
Quotes About Religion and Atheism Juxtaposed

The following quotations were compiled and contributed by Ken Helms

"By declaring the logos, the first begotten of God, our master Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin, without any human mixture, we (Christians) say no more in this than what you (pagans) say of those whom you style the sons of Jove."

—**Justin Martyr** First apology, (mid-second Century CE.) Volume I, chapter 22, page 69, in the Reeves edition

Justin Martyr for instance describes the institution of the Lord's Supper as narrated in the Gospels, and then goes on to say:

"Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithra, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated you either know or can learn."

—**Justin Martyr** (circa 156 CE.)

*"The devil by the mysteries of his idols imitates even the main part of the divine mysteries." . . .
"He baptizes his worshippers in water and makes them believe that this purifies them from their crimes." . . . "Mithra sets his mark on the forehead of his soldiers; he celebrates the oblation of bread; he offers an image of the resurrection, and presents at once the crown and the sword; he limits his chief priest to a single marriage; he even has his virgins and ascetics."*

—**Tertullian** (b. ca.150-160, d. ca. 220-240 CE)

"I believe BECAUSE it's impossible."

— **Tertullian** (b. ca. 150-160, d. ca. 220-240CE), one of the writers of the early Christian Church

Bishop Dionysius complains that his own writings *"had been falsified by the apostles of the devil; no wonder, he adds, 'that the Scriptures were falsified by such persons.'"* (CE. v, 10.)

— **Bishop Dionysius** (b. ? d.circa 268 CE).

“The religion published by Jesus Christ to all nations is neither new nor strange... For though, without controversy we are of late, and the name of Christians is indeed new; yet our manner of life and the principles of our religion have not been lately devised by us, but were instituted and observed...from the beginning of the world by good men, accepted by God.”

—**Eusebius** Church Historian (c 260-340) Bishop of Caesarea & Church Historian, considered "the Father of Ecclesiastical History"

“I have repeated whatever may rebound to the glory, and suppressed all that could tend to the disgrace of our religion” (KH Church History as Apologetics)

—**Eusebius**, (c 260-340) 4th century Bishop of Caesarea & Church Historian, considered "the Father of Ecclesiastical History"

“Even in our day, there are still those whose only guide is Deity; ones who live by the true reason of nature, not only themselves free but filling their neighbors with the spirit of freedom. They are not very numerous indeed, but that is not strange, for the highest nobility is ever rare; and then these ones have turned aside from the vulgar herd to devote themselves to a contemplation of nature's verities. They pray, if it were possible, that they may reform our fallen lives; but if they cannot, owing to the tide of evils and wrongs which surge up in cities, they flee away, lest they too be swept off their feet by the force of the current. And we, if we had a true zeal for self-improvement, would have to track them to their places of retreat, and, halting as supplicants before them, would beseech them to come to us and tame our life grown too fierce and wild; preaching instead of war and slavery and untold ills, their Gospel of Peace and freedom, and all the fullness of other blessings.”

—**Eusebius**, (c 260-340) **Bishop of Caesarea** (circa CE.300)

“Nothing can impose better on the people than verbiage; the less they understand, the more they admire. Our [Christian) Fathers and Doctors have often said, not what they thought, but what circumstance and necessity forced them to.”

—**St. Gregory of Nazianzen** (c. 329-389 CE)

“For not only the prophecies which are contained in words, nor only the precepts for the right conduct of life, which teach morals and piety, and are contained in the sacred writings, —not only these, but also the rites, priesthood, tabernacle or temple, altars, sacrifices, ceremonies, and whatever else belongs to that service which is due to God, and which in Greek is properly called latreia, —all these signified and fore-announced those things which we who believe in

Jesus Christ unto eternal life believe to have been fulfilled, or behold in process of fulfillment, or confidently believe shall yet be fulfilled.”

—**St. Augustine** (given as 354-430CE)

“Great is the force of deceit, provided it is not excited by a treacherous intention.”

—**John Chrysostom**, Bishop of Constantinople (circa 347-407) In his commentary on 1 Corinthians 9:19

“How It May Be Lawful and Fitting to Use Falsehood as a Medicine and for the Benefit of Those Who Want to Be Deceived”

—**Anselm Archbishop** of Canterbury (circa 1033-1109 CE) Title of 37th Chapter of the Twelfth Book of Anselm, Evangelical Preparation

“Kill them all. God will select those who should go to heaven and those who should go to hell.”

—**Abbot Arnold de Citeaux**,

“A person is to be punished with a just penalty, who . . . utters blasphemy, or gravely harms public morals, or rails at or excites hatred of or contempt for religion or the Church.”

—**The Catholic Church's Canon Law 1369** (KH I wonder why a Reformation?)

