

FORTIFY YOUR FAITH SERIES

THE PROBLEM OF UNBELIEF

BY WAYNE JACKSON

A study on doubt, atheism, and the case for belief in God.



The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' — Psalm 14:1

 **LONG ISLAND
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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The Problem of Unbelief

by Wayne Jackson

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Introduction

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

With these words the founders of our nation stated the case for independence from the despotism of Great Britain. Their argument rested upon a certain dignity bestowed by Jehovah upon each and every man independent from the whims of human rulers.

The very idea of equal human worth has no meaning at all apart from a divine perspective and most importantly, the gift of Heaven's son in order to redeem each and every person who submits their will in obedience to Jesus Christ as Lord.

Sadly, we as a nation are rapidly turning our backs on the One who established and preserved us as a nation. Less than four generations from the foundation of our republic, the Bible was banned from our school rooms, as was prayer.

More recently, our president recited these words from the Declaration of Independence quoted above ... leaving out "by their Creator"—a subtle but poignant indicator of his convictions.

Many have done likewise. God has become merely a word to invoke in pragmatism. The idea of a living Creator who is loving and actively concerned with his creation is far removed in the minds of so many.

Unbelief is rising. Our nation's fifth generation grew up with barely any acknowledgment at all to Jehovah each day. According to a recent Gallup poll, the third largest religious affiliation is **none at all**. Across the board, all religious groups are losing large numbers as

the sixth generation matures. And we are reaping a bitter fruit. Violent crime is rising, financial indebtedness is skyrocketing. Youth today are in a pressure cooker of social and emotional strain that is only a fraction of what it was a generation ago. What will our nation look like ten years from now if this trend continues?

In 1974, Wayne Jackson foresaw the need to address the growing problem of atheism and unbelief in general. His book, ***Fortify Your Faith in an Age of Doubt***, became a beacon of light for thousands of people who were looking for solid ground for their belief in the Creator, his Son, and the Bible.

Fortify Your Faith in an Age of Doubt has been out of print for many years now. But in a series of white papers, we are bringing this important content back in circulation to a new and wider audience.

Our goal is to help every person searching for intelligent and rational faith to find the true God of heaven, believe in his Son, and trust the precious Book Divine.

Sincerely,



Jared Jackson

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The Problem of Unbelief

"Atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man."

—Sir Francis Bacon

"Atheism is a theoretical formulation of the discouraged life."

—Harry Emerson Fosdick

"Atheism is the death of hope, the suicide of the soul."

—Anonymous

*"Atheism is a disease of the soul before
it becomes an error of understanding."*

—Plato

"The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

—King David, Psalms 14:1

More than three thousand years ago, Moses, armed with divine credentials, walked into the stately presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt and demanded: "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go.'"

Amazingly, the monarch replied: "Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah" (Exodus 5:1, 2).

There are numerous deluded souls of this age who proudly boast of being the spiritual descendants of that ancient pagan king. To some, unbelief is a mark of intellectual sophistication, and they frankly contend that faith ought to be relegated to the realm of superstition.

Others, though not approaching that extreme, feel that faith is, at least to a certain degree, unprovable; that it is without the sort of basis that one might call reasonable. Rather, it is alleged to be a mystical experience, a “leap in the dark,” the result of some better-felt-than-told subjective experience. Of course there is really nothing new about this, but it is receiving a good deal of attention these days.

I do not subscribe for a moment to either of these views. It is my unflinching conviction that **God exists**, that he is our Creator having endowed us with living bodies and rational minds.

Further, I am equally certain that our Divine Benefactor has provided **adequate evidence** of himself which commends itself to the human mental faculty, so that, upon a foundation of reasonable evidence, we may “believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him” (Hebrews 11:6).

At the very beginning of this presentation, let me point out that I am not unaware of the fact that when one begins to discuss the sphere of unbelief, he is entering a complex area. For unbelievers, indeed as many professed religionists, come in various breeds and shapes.

The **atheist** simply claims that there is no God. The **skeptic** is not quite so bold; he suggests that he doubts the Almighty’s existence, while the **agnostic** shrugs his shoulders and pleads that he doesn’t know one way or the other. A **deist** professes to believe that there is a God, but the God of his fancy is far removed from any interest in man.

At this point, I wish to principally address myself to a consideration of atheism as a subspecies of unbelief in general.

