

WHY IT IS BAD TO BELIEVE IN GOD

Harmful religion can be compared to the smoker. Most people feel that if you want to smoke that is up to you. But what they object to is having to pay taxes for your medical care and suffering the other consequences of your habit. They do not want to be passive smokers over you. In the same way, unbelievers argue that they don't want to be passive "believers" or passive religionists either. Religion often has an innate bullying nature. Unbelievers have to be defensive in the face of religion rather than aggressive for religion will usurp all the rights it can at their expense. For example, unbelievers are forced to pray in many public schools. If it is bad to believe in God, then we must work for the secularisation of our society.

God is the supreme being who has power without limit and who is all loving. God is believed to have made all things and to be the one that keeps things running.

This belief is bad for countless reasons. A few are listed below.

* If God is not going to take away your cancer and nobody can then can you accept his will? Not if the eastern religions are to be believed. They hold that you can put your awareness outside of time and space. In theory, that can be done and even if there is a God a person's mind can simulate an eternity of pure peace without God. Eastern mystics say they know it can be done for they experience it. If they are right then God is a doctrine that takes away people's chance to find transcendence.

* Self-deception is the most dangerous of human traits. People underestimate how much they do it. It is too easy. Encouraging belief in God is bad because religion causes the worst form of self-deception. Moses and Jesus and Mohammad for instance blinded their followers to the evil of sentencing adulterous people to death by stoning. Yet their dangerous faiths prevail in the world. Catholicism likes to claim that it is not against reason but merely fills the gaps for there are many things reason cannot tell us. In other words, it does away with the reality check. Satanism or some new religion could do the same thing. So we end up not knowing if the religion is true or not and are left unable to know! Then we are left being cruelly expected to serve and sacrifice for a faith that really has no credibility.

* Self-esteem is when you see yourself as a good and decent person who deserves good things. It involves seeing yourself as self-made. The notion of God encourages people to put themselves down. Religious believers may suffer from an inferiority complex. To compensate for the horrible feelings they have towards themselves, they may develop a superiority complex. If you feel weak and helpless, you can over-compensate by telling yourself how God is on your side and how powerful your prayers to him are. A person may develop a superiority complex with regard to driving. Because they think they can do nothing right, they may think that they are exceptional drivers and feel invincible. They exaggerate how good they are at driving. But they will learn the truth the hard way. Religion gives people God and people fall for the bait because religion insulates the doctrine of God against the reality. For example, the believer is told that if prayer seems to fail it actually is working despite appearances. The superiority complex in religion is mistaken by society and psychiatry as acceptable and makes believers often seem normal and ordinary. The truth is actually very different and very disturbing. They are still ill. Abraham felt his faith was invincible when he was going to murder his son as a sacrifice at God's behest. This was his superiority complex at work. Yet he also felt he didn't deserve his son - that was the inferiority complex at work. Abraham's faith like all faith in God is based on arrogance - he claims to be an expert on knowing what God wants. He knows too when God answers prayer even though it is obvious that God is not answering prayer at all. Faith is arrogance enrobed as humility.

* A child or immature person sees rejection where no rejection was intended. For example, it is easy for a child to imagine that her mother favours her the least of the children. If belief in God is inculcated in the child, the child will see the seeming uselessness of prayer or failure of prayer or a feeling of despondency or spiritual angst as a rejection by God. This increases the risk of such thoughts as, "I don't know how anybody could love me." Such thoughts are about warning yourself about others so that you must try to protect yourself from rejection and the pain it brings. The thoughts are protective. Such thoughts indicate that there is severe hurt there owing to a rejection or perceived rejection by God or other people. And if it is true that evil disproves God, it follows that if the child perceives rejection by God this is simply a realisation that there is no excuse for God claiming to love the child while tolerating that child being severely hurt. The blame then lies with the Church and with parents who encourage faith in God or belief in the existence of God. A perceived or real rejection by God should be far more damaging than any other kind. After all God is the one who calls all things into existence. If he cannot be trusted then nothing can and no one can. After all he even makes the people who love us so imagine how bad it is to face divine rejection or to perceive that God rejects you.

* You need to feel you are dependent on yourself to make yourself reasonably happy. There are things that will happen that you have little or no control over. But you are dependent on yourself to be able to face up to them. Take charge of your own

life and do not feel that God controls all things or that you are dependant on him or anybody. Remember that free will does not solve the God problem. Do not say, "God has given me free will and that means I am independent." That is merely contradicting yourself. We would be free because God lets us be and enables us to be. We are still as unfree as budgies put into bigger cages. The owner still has all the control he wants over the birds. But it is worse than that. Religion says that we are free because of God and not in spite of him. Our freedom is wholly dependent on God. Without God you cannot choose. Your battery has power but gets it from another power. So its power is not really its power. Your freedom then is not your freedom. But to be really free it has to be yours and yours alone. If you cannot move your arm and you want to murder and somebody else moves the arm for you your freedom is dependent on them but is not your freedom at all. Religion will answer that we are talking about the will and nobody else can choose something for you and only you can choose. It says the will is different and not like somebody moving your arm for you. But the will is itself an action and so is moving the arm. God moving your will is the same as God moving your arm. Unless atheism is true, there can be no free will. The Church accuses people of abusing their freedom when in fact it is freedom in name only. Freedom means you make your freedom yourself. You make your own freedom. You cause your free will. Religion says God gives you free will but in fact it is only using words. It does not really believe in free will. Freedom would be a contradiction if there is a God. We are unfreely free and freely unfree. Our independence is itself dependence. Feeling really independent is fundamentally atheistic. So feel that. Failing to feel that it is up to you shows you think deep down that your life is safer if you let others take responsibility for you and the world. You do not feel you can make yourself feel safe or that you can trust yourself. You like to think you trust God for that is a diversion from the truth that you do not trust yourself to co-operate with others implying your trust in them is far too weak. You are trying to protect yourself from rejection by others and from feeling that you are really useless. It is not really about God. It can never be. It is about you.