“I will believe that the white that I see is black if the hierarchical Church so defines it.” One of Loyola's fellow Jesuits had this to say about God's Word: *Without the authority of the Church, I would believe St. Matthew no more than Titus Livius.*

—**Ignatius Loyola** (1491-1556) Founded the Jesuit order, from his *“Rules For Thinking With The Church,”* Rule #13

Who being privy to the truth because of his high rank, could make this curious declaration,
“What profit has not that fable of Christ brought us!”

Or as Rev. Taylor has it, in *The Diegesis* but only slightly differently:

“It was well known how profitable this fable of Christ has been to us.”

— **Pope Leo X** (1513-1523) (*The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*, by Barbara Walker, p. 471). (footnote, p. 35.) see more:

"A person is to be punished with a just penalty, who . . . utters blasphemy, or gravely harms public morals, or rails at or excites hatred of or contempt for religion or the Church."

—**The Catholic Church's Canon Law 1369**

"Whoever wants to be a Christian should tear the eyes out of his reason."

— **Martin Luther** (1483-1546)

"Reason is the greatest enemy that faith has; it never comes to the aid of spiritual things, but more frequently than not struggles against the divine Word, treating with contempt all that emanates from God."

—**Martin Luther** (1483-1546)

"Reason should be destroyed in all Christians."

— **Martin Luther** (1483-1546)

"Reason is the Devil's greatest whore; by nature and manner of being she is a noxious whore; she is a prostitute, the Devil's appointed whore; whore eaten by scab and leprosy who ought to be trodden under foot and destroyed, she and her wisdom ... Throw dung in her face to make her ugly. She is and she ought to be drowned in baptism... She would deserve, the wretch, to be banished to the filthiest place in the house, to the closets."

— **Martin Luther** (1483-1546) *Erlangen Edition* v. 16, pp. 142-148

"Reason must be deluded, blinded, and destroyed. Faith must trample underfoot all reason, sense, and understanding, and whatever it sees must be put out of sight and ... know nothing but the word of God."

—**Martin Luther** (1483-1546)

"What harm would it do, if a man told a good strong lie for the sake of the good and for the Christian church? [...] a lie out of necessity, a useful lie, a helpful lie, such lies would not be against God, he would accept them."

— **Martin Luther** (1483-1546)

Stanislaus Hosius, who presided over the **Council of Trent** (1545-1563), is credited the following statement about the value of God's Word: *"Except for the authority of the Holy Mother Church, the Scriptures would have no more weight than the fables of Aesop."*

—**Polish Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius**, (16th Century)

"I was at this time living, like so many Atheists or Antitheists, in a whirl of contradictions. I maintained that God did not exist. I was also very angry with God for not existing. I was equally angry with Him for creating a world."

— **C. S. Lewis**, (1898-1963) famous Christian apologist and former Atheist

"I am convinced that I am acting as the agent of our Almighty Creator. By fighting the Jews, I am doing the Lord's work."

— **Adolf Hitler**, (1889-1945) *Mein Kampf*

"The National Government will preserve and defend those basic principles on which our nation has been built. It regards Christianity as the foundation of our national morality, and the family as the basis of national life."

— **Adolf Hitler**, (1889-1945) Berlin, 1933, first radio address after coming to power

"I am now as before a Catholic and will always remain so."

— **Adolf Hitler**, (1889-1945) 1941

"Give me a child for the first 5 years of his life and he will be mine forever."

— **Vladimir Lenin** (1870-1924)

"Autocracy cannot do without its twin agents: a hangman and a priest, the first to suppress popular resistance by force, the second to sweeten and embellish the lot of the oppressed with empty promises of a heavenly kingdom."

—**Vladimir Lenin** (1870-1924)

*"We don't have to protect the environment - the Second Coming is at hand."
"After the last tree is felled, Christ will come back."*

—**James Watt**, Interior Secretary under Ronald Reagan

“Those who control what young people are taught, and what they experience - what they see, hear, think, and believe - will determine the future course for the nation.”

—**James Dobson**, Ph.D Founder, former president and chairman of the board of Focus on the Family, a nonprofit organization that produces his internationally syndicated radio programs heard daily on more than 8,300 radio facilities in 25 languages in more than 164 other countries.

“With all due respect to those dear people, my friend, God almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew.”

—**Bailey Smith**, Christian Coalition

“I don't know that Atheists should be considered as citizens, nor should they be considered patriots. This is one nation under God.”

—**George H.W. Bush**, President

“On the issue of evolution, the verdict is still out on how God created the Earth.”

—**George W. Bush**, President

“There are a lot of very brilliant scholars who believe the reason we have incomplete science on evolution is that there is a higher power involved in this.”

— **Bill O'Reilly**, conservative TV and radio host

“AIDS is not just God's punishment for homosexuals; it is God's punishment for the society that tolerates homosexuals.”

— **Reverend Jerry Falwell**

“If we ever opened a meeting with a prayer, silent or otherwise, we would disintegrate.”

