bloomberg Businessweek* has referred to this as the “godless market.” It is justified by atheists who say, “It’s nice to have a small amulet of sorts that one can carry with them that represents who they are and makes them feel part of a larger rational community.” Source: *Houston Chronicle*, September 28, 2012, section F6 page 9.

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