The Origin of Atheism

The Austrian psychopathologist Sigmund Freud taught that atheism is a characteristic of the normal, well-adjusted mind. He felt that faith in a supreme Being was simply a holdover of childhood fears, hence, an

adult abnormality. In his well-known book, *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud wrote:

Now when the child grows up and finds that he is destined to remain a child forever, and that he can never do without protection against unknown and mighty powers, he invests these with the traits of the father-figure; he creates for himself the gods, of whom he is afraid, whom he seeks to propitiate, and to whom he nevertheless entrusts the task of protecting him. Thus the longing-for-the-father explanation is identical with the other, the need for protection against the consequences of human weakness (1928, 39, 40).

I do not hesitate to say that Freud's theory is based upon preconceived assumptions resulting from **antireligious bias**. And the facts that oppose such may be developed along several lines of reasoning.

First, a disposition to believe in some sort of supernatural power is a well-established fact. The universality of this tendency, which will be more fully discussed later, argues for its **normalcy**.

Actually, the very mental phenomenon of believing appears to be a psychological necessity. In an important work entitled *Readings in the Psychology of Religion*, Mortimer Ostow and Ben-Ami Scharfstein declare:

Believing is almost as necessary to humans as eating. What is believed is of course not necessarily useful, anymore than what is eaten is always nourishing. But belief is essential to the effective functioning of a human organism (Strunk 1959, 190–191).

A number of authorities have concluded that the suppression of faith is related to various kinds of neuroses, either precipitating such or resulting therefrom. Let me cite two examples.

Doctors J. A. Mendelson and Wayne Oates conducted a study over a period of nine-weeks at the Kentucky State Hospital. They made a study of the role of religion in the lives of sixty-eight mental patients,

and by far the largest group of several categories (51.5%) “reflected ***an absence of religious influence*** in their present thought and life activity.” Dr. Oates concludes that “much that is called mental illness today is the end result of ***a lack of wholesome moral education***” (Strunk 1959, 243; emphasis added).

And professor of psychology, Dr. Orlo Strunk Jr., affirms that the opinion that atheism is the “result of deep and complex ***emotional problems***—is undoubtedly true to a great degree” (1968, 54; emphasis added).

Seeds of Unbelief

Perhaps this is a good place to discuss those factors which lend themselves to the development of atheistic tendencies in the thinking of some. There are several psychological factors which may pave the way for unbelief.

Parental Neglect

One of the most dangerous contributions a parent can make toward the spiritual delinquency of his child is a failure to instill within him ***a wholesome respect for authority***.

If the parent neglects to set the proper example as an authority figure, or refuses to exercise discipline with love, he may be rejected as an authority figure by the child, and thus by transference the child may come to disdain all authority, ***including the supreme Authority***, God.

Dr. Joshua Liebman says:

I believe that much atheism has the ground prepared for it in the disillusionment with the parent which has arisen in the child. Disbelief in life, skepticism about humanity, the denial of God—all sink their roots in the soil of emotion long before exposure to courses in philosophy and science. Life has scared such people early and has

made them unwilling to believe either in man or in God (11946, 47, 148).

A Lust for Power

Another attitude facilitating atheism is an ***unhealthy lust for power***. This disposition sees God as competition, hence, rejects him.

Atheistic philosopher Frederic Nietzsche, who eventually went insane, once exclaimed, "If there were gods, how could I endure it to be no god?" Faith in Jehovah simply cannot abide in a heart so saturated with inordinate pride.

Moral Rebellion

A third motivation for the rejection of God is ***the desire to be free of moral restraint***.

In his article, "Confession of a Professed Atheist: Aldous Huxley," Huxley openly admitted that he rejected belief in God and morality because he did not want his sexual freedom hindered (1966, 19).

Unbelievers speciously reason: "If there is a God, I must be morally responsible to him. I will not be so restrained. Thus, there is no God!" The wickedness of man rationalizes the situation.

David pinpointed it: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works; There is none that doeth good" (Psalms 14:1).

Wilbur Smith, in his terrific volume, *Therefore Stand*, says:

One of the reasons why men refuse to accept the Christian Faith is because the very principles of their lives are in every way contradictory to the ethical principles of the Bible, and, determined to remain in the lawlessness of their own sensuality, they could not possibly embrace a holy religion nor walk with a holy God, nor look

for salvation to His holy Son, nor have any love for His holy Word” (1945, 170).

Disappointment in Others

Occasionally one may turn to atheism because his ***faith in someone who professes to be a devotee of God has been shattered.***

Truly, “confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint” (Proverbs 25:19). It is only realistic to recognize that man is but man; “to err is human.”