— **Rev. Jerry Falwell** Founder of Moral Majority, Address to the Religious Newswriters Association in New Orleans, explaining why Moral Majority meetings do not open with prayer.

“Leftist organizations are aggressively attempting to redefine America in their own Godless image.”

— **Reverend Jerry Falwell**

Cal Thomas, director of communications for Moral Majority, said his group did not open meetings with prayer *“because it is a political organization that includes Jews, Catholics, Mormons, Protestants, and some “non-religious” members. “What kind of prayer would we use?”* he asked. Quoted from *“Falwell Arms the Opposition,” San Francisco Chronicle*, Sept. 19, 1982.

— **Cal Thomas**

“People for the American Way says it has yet to find anyone who has made a stronger case against the proposed school prayer Constitutional amendment.”

“The Bible is the supreme law that all governments must obey.”

— **Randall Terry**, founder of Operation Rescue

“I want you to just let a wave of intolerance wash over you. I want you to let a wave of hatred wash over you. Yes, hate is good - Our goal is a Christian nation. We have a Biblical duty. We are called by God to conquer this country.”

— **Randall Terry**

“If Christian people work together, they can succeed during this decade in winning back control of the institutions that have been taken from them over the past 70 years. Expect confrontations that will be not only unpleasant but at times physically bloody. When it is over, I am convinced God’s people will emerge victorious.”

— **Reverend Pat Robertson**

“The feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians.”

— Reverend Pat Robertson

"We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity."

— Ann Coulter, conservative author

"The Church does not dictate the policies of the nation. The Church proclaims the truth of God to which all these policies must conform."

— Father Frank Provone of Priests for Life, at a prayer breakfast during the 2000 Republican Convention

Whereas dangers and threats to our Nation persist and, in this time of peril, it is appropriate that the people of the United States, leaders and citizens alike, seek guidance, strength, and resolve through prayer and fasting: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the President should issue a proclamation —

(1) designating a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States; and

(2) calling on all people of the United States—

(A) to observe the day as a time of prayer and fasting;

(B) to seek guidance from God to achieve a greater understanding of our own failings and to learn how we can do better in our everyday activities; and

(C) to gain resolve in meeting the challenges that confront our Nation.

— H. RES. 153, 108th CONGRESS, March 27, 2003, passed by an overwhelming vote

NOTE: A similar bill in the Senate passed unanimously

NOW BY WAY OF THOUGHTFUL CONTRAST USING FACTS AND REASON

"Why should I fear death? If I am, death is not. If death is, I am not. Why should I fear that which can only exist when I do not?"

— **Epicurus** (341-270 BCE)

"Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able?

Then he is not omnipotent.

Is he able, but not willing?

Then he is malevolent.

Is he both able and willing?

Then whence cometh evil?

Is he neither able nor willing?

Then why call him God?"

— **Epicurus** (ca. 341-270 B.C.E.)

"The world holds two classes of men – intelligent men without religion, and religious men without intelligence."

— **Abu'l-Ala-Al-Ma'arri**, (973-1057 C.E.), Syrian poet

"I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use."

— **Galileo** (1564-1642)

"Religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich."

— **Napoleon Bonaparte** (1769-1821)

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

— **from the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution**

"... no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States."

— **from Article VI of the U.S. Constitution**

"The Government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion."

— **The Treaty of Tripoli**, written during the administration of President George Washington, signed by President John Adams and unanimously approved by the Senate in 1797.

"E Pluribus Unum" (Out of many, one)

— **The original national motto**

"The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"The study of theology, as it stands in Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities; it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing; and it admits of no conclusion."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809) *The Age of Reason*

"I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809) *ibid.*

"It is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what one does not believe. It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809) *ibid.*

"The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"Of all the tyrannies that affect mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst; every other species of tyranny is limited to the world we live in; but this attempts to stride beyond the grave, and seeks to pursue us into eternity."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"I put the following work under your protection. It contains my opinion upon religion. You will do me the justice to remember, that I have always strenuously supported the right of every man to his opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this right, makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"Whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and tortuous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveness with which more than half the Bible is filled, it would be more consistent that we call it the word of a demon than the word of God. It is a history of wickedness that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"What is it the Bible teaches us? - raping, cruelty, and murder. What is it the New Testament teaches us? - to believe that the Almighty committed debauchery with a woman engaged to be married, and the belief of this debauchery is called faith."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

"And to read the Bible without horror, we must undo everything that is tender, sympathising and benevolent in the heart of man."

— **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809)

“Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man & his god, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, (1743-1826) *Letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, 1802*

“The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as are injurious to others.”

—**Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826), in his *Statute for Religious Freedom*, saying government has no authority over one's religious opinions, thus defining "crime" as the injury of a person or his property

“Christianity is the most perverted system that ever shone on man.”

— **Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826)

“It is between fifty and sixty years since I read the Apocalypse, and I then considered it merely the ravings of a maniac.”