* Telling a child you think he is great and that you love him is a waste of time unless it is a reminder to him of the good things you did and unless you look lovingly at him. Then it is not the words that bring him joy but the actions the words remind him of. The words are nothing at all without the actions and memories of being cared for. A child can be damaged by telling him to centre on the love God has for him and to put God first. God cannot give him the personal touch that another human being can. A child cannot hear God telling him with deep feeling that he loves him. What if you encourage your child to love God and revere God? All you are doing is distorting the child's development into a person who has the potential to be content and fulfilled. Love the sinner and hate the sin will make less sense to a child than it will an adult. Hating the sin will be equated with hating the sinner. Children are told to believe they are sinners. The children will then fear God withdrawing his love which can develop their capacity to block love messages from others. It is training the children in becoming sceptical about the love others have towards them. A child should be raised to be open to her own lovability and value and worth not God's. The child that is into God is unable to face her or his sense of worthlessness and deals with it by distracting herself from it. She concentrates on God instead. But the problems are still there and the mask will slip. To be open to your own value enables you to embrace and seize every moment you have as if it were your very last moment. You are getting meaning in life from just living and not for God or any other reason. You even live as if you will be dead in a moment and going out of existence permanently. Life gives its own meaning and gets it far more when there is awareness that death is the end.

* Thoughts in themselves are not going to change your negative attitude into a more positive one. It is the feelings that do that. It is true that some feelings will be accompanied by certain thoughts and vice versa. But it does not follow that the feelings are the cause of the thoughts or that the thoughts are the cause of the feelings. When feelings matter and are so fundamental then God clearly cannot matter as much as them. Yet God by definition must be the only thing that matters. God is goodness and if you do not see his full worth you are in some way bad or a failure. But this contradicts the fact that feelings come first. Feelings are proof that atheism may not be accepted but should be accepted.

* It is mature to do what I do because I want to do it and not because other people approve. The God concept implies that I should do what I do because God is good and wants me to do it. It makes me worry about what God thinks. God therefore is opposed to self-esteem and maturity.

I should know myself what good is and I shouldn't and wouldn't need a God to command me. You are only good when you follow commands you know are good. When I have to judge God good before I can be good in obeying him, it follows that I should do good because I see it as good in the first place. I shouldn't be doing it to obey him but because it is good. The God belief opposes this attitude. The attitude makes the belief unnecessary and God is claimed to be wholly necessary as a belief.

God shouldn't be commanding me so what I do against other people shouldn't concern God and should concern his church even less.

* It follows from this that it is none of God's business what I do to others. I must try to do my best for myself and others and do it because it is my concern and I want to do it. He has no business forgiving my sins against other people. If I hit a child I hurt the child not him. If it is God's business then my needs and wants do not matter and I should be forced by religion to submit to it's credo. To delight in the mercy of God is to delight in degradation and we must make ourselves feel

that for feelings are contagious.

* God believers crave approval. We rarely get the approval we need from others. And when we do, it soon bores us or it does not last. God believers then project that there is a God who approves them and tell themselves that he exists. It is about their desire for approval and not about God. They are really religious atheists!

* Rather than say evil is a mystery (when no justification exists for God allowing evil to happen, religion resorts to the cop-out that it is a mystery) when God can stop it but won't, it is better to say that an impersonal intelligence not a God created all things and set a good but not all-powerful entity over the universe. That avoids the mystery. It is callous to create mysteries in such an important matter as human suffering for not understanding creates more misery. The Church will reply that then you don't have the consolation of a God who will make all things right in the end. But even if there is a God there is no guarantee that everything will be okay for me and you. The Church says that God does not make it all right in the end for some are confined to Hell to suffer forever. And besides the intelligence has done its best. What kind of person would refuse to see some evil, such as a baby suffering unimaginable horrors, as the intolerable thing it is in order to assert that God will make it all okay in the end? You would need to see the end result to justify it when it is so serious for the baby.

* There is a cruel streak in anybody who would condone a God standing by and allowing dreadful suffering to happen and who makes diseases and killer viruses and who damns many to an eternity in the torment of Hell. If somebody abuses a child you don't try to condone it. If you do, you are just a sweet monster. If you can condone the things God does you can condone anything. God is only a belief. Do you see how awful it is to create a belief and then insult people with it? Do you see that though people see this as harmless that it is still fanaticism? Fanaticism is just fanaticism. When fanaticism doesn't lead to violence it still could. If I am a harmless fanatic I can hardly complain if somebody decides to adopt a fanaticism that gives them a bloodlust.

* God by definition does not need our love or our service for he is perfect and almighty and so is perfectly happy. So he makes us suffer for the sake of virtue he does not need and which we will not need in Heaven for there are no tears or death there. Any good our actions do on earth could have been done by God himself. But I need to feel that my good works for him are needed. Atheism not theism is what makes us more eager to do good for it holds that good makes a real difference. Theism demands good that is nothing but wasting time thanks to God and it is anything but encouraging. Would you like to have a cleaning job in which the employer deliberately dirties the place in order to give you something to do? The God concept was set up as a soul-destroying enterprise that vibrates with distaste towards human happiness.