It is folly to blame Deity for the blunders of humanity. In the final analysis, “it is better to take refuge in Jehovah than to put confidence in man” (Psalms 118:8).

The Problem of Human Suffering

One of the greatest obstacles to belief with many is the problem of ***evil, suffering and pain.*** Because men cannot subject all suffering to meaningful analysis, the assumption is made that the concept of God must therefore be negated. As one unbeliever asserts:

“There is too much evil in the world to warrant the inference that there is a Providence or an Architect who has human interests at heart” (Wells 1962, 12).

Another authority has expressed it thusly:

The problem of pain and suffering in all ages, has stood as a paramount challenge in the thinking of men. The challenge which the age-old problem presents is expressed in these words: “The dilemma of Epicurus is still with us: if God wishes to prevent evil but cannot, then he is impotent; if he could, but will not, he is malevolent; if he has both the power and the will, whence the evil?” (Harrison 1960, 505).

Now, I certainly would not be so presumptuous as to assert that man can **completely** understand the problem of suffering. Other than what he has revealed in his Word, the mind and purposes of God are unknown to men. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" (Romans 11:33).

Sources of Human Suffering

I do believe, however, that enough of the answers concerning suffering are suggested in the Bible to allow us to accept that inexplicable percentage on the basis of trust in the loving God who always does what is right (Genesis 18:25).

Suffering: Self-inflicted

When considering the problem of suffering, it ought to be very obvious in the first place that much of the misery with which we are plagued is ***the direct result of our personal sins***. Let us take an example, the drunkard. The inspired writer of Proverbs asked:

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; They that go to seek out mixed wine (Proverbs 23:29, 30).

Surely God can in no way be charged with the responsibility of the drunkard's plight.

The prodigal son wrought grievous consequences upon himself because of his profligate living (Luke 15:11ff). And the apostle Peter emphasizes the connection between sin and suffering when he says: "For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters" (1 Peter 4:15). The idolatrous worship of animals in many eastern countries causes untold thousands to go hungry needlessly. Indeed, sin reaps a great harvest of suffering.

Suffering: Inflicted by Previous Generations

There is a vast amount of suffering in the world as ***a natural consequence of the sins of those who have lived before us.***

A very simple example of this is a situation where a young woman has engaged in sexual promiscuity and thereby contracted venereal disease. It is entirely possible that should she later bear children, they might inherit numerous defects causing much misery, all of which might ultimately be traced to her sinful conduct.

Further, history is replete with examples where whole nations have ignored the Will of God. “The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, Even all the nations that forget God” (Psalms 9:17). Millions today are suffering untold agonies, living in the most deplorable of conditions, because their forefathers in generations gone by rejected the teaching which comes from Jehovah, thus depriving themselves of all the attendant blessings characteristic of godly society.

As the Lord warned centuries ago:

I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments (Exodus 20:5, 6).

Going back further still, I believe it is possible to show that other varieties of suffering, which we have not yet considered, may be attributed to ***humanity’s involvement in sin.***

Consider the numerous diseases with which man is blighted; ultimately, these are related to sin.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had access to the “tree of life,” and hence to physical immortality. Clearly then, in that original state, they were unaffected by disease and sickness.

When that first pair rebelled however, Jehovah drove them from that Edenic paradise lest they should partake of the tree of life and thus forever live in sin. No longer having access to the tree of life, Adam and Eve became prey to weakness, disease, and death; and through them, we are likewise heir to such misfortunes.

As the inspired Paul declared:

Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned (Romans 5:12).

As we look back on it from our weakened condition, the physical vigor of our early parents was phenomenal. Adam lived to the age of 930 years (Genesis 5:5). Just imagine, when he was more than four and one half centuries old, he might have been comparable to a thirty-five year-old man of our day!

Many of those ancients lived to very great ages; Methuselah was 969 years old at the time of his demise; Noah expired at 950 years (Genesis 5:27; 9:29). And this brings me to another point which I wish to make.

After the great flood of Noah's day, there began to be a decrease human longevity. Shem, Noah's son, lived 600 years (Genesis 11:10, 11), and a few generations later, Peleg lived to be only 239 years (Genesis 11:18, 19).

By the time of Abraham, man's age was drastically reduced, for that patriarch reached only 175 years, which was considered to be "a good old age" (Genesis 25:7, 8). Many scholars believe that the flood had something to do with the progressive weakening of man.