— **Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826)

“The Christian God is a being of terrific character — cruel, vindictive, capricious, and unjust.”

— **Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826)

“Fix Reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God; because, if there be one, he must more approve the homage of reason than of blindfolded fear. ... Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. If it end in a belief that there is no God, you will find incitements to virtue in the comfort and pleasantness you feel in its exercise and in the love of others which it will procure for you”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, (1743-1826) *Jefferson's Works, Vol. II.*, p. 217

“Shake off all the fears of servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call on her tribunal for every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of God; because, if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of REASON than that of BLINDFOLDED fear.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to nephew Peter Carr, 1787

“The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the supreme being as his father in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to John Adams, 1823

“The whole history of these books [the Gospels] is so defective and doubtful that it seems vain to attempt minute enquiry into it; and such tricks have been played with their text, and with the texts of other books relating to them, that we have a right, from that cause, to entertain much doubt what parts of them are genuine. In the New Testament there is internal evidence that parts of it have proceeded from an extraordinary man; and that other parts are of the fabric of very inferior minds. It is as easy to separate those parts, as to pick out diamonds from dunghills.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to John Adams (January 24, 1814)

“I have ever judged of the religion of others by their lives... But this does not satisfy the priesthood. They must have a positive, a declared assent to all of their interested absurdities. My opinion is that there would never have been an infidel, if there had never been a priest.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to Mrs. M. Harrison Smith, 1816

“History, I believe, furnishes no example of a priest-ridden people maintaining a free civil government. This marks the lowest grade of ignorance, of which their political as well as religious leaders will always avail themselves for their own purposes.”

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to Alexander Humboldt, 1813

“Millions of innocent men, women and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What

has been the effect of coercion? To make one half of the world fools and the other half hypocrites. To support roguery and error all over the world."

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Notes on the State of Virginia, 1787

"I have recently been examining all the known superstitions of the world, and do not find in our particular superstition (Christianity) one redeeming feature. They are all alike, founded on fables and mythology."

— **Thomas Jefferson**, Letter to Dr. Woods

"The clergy converted the simple teachings of Jesus into an engine for enslaving mankind and adulterated by artificial constructions into a contrivance to filch wealth and power to themselves...these clergy, in fact, constitute the real Anti-Christ."

— **Thomas Jefferson**

"I do not find in orthodox Christianity one redeeming feature."

— **Thomas Jefferson**

"On the dogmas of religion, as distinguished from moral principles, all mankind, from the beginning of the world to this day, have been quarreling, fighting, burning and torturing one another, for abstractions unintelligible to themselves and to all others, and absolutely beyond the comprehension of the human mind."

— **Thomas Jefferson**

"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

— **Benjamin Franklin**, (1706-1790) from the *Historical Review of Pennsylvania*, which warns, among other things, that if we don't use the Liberty to hold and express our own religious opinions, even if out of the fear of reprisal, then we rightly forfeit that Liberty

"Lighthouses are more helpful than churches."

— **Benjamin Franklin** (1706-1790)

"I have found Christian dogma unintelligible. Early in life I absented myself from Christian assemblies."

— **Benjamin Franklin**, *Toward The Mystery*

"The way to see by Faith is to shut the eye of Reason."

— **Benjamin Franklin**, *Poor Richard*, 1758

"Revealed religion has no weight with me."

— **Benjamin Franklin** (1706-1790)

"Indeed, when religious people quarrel about religion, or hungry people quarrel about victuals, it looks as if they had not much of either among them."

— **Benjamin Franklin**, quoted by Joseph Lewis in *Benjamin Franklin - Freethinker*

"Do not, however, mistake me. It is not to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, 'tis his honesty that brought upon him the character of a heretic"

— **Benjamin Franklin**, letter to Benjamin Vaughan, in *Works*, Vol. X, p.365

"The things of this world take up too much of my time, of which indeed I have too little left, to undertake anything like a reformation in religion"

— **Benjamin Franklin**, *Works*, Vol. X', p. 323

"Religion I found to be without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serves principally to divide us and make us unfriendly to one another."

— **Benjamin Franklin**

"The divinity of Jesus is made a convenient cover for absurdity. Nowhere in the Gospels do we find a precept for Creeds, Confessions, Oaths, Doctrines, and whole carloads of other foolish trumpery that we find in Christianity."

— **John Adams** (1735-1826)

"The question before the human race is, whether the God of nature shall govern the world by his own laws, or whether priests and kings shall rule it by fictitious miracles?"

— **John Adams**, letter to Thomas Jefferson

"As I understand the Christian religion, it was, and is, a revelation. But how has it happened that millions of fables, tales, legends, have been blended with both Jewish and Christian revelation that have made them the most bloody religion that ever existed?"

— **John Adams**, letter to F.A. Van der Kamp, Dec. 27, 1816

"I almost shudder at the thought of alluding to the most fatal example of the abuses of grief which the history of mankind has preserved - the Cross. Consider what calamities that engine of grief has produced!"

