

the Christian atheist

The Christian Atheist

You say you believe in God. Do you really? Do you live your life as if God is in the room, or do you assume He's not paying attention? You call yourself a Christian. Are you who you say you are?

In this multiple week series, we will challenge each other to confront hypocrisy, challenge ourselves, and live a life that brings glory to Christ.

The Christian Atheist – Week 7

Believing in God, But Don't Think You Can Change

Key Thought

Many people believe in God, yet secretly believe they are beyond change. They trust God for eternity but not for transformation. The Gospel declares that through Christ, we are not only forgiven—we are made new.

Introduction

One of the most discouraging lies a believer can embrace is:

- "This is just who I am."
- I've always struggled with anger.
- I've always been anxious.
- I've always been addicted.
- I've always been bitter.
- I've always been insecure.

Many Christians believe God can save them from hell but aren't convinced He can change them on earth.

"A lie believed as truth will affect you as if it was truth."

Craig Groeschel

Our little dog is part Jack Russell Terrier and part Dachshund. Smart enough to chase rabbits, but with an attention span that disappears quickly. Somehow she became terrified of fly swatters. We've never hit her with one, yet whenever I pick one up, she runs and hides.

The enemy doesn't need us to stop believing in God if he can convince us of the lie that God's power cannot change us.

Big Idea #1

Lies Create Limits That God Never Intended

The enemy has always used lies to distort God's truth.

From the Garden of Eden until today, Satan's primary weapon has not changed.

John 8:43-45 (NLT)

Why can't you understand what I am saying? It's because you can't even hear me! You are the children of your father the devil... he is a liar and the father of lies.

Many believers live inside invisible prisons built from lies:

- I'll never change.
- I'll always struggle with this sin.
- I'm too damaged.
- God can help others, but not me.
- This is simply how God made me.

The problem isn't merely that these statements are discouraging.

The problem is that they contradict what God says.

Discussion Question

What are some common lies people tend to believe about themselves, God, or their future?

Big Idea #2

God Specializes in the Impossible

When Jesus encountered the rich young ruler, the disciples were stunned by His teaching.

Mark 10:26-27 (NLT)

Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.

Jesus wasn't saying life would be easy.

He was saying God's power is greater than human limitations.

Think about Scripture:

- Moses was insecure. (*Exodus 4:13*)
- Gideon was afraid. (*Judges 7:10-11*)
- David failed morally. (*2 Samuel 11-12*)
- Peter denied Christ. (*Luke 22:54-62*)
- Paul persecuted Christians. (*Galatians 1:13*)

Yet God transformed every one of them.

The same God who changed them is still changing people today.

Application Question

How would your life be different if you truly believed that God could change anything He wanted to change in you?

Church Question

How might our church look different if we genuinely believed that all things are possible with God?

Big Idea #3

Change Begins When We Replace Lies With Truth

Transformation doesn't happen merely by trying harder.

It begins by thinking differently.

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...

Before behavior changes, beliefs change.

Before actions change, thinking changes.

The question isn't:

"What am I doing?"

The deeper question is:

"What am I believing?"

When God's truth replaces the enemy's lies, transformation begins.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (ESV)

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh... we take every thought captive to obey Christ.

Personal Reflection

Identify an area of your life where you have resisted change.

Ask yourself:

- What excuse have I been making?
- What lie have I believed?
- What truth from God's Word challenges that lie?
- What would change if I truly believed God's truth?

Romans 8:9

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Big Idea #4

Lasting Change Requires Godly Relationships

Many people want transformation while remaining isolated.

God designed change to happen in community.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34 (NLT)

Don't be fooled... "Bad company corrupts good character."

The opposite is also true:

Good company strengthens good character.

Healthy relationships help us:

- See blind spots.
- Stay accountable.
- Receive encouragement.
- Persevere when growth is difficult.

Nobody changes alone.

Practical Exercise

Write down three people who care enough about you to:

- Encourage you
- Correct you
- Challenge you
- Pray for you
- Hold you accountable

If you cannot identify three people, this is an opportunity to intentionally build those relationships.

Big Idea #5

Your Identity Is Not Your Struggle

One of the enemy's greatest tactics is convincing believers that their struggle defines them.

But Scripture teaches that our identity is found in Christ.

Colossians 1:29

That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.

You may struggle with sin.

You may battle temptation.

You may have weaknesses.

But those things are not your identity.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

"My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness... For when I am weak, then I am strong."

In Christ:

- You are forgiven.
- You are redeemed.
- You are loved.
- You are chosen.
- You are being transformed.

You are not who you were.

You are becoming who God created you to be.

Conclusion

The Christian atheist says:

"I believe in God, but I don't think I can change."

The Gospel says:

"With God, all things are possible."

The enemy says:

"You'll always be this way."

Jesus says:

"I am making all things new."

The question isn't whether God has the power to change you.

The question is whether you'll believe Him enough to let Him.

Next Steps

- Identify one lie you've been believing.
- Replace it with a truth from God's Word.
- Share that struggle with a trusted believer.
- Take one practical step toward change this week.
- Ask God daily to transform your mind and heart.

Closing Challenge

What lie has kept you from becoming the person God is calling you to be?

And what would happen if, beginning today, you believed God instead?