The geophysical evidence indicates that a worldwide warm, greenhouse-like climate was characteristic of the pre-flood world. Rehwin-
kel quotes professor Alfred Wallace as follows:

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There is but one climate known to the ancient fossil world as revealed by the plants and animals entombed in the rocks, and the climate was a mantle of spring-like loveliness which seems to have prevailed continuously over the whole globe (1957, 7).

What was the cause of this ideal climate? And what precipitated the changes resulting in our present climatic conditions?

First of all, it is suggested by some that the earth of the antediluvian world was encased by a canopy of water vapor. According to this view,

the earth was originally surrounded by a canopy of vapor which intercepted the direct rays of the sun. The heat which penetrated the canopy was diffused so equally over all the zones of latitude that the subtropical climate prevailed even in the high latitude. This canopy served to bring about conditions similar to those in a hot-house with a temperature of about 72 degrees F. The chemical rays of the sun, those that bring about decay and fermentation, were intercepted by the canopy, and as a result, man and animals lived to great ages (Ibid., 12).

There are several biblical passages which seem to corroborate this concept.

For example, the creation account speaks of the “waters that were above the expanse” (Genesis 1:6, 7 ESV); and again, “there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground” (Genesis 2:6).

Now what has this to do with the problem of disease and suffering?

Well, simply this: the flood was brought upon the ancient world because of the **unchecked wickedness** of a rebellious race. “And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

Not only did that deluge destroy the entire human race, with the exception of eight souls, but it undoubtedly dissipated the vaporous blanket shielding the earth. As a result, man was greatly weakened; hence, he and his progeny became vulnerable to many maladies which probably did not affect them prior to this time.

In this regard, Whitcomb and Morris have written:

[T]he declining lifespan after the Flood seems to fit in perfectly with our concept of the dissipation of the earth's protective blanket during the Flood. As we have noted, this canopy of water vapor (with probably also large amounts of carbon dioxide and ozone augmenting the effect) provided a warm, pleasant, presumably healthful environment throughout the world. Perhaps the most important effect of the canopy was the shielding action provided against the intense radiations impinging upon the earth from space. Short wavelength radiation, as well as bombardment of elementary particles of all kinds, is known to have damaging effects—both somatic and genetic effects—on organisms and this is generally true for all types of radiations (1961, 399).

Thus, again, sin is seen as a devastating contributor to man's agonizing condition.

Frequently there is much misery associated with meteorological phenomena such as hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. But again, it appears very probable that violent weather conditions are the results of the changed features of the earth due to the universal flood.

In discussing the vapor blanket view, Whitcomb and Morris contend that this effect:

would largely inhibit the atmospheric circulations which characterize the present troposphere and which are caused basically by temperature differentials between points of different latitudes and topographies. The constant battle of "fronts" would be mostly absent, so that antediluvian climates were not only warm but also

without violent windstorms The waters both above and below the firmament were in large measure restrained, temperatures were equably warm, there were no heavy rains nor winds and probably no earthquakes nor volcanic emissions (Ibid., 240, 243).

Rehwinkel agrees: “Storms and rain were unknown in the world of Adam” (12).

Had it not been for man’s evil, the flood would never have come; the features of the earth would not have been so altered; and man would not be suffering the consequences thereof today!

Suffering and Freedom

There is one other point that is worth bringing out in this connection, and that is, God created man as ***a free moral agent***.

Human beings have the capacity for making decisions. Thus, this power of choice, together with the fact that the material universe is governed by natural laws, must inevitably result in a certain amount of suffering.

If man is to be free to glorify God, and this is the purpose for which he was created (Isaiah 43:7), he must also be free to make mistakes—and these will entail some misery.

Just think about what sort of situation would exist if Jehovah were to intervene with a miracle, thereby suspending natural law, every time some human being anywhere in the world became involved in a crisis. Why, the process which we term “natural law” and upon which we depend to conduct our affairs each day of our lives would be so random, haphazard, and undependable that human existence would scarcely be possible.

Benefits of Suffering?

Finally, some consideration must be given to ***the benefits of pain and suffering***, both from a physical and spiritual viewpoint. Often pain is of great value to man. It serves as a kind of sentry, ***warning us of dangers*** which otherwise might lead to our destruction.

If we felt no pain from excessive heat, we could easily be burned to death without an awareness of such. If we had no hunger pangs, we might starve. If we were incapable of pain, those telltale signs which send us to our doctor for diagnosis and treatment would not exist. To a great degree therefore, we must be thankful for the existence of pain.

Pain in the Animal World

Incidentally, let me make a brief comment regarding the existence of pain in the animal world since this is often mentioned in connection with the problem of suffering. The following observations are in order.