— **John Adams**, letter to Thomas Jefferson

"What havoc has been made of books through every century of the Christian era? Where are fifty gospels, condemned as spurious by the bull of Pope Gelasius? Where are the forty wagon-loads of Hebrew manuscripts burned in France, by order of another pope, because suspected of heresy? Remember the 'index expurgatorius', the inquisition, the stake, the axe, the halter and the guillotine."

— **John Adams**, letter to John Taylor

"The priesthood have, in all ancient nations, nearly monopolized learning. And ever since the Reformation, when or where has existed a Protestant or dissenting sect who would tolerate A FREE INQUIRY? The blackest billingsgate, the most ungentlemanly insolence, the most yahooish brutality, is patiently endured, countenanced, propagated, and applauded. But touch a

solemn truth in collision with a dogma of a sect, though capable of the clearest proof, and you will find you have disturbed a nest, and the hornets will swarm about your eyes and hand, and fly into your face and eyes."

— **John Adams**, letter to John Taylor

"This is my religion . . . joy and exaltation in my own existence . . . so go ahead and snarl . . . bite . . . howl, you Calvinistic divines and all you who say I am no Christian. I say you are not Christian."

— **John Adams**, *Toward the Mystery*

"[In regard to the Trinity]; "Tom, had you and I been 40 days with Moses, and beheld the great God, and even if God himself had tried to tell us that three was one . . . and one equals three, you and I would never have believed it. We would never fall victims to such lies."

— **John Adams**, letter to Thomas Jefferson

"Indeed, Mr. Jefferson, what could be invented to debase the ancient Christianity, which Greeks, Romans, Hebrews and Christian factions, above all the Catholics, have not fraudulently imposed upon the public? Miracles after miracles have rolled down in torrents, wave succeeding wave in the Catholic church, from the Council of Nicea, and long before, to this day."

— **John Adams**, to Jefferson, 3 December 1813]

"The United States of America have exhibited, perhaps, the first example of governments erected on the simple principles of nature; and if men are now sufficiently enlightened to disabuse themselves of artifice, imposture, hypocrisy, and superstition, they will consider this event as an era in their history. Although the detail of the formation of the American governments is at present little known or regarded either in Europe or in America, it may hereafter become an object of curiosity. It will never be pretended that any persons employed in that service had interviews with the gods, or were in any degree under the influence of Heaven, more than those at work upon ships or houses, or laboring in merchandise or agriculture; it will forever be acknowledged that these governments were contrived merely by the use of reason and the senses...."

— **John Adams**, *A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*; from Adrienne Koch, ed., *The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society*, p. 258

"Nothing is more dreaded than the national government meddling with religion."

— **John Adams** (1735-1826)

"The United States of America governments have exhibited, perhaps, the first example of governments erected on the simple principles of nature. It will never be pretended that any persons employed in that service had interviews with the gods, or were in any degree under the influence of Heaven, more than those at work upon ships or houses, or laboring in merchandise or agriculture; it will forever be acknowledged that these governments were contrived merely by the use of reason and the senses."

— **John Adams** (1735-1826)

"The most extravagant legends, as they conduced to the honour of the Church, were apprehended by the credulous multitude, countenanced by the power of the clergy, and attestd by the suspicious evidence of ecclesiastical history."

— **Sir Edward Gibbon** (1734-1794) in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* 1776-88 [Modern Library p.502]

"During almost fifteen centuries has the legal establishment of Christianity been on trial. What has been its fruits? More or less, in all places, pride and indolence in the clergy; ignorance and servility in the laity; in both, superstition, bigotry and persecution."

— **James Madison** (1751-1836)- chief architect of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

"Who does not see that the same authority, which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other Sects?"

— **James Madison** (1751-1836) 4th U.S. President (1809-1817) "A Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments," addressed to the Virginia General Assembly, 1785

"It degrades from the equal rank of Citizens all those whose opinions in Religion do not bend to those of the Legislative authority. Distant as it may be in its present form from the Inquisition, it differs from it only in degree."

— **James Madison** (1751-1836)

"Strongly guarded as is the separation between Religion and Government in the Constitution of the United States, the danger of encroachment by Ecclesiastical Bodies may be illustrated by precedents already furnished in their short history."

— **James Madison**, undated, *Detached Memoranda*

"To remain silent when one should protest makes cowards out of men."

— **Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1864)

"The Bible is not my Book and Christianity is not my religion. I could never give assent to the long complicated statements of Christian dogma."

— **Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1864)

"I am for liberty of conscience in its noblest, broadest, and highest sense. But I cannot give liberty of conscience to the pope and his followers, the papists, so long as they tell me, through all their councils, theologians, and canon laws that their conscience orders them to burn my wife, strangle my children, and cut my throat when they find their opportunity."

— **Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1864)

"I see a very dark cloud on America's horizon, and that cloud is coming from Rome."

— **Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1864)

"It will not do to investigate the subject of religion too closely, as it is apt to lead to infidelity."

— **Abraham Lincoln**, from *What Great Men Think Of Religion* by Ira Cardiff

"My husband is not a Christian but is a religious man, I think."

— **Mary Todd Lincoln**, 1818-1882 Lincoln's wife, in *Toward The Mystery*

"Religion is all bunk."

— **Thomas Edison** (1847-1931)

"Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science."

— **Charles Darwin**

"Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"Man is a marvelous curiosity ... he thinks he is the Creator's pet ... he even believes the Creator loves him; has a passion for him; sits up nights to admire him; yes and watch over him and keep him out of trouble. He prays to Him and thinks He listens. Isn't it a quaint idea"?

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"I cannot see how a man of any large degree of humorous perception can ever be religious - unless he purposely shut the eyes of his mind & keep them shut by force."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"When one reads Bibles, one is less surprised at what the Deity knows than at what He doesn't know."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"Blasphemy? No, it is not blasphemy. If God is as vast as that, he is above blasphemy; if He is as little as that, He is beneath it."

— **Mark Twain**

"If the man doesn't believe as we do, we say he is a crank, and that settles it. I mean, it does nowadays, because now we can't burn him."

— **Mark Twain**

"To trust the God of the Bible is to trust an irascible, vindictive, fierce and ever fickle and changeful master."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"In God We Trust. It is the choicest compliment that has ever been paid us, and the most gratifying to our feelings. It is simple, direct, gracefully phrased; it always sounds well - In God We Trust. I don't believe it would sound any better if it were true."

— **Mark Twain**

"If Christ were here there is one thing he would not be - a Christian."

— **Mark Twain**

"The so-called Christian nations are the most enlightened and progressive ... but in spite of their religion, not because of it. The Church has opposed every innovation and discovery from the day of Galileo down to our own time, when the use of anesthetic in childbirth was regarded as a sin because it avoided the biblical curse pronounced against Eve. And every step in astronomy and geology ever taken has been opposed by bigotry and superstition. The Greeks surpassed us in artistic culture and in architecture five hundred years before Christian religion was born."

— **Mark Twain**

"Nothing agrees with me. If I drink coffee, it gives me dyspepsia; if I drink wine, it gives me the gout; if I go to church, it gives me dysentery."

— **Mark Twain**

"The church is always trying to get other people to reform; it might not be a bad idea to reform itself a little, by way of example."

— **Mark Twain**

"The bible has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies."

— **Mark Twain**

"Faith is believing what you know ain't so."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"We despise all reverences and all the objects of reverence which are outside the pale of our own list of sacred things. And yet, with strange inconsistency, we are shocked when other people despise and defile the things which are holy to us."

— **Mark Twain**, *Following the Equator*

"I was dead for millions of years before I was born and it never inconvenienced me a bit."

— **Mark Twain** (1835-1910)

"Which is it, is man one of God's blunders or is God one of man's?"

— **Friedrich Nietzsche**, (1844-1900)

"After coming into contact with a religious man I always feel I must wash my hands."

— **Friedrich Nietzsche** (1844-1900)

"So long as the priest, that professional negator, slanderer and poisoner of life, is regarded as a superior type of human being, there cannot be any answer to the question: What is Truth?"

— **Friedrich Nietzsche**, *The Antichrist*

"The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one. The happiness of credulity is a cheap and dangerous quality."

— **George Bernard Shaw** (1856-1950)

"We may define "faith" as the firm belief in something for which there is no evidence. Where there is evidence, no one speaks of "faith." We do not speak of faith that two and two are four or that the earth is round. We only speak of faith when we wish to substitute emotion for evidence. The substitution of emotion for evidence is apt to lead to strife, since different groups, substitute different emotions."

— **Bertrand Russell** (1872-1970)

“When two men of science disagree, they do not invoke the secular arm; they wait for further evidence to decide the issue, because, as men of science, they know that neither is infallible. But when two theologians differ, since there is no criteria to which either can appeal, there is nothing for it but mutual hatred and an open or covert appeal to force.”

— **Bertrand Russell** (1872-1970)

“My conclusion is that there is no reason to believe any of the dogmas of traditional theology and, further, that there is no reason to wish that they were true. Man, in so far as he is not subject to natural forces, is free to work out his own destiny. The responsibility is his, and so is the opportunity.”

— **Bertrand Russell** (1872-1970) from an unpublished essay, "Is There a God?" (1952)

“The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.”

— **Bertrand Russell** (1872-1970)

“So far as I can remember, there is not one word in the Gospels in praise of intelligence.”

— **Bertrand Russell** (1872-1970)

“Most people would sooner die than think; in fact, they do so.”

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

“There is no reason for believing that any sort of gods exist, and quite good reasons for believing that they do not exist and never have. It has all been a gigantic waste of time and a waste of life. It would be a joke of cosmic proportions if it weren't so tragic.”