First, the whole creation, including animals, came under the consequences of a sin-cursed earth. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22).

Secondly, pain serves as a contributor to animal preservation even as it does for humans.

Finally, pain is a phenomenon of the brain. Since the brains of animals are less sophisticated emotionally than humans, it need not be assumed that they are as intensely affected by pain.

This seems to be evidenced by some creatures' actions. A crab, for instance, will continue to eat, and apparently relish, a smaller crab, while being itself slowly devoured by a larger one; and this shows that the crab can feel scarcely any pain, since the almost universal effect of pain is to destroy the pleasure of eating.

Suffering: A Spiritual Boost

Suffering also ***contributes to the spiritual betterment of man***. Suffering connected with sudden natural disasters enforces the:

realization that one's life on earth is both certain (as to the fact that it will end) and uncertain (as to the exact time that end will occur)."

and consequently,

"should lead men to give most serious thought to the questions of God and the proper response to him. The destructive power and the uncertainty of such events should serve as a reminder to man that this world is not his permanent home (Warren, 59).

Indeed, suffering in general keeps us from falling too deeply in love with this old world; hence, we "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly" (Hebrews 11:16).

Suffering: Making Nobility

Suffering ***affords man the opportunity of demonstrating the noblest qualities of which he is capable***. W. H. Turton writes:

[I]f there were no suffering in the world, there could be no fortitude, no bravery, no patience, no compassion, no sympathy with others, no self-sacrifice for their good—nothing, in fact, that constitutes the highest type of man (1895, 75).

Suffering: Reveals Our Limitations

Suffering ***reveals the limitations*** of frail man and thus encourages us to cast our cares upon Jehovah, knowing he cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). Perhaps one never really plumbs the depths of prayer until he has an immersion of suffering, either personally or vicariously through a loved one.

Suffering: Moves Us to Serve Jehovah

Suffering gives us the opportunity to demonstrate that our **God is truly worth serving**, even apart from the delightful blessings he bestows.

Job is the Lord's trophy to this end. Satan charged that if Job's blessings were removed, he would curse God. He thus implied that Jehovah was not worthy of adoration on the basis of his nature alone. Hence, Job's possessions were removed, he was dreadfully afflicted, and suffered greatly; but still, he did not curse God, thus proving that Jehovah "is worthy to be praised" (Psalms 18:3).

In summation, let it be remembered that even though much of man's misery is the result of sin, if he will but exercise the wisdom with which he is endowed by God, he can use adversity to help fashion the quality of character with which God is well pleased and by which he is glorified.

Has Science Destroyed God?

Others believe that the advancement of modern science has rendered unbelief a valid philosophy of life. Has science become a sacred cow and the laboratory a "holy of holies"? Apparently to many superficial thinkers, it has.

Admittedly, we owe much to science; but **science owes everything to God!** Jehovah has not become obsolete. To the contrary, every scientific discovery has further glorified the Creator.

Popular science writer, Lincoln Barnett, suggests that it is becoming increasingly difficult for scientists to solve their problems without recourse to God (1957, 22), and James Jauncey, concurs affirming that "many scientists are returning to God as a final and only answer to the problems of the world." He says, in fact, that "the atheist or the hostile agnostic, even in scientific circles, is becoming a rare bird indeed" (1963, 10, 17).

Incidentally, Dr. Jauncey holds ten academic degrees, including bachelor's degrees in science, psychology, philosophy, and divinity; master's degrees in science, history, and divinity; doctor's degrees in mathematics and religion. Otis Gatewood calls attention to the fact that:

during the Apollo 10 moon shot the statement was made on international television that 89% of the scientists engaged in the moon shot believed in God. One of the astronauts read for all the world to hear: "In the beginning—God." When 89% of the world's best scientists agree on something, we may safely say it is scientifically accurate (1970, 157).

One need not, therefore, surrender his faith because of alleged conflicts between faith in God and science. Conversely, we ought to rejoice in the advancements of science with the confidence that such will only be additional evidence of God's existence and majesty.

Atheism's Creed

Before concluding this discussion on atheism, we feel compelled to call attention to the atheist's smug self-image of his totally "scientific" and rational outlook. He feels that faith is irrational, and thus, allegedly disassociates himself from such.

The truth is, however, it actually requires more faith, and that of an unreasonable variety, to accept atheism than theism. The atheist does indeed have a faith!