— **Richard Dawkins**

“Science shares with religion the claim that it answers deep questions about origins, the nature of life, and the cosmos. But there the resemblance ends. Scientific beliefs are supported by evidence, and they get results. Myths and faiths are not and do not.”

— **Richard Dawkins**, *River out of Eden*

"I am very hostile to religion because it is enormously dominant, especially in American life. And I don't buy the argument that, well, it's harmless. I think it is harmful, partly because I care passionately about what's true."

— **Richard Dawkins**

"We who are Atheists are also a-fairyists, a-teapotists, and a-unicornists, but we don't have to bother saying so."

— **Richard Dawkins**

"The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference."

— **Richard Dawkins**

"Since all organisms inherit all their genes from their ancestors, rather than from their ancestors' unsuccessful contemporaries, all organisms tend to possess successful genes. They have what it takes to become ancestors - and that means to survive and reproduce. This is why organisms tend to inherit genes with a propensity to build a well-designed machine - a body that actively works as if it is striving to become an ancestor. That is why birds are so good at flying, fish so good at swimming, monkeys so good at climbing, viruses so good at spreading. That is why we love life and love sex and love children. It is because we all, without a single exception, inherit all of our genes from an unbroken line of successful ancestors. The world becomes full of organisms that have what it takes to become ancestors. That, in a sentence, is Darwinism."

— **Richard Dawkins**, *River out of Eden*, page 2

"Another meme of the religious meme complex is called faith. It means blind trust, in the absence of evidence, even in the teeth of evidence. The story of Doubting Thomas is told, not so that we shall admire Thomas, but so that we can admire the other apostles in comparison. Thomas demanded evidence. Nothing is more lethal for certain kinds of meme than a tendency to look for evidence. The other apostles, whose faith was so strong that they did not need evidence, are held up to us as worthy of imitation. The meme for blind faith secures its own perpetuation by the simple unconscious expedient of discouraging rational inquiry."

— **Richard Dawkins**, *The Selfish Gene*

"Natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly

impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker, impress us with the illusion of design and planning."

—**Richard Dawkins**, *The Blind Watchmaker*

"Let's get up off our knees, stop cringing before bogeymen and virtual fathers, face reality, and help science to do something constructive about human suffering."

—**Richard Dawkins**,

"The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, it is the illusion of knowledge."

— **Stephen Hawking**

"Religion has ever been anti-human, anti-woman, anti-life, anti-peace, anti-reason and anti-science. The god idea has been detrimental not only to humankind but to the earth. It is time now for reason, education and science to take over."

— **Madalyn Murray O'Hair** - Speech, 1990

"For me, it is far better to grasp the Universe as it really is than to persist in delusion, however satisfying and reassuring."

— **Carl Sagan**

"Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence."

— **Carl Sagan**

"Intellectual honesty is a skill that has to be learned and a virtue that has to be practiced; it often requires you to accept unpleasant conclusions."

— **John B. Hodges**

"If faith is 'believing what you are told', religious ethics is 'doing what you are told'."

— **John B. Hodges**

"Religion is a bandage that man has invented to protect a soul made bloody by circumstance."

— **Theodore Herman Albert Dreiser**

"Finding that no religion is based on facts and cannot therefore be true, I began to reflect what must be the condition of mankind trained from infancy to believe in errors."

— **Robert Owen**, reformer and philanthropist

"Gods are fragile things; they may be killed by a whiff of science or a dose of common sense."

— **Chapman Cohen**

"Man is certainly stark mad; he cannot make a worm, yet he will make gods by the dozen."

— **Michel de Montaigne**

"All my life I have made it a rule never to permit a religious man or woman take for granted that his or her religious beliefs deserved more consideration than non-religious beliefs or anti-religious ones. I never agree with that foolish statement that I ought to respect the views of others when I believe them to be wrong."

— **Chapman Cohen**, *The Creed of Empowerment*

"If you can tell me what to think, then I can tell you where to go."

— **Unknown**

"You can't reason a person out of a position that they didn't reason themselves into in the first place."

— **Unknown**

"Those who get instructions directly from the Almighty are twice blessed. They get their orders from the Highest Authority, and the orders are always to do what they would have done anyway."

— **Harley Sorensen**, SF Gate

“A patriot must always be ready to defend his country against its government.”

— **Edward Abbey** (1927-1989)

“In contradiction to the Bible, the First Amendment to our Constitution gives us the right to worship gods (or not), work on Sunday (or not), and say what we wish about the various gods. The Constitution, conceived by what may be the most brilliant and visionary group of men ever assembled, must take precedence over a book compiled by self-serving peoples of ancient cultures.”

— **David Miles**, Orange Beach, AL

“ATHEIST is really a thoroughly honest, unambiguous term, it admits of no paltering and of no evasion, and the need of the world, now as ever, is for clear-cut issues and unambiguous speech.”

— **Chapman Cohen**

“I have the honesty to say I’m an Atheist. There is nothing that supports the idea of a personal God.”

— **Ernst Mayr**, (1905-2005) Harvard University, one of the most influential biologists in history

“On the other hand, famous evolutionists such as Dobzhansky were firm believers in a personal God. He would work as a scientist all week and then on Sunday get down on his knees and pray to God. Frankly I’ve never been able to understand it because you would need two totally different compartments in your brain, one that deals with religion and the other with everything else.”

— **Ernst Mayr** (1905-2005)

“What the mind doesn't understand, it worships or fears.”

— **Alice Walker**, Pulitzer Prize-winning author

"Most men would kill the truth if truth would kill their religion."

— **Lemuel Washburn**

When religion comes in at the door, common sense goes out at the window"

— **Lemuel Washburn**

"One of the great achievements of science has been, if not to make it impossible for intelligent people to be religious, then at least to make it possible for them not to be religious."

— **Steven Weinberg**, Nobel laureate physicist

"Religion is an insult to human dignity. With or without it you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion."

— **Steven Weinberg**, in *Freethought Today*, April, 2000

"With or without religion, good people can behave well and bad people can do evil; but for good people to do evil - that takes religion."

— **Steven Weinberg**

"Wherever science has not yet cast its illuminating light, the supernatural or metaphysical can and will always be unwrapped by some of us, to provide an explanation."

— **Ronald Jenner**, Postdoctoral Researcher, Marie Curie Fellow

"The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed – and hence clamorous to be led to safety – by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary."

— **H.L. Mencken**

- *I believe that religion, generally speaking, has been a curse to mankind - that its modest and greatly overestimated services on the ethical side have been more than overcome by the damage it has done to clear and honest thinking.*

- *I believe that no discovery of fact, however trivial, can be wholly useless to the race, and that no trumpeting of falsehood, however virtuous in intent, can be anything but vicious.*
- *I believe that all government is evil, in that all government must necessarily make war upon liberty...*
- *I believe that the evidence for immortality is no better than the evidence of witches, and deserves no more respect.*
- *I believe in the complete freedom of thought and speech...*
- *I believe in the capacity of man to conquer his world, and to find out what it is made of, and how it is run.*
- *I believe in the reality of progress.*
- *But the whole thing, after all, may be put very simply. I believe that it is better to tell the truth than to lie.*
- *I believe that it is better to be free than to be a slave. And I believe that it is better to know than to be ignorant.*

— **Mencken's Creed**

“People who oppose evolution, and seek to have creationism or intelligent design included in science curricula, seek to dismiss and change the most successful way of knowing ever discovered. They wish to substitute opinion and belief for evidence and testing. The proponents of creationism/intelligent design promote scientific ignorance in the guise of learning. As professional scientists and educators, we strongly assert that such efforts are both misguided and flawed, presenting an incorrect view of science, its understandings, and its processes.”

— Botanical Society of America

“There is no other door to knowledge than the door Nature opens. And there is no truth but the truth we discover in Nature.”

— Luther Burbank (1849-1926) Horticulturist

“Those who would legislate against the teaching of evolution should also legislate against gravity, electricity and the unreasonable velocity of light, and also, should introduce a clause to prevent the use of the telescope, the microscope and the spectroscope or any other instrument of precision which may in the future be invented, constructed or used for the discovery of truth.”

— Luther Burbank

“Evolution lies at the heart of biology. It is seamlessly and continuously linked to health research to better understand such conditions as AIDS or bird flu or Parkinson's or cancer or heart disease. Every biomedical experiment, every tiny advance, every major breakthrough ultimately connects to the principles first postulated by Darwin.”

— Huntington F. Willard of Duke University, author of the textbook *Genetics in Medicine*, Director of the Institute for Genome Sciences and Policy

“There is nothing wrong with challenging conventional wisdom - continuing challenge is a core feature of science. But challengers should at least be aware of, read, cite, and specifically rebut the actual data that supports conventional wisdom, not merely construct a rhetorical edifice out of omission of relevant facts, selective quoting, bad analogies, knocking down strawmen, and tendentious interpretations. Unless and until the 'intelligent design' movement does this, they are not seriously in the game. They're not even playing the same sport.”

“The Bible identifies 15 crimes against the family worthy of the death penalty.

ABORTION is treason against the family and deserves the DEATH PENALTY.

ADULTERY is treason to the family; adulterers should be put to DEATH.

HOMOSEXUALITY is treason to the family, and it too, is worthy of DEATH.”

— R.J. Rushdoony, to Bill Moyers on television. From a PBS Home Video: *God and Politics: On Earth as it is in Heaven*, 1988.

R.J. Rushdoony hasn't read his bible much. God may oppose abortion but he doesn't seem to mind killing of