James D. Bales discusses some of the articles of faith in the atheist's creed in his book, *Communism: Its Faith and Fallacies*. The following is an adaptation of some of his points (1962, 40–43).

Atheism Believes There Is No God

Though the atheist cannot prove it, he ***believes that God does not exist.***

To know that God does not exist one would have to know everything and be everywhere, for the thing which he did not know might prove God's existence. He would have to know all the causes which have ever operated, for the one cause he did not know might be God. The person who possessed such characteristics would be a god himself!

Thus, an atheist, to be consistent, must be an auto-theist, a self-god. There are no real atheists, only self-worshipping idolaters who have deified themselves.

The atheist cannot reverse this argument and say that one must know all in order to have sufficient reason to believe in God. Several lines of evidence show that it is rational to accept God and irrational to reject God. We need to know at least some of the evidence, but we do not need to know everything.

Atheism Believes in Eternal Matter

The atheist ridicules the concept of an eternal God, yet believes in the *eternal existence of matter*. His belief in the eternal existence of matter is not only without reasonable evidence, it is contrary to one of the best established scientific laws, the second law of thermodynamics, which demonstrates that the universe is running down and hence had an origin.

Also, it is much more reasonable to believe that a Mind (God) produced matter, life, and human consciousness than to believe that matter created mind, consciousness, and intelligence.

Atheism Believes in Life from Nonlife

Atheists believe that *life spontaneously arose from non-living matter*. Again, this is contrary to the evidence suggested by the law of biogenesis, which affirms that life can only come from preexisting life.

The theory of spontaneous generation, as one unbeliever candidly admitted, "is far from proven, and it is improbable that satisfactory

proof will ever be forthcoming” (Elliott 1976, 33).

Atheism Believes in Luck

Atheists believe that the *order and design found in nature are simply the results of non-intelligent, non-conscious fate, or chance*. Atheists usually concede that there is at least “apparent design” and order in nature which they attribute to irrational forces. This is totally contrary to all our experience, which reveals that design is the result of intelligence.

Atheism Believes in Natural Consciousness

The atheist believes that ***consciousness evolved*** from a fortuitous combination of non-conscious molecules. He has ***no proof*** for this incredible view.

Atheism Believes in Natural Morality

The atheist believes that ***non-moral matter created man with a moral sensitivity***—a sense of obligation or duty. I appeal to your good sense: does it seem reasonable to believe that primeval slime could evolve into a morally sensitive man?

Atheism Believes in Determinism

The atheist, to be consistent, must believe that man is merely a matter-machine ***without any power of choice***, and thus ***without any real responsibility*** for his conduct. How could matter, regardless of how refined it might be, decide between alternatives and be responsible for that decision?

When the atheist acts as if he were a morally responsible being, he negates his own assertions.

Atheism Believes All Thought Is Irrational

Again, if consistent, atheists must believe that ***all thought is irrational***, for it is all assumed to be the inevitable by-product of irrational causes. According to atheism, mental processes are wholly determined by the physical movement of atoms in the brain.

I once had a discussion with an atheist who contended that belief in God was not reasonable since such belief was only the result of a human brain that had evolved from matter. It had apparently never occurred to him that if his reasoning was valid, the very atheism he was urging me to accept, was also the product of an evolved brain of pure matter and therefore unworthy of my consideration! His line of argumentation was devastating to his own position.

As Bales has so succinctly observed: “How strange it is that those who claim the name ‘rationalist’ and maintain that theists are not rational, should end up with a position which implies that all thought is irrational.”

In the next white paper in this series, we'll look at the other side of the coin: concrete evidence for the existence of God.

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Family Activity

If you have young children, it is important that you spend quality teaching time with them to create an unshakable faith. Here are some important activities you can do that are intended to create and strengthen their faith.

Frequency: Often

Details: Discuss with your child whether things you cannot see are real. There are at least three different types of things that are real but cannot be seen:

1. invisible objects (air, molecules, atoms)
2. emotions or ideas (love, hate, happiness)
3. past events (when they were born)

Once you have identified several things in each category, discuss **HOW** we can know these things are **REAL**.

1. air — we breathe, fill up a balloon, etc.
2. love — how we treat one another, the words we use
3. something that happened when the parent was a little child — eye witness testimony

Purpose: The reason this activity is so important is because one of the more effective arguments atheists use to create doubt in children is the idea that if you cannot submit an idea to physical examination, it cannot be true. This is a fallacy because there are many things we know are true which can be established by evidential tests other than through physical examination. This is an important foundational idea of faith. Faith is the substance of hope in an **unseen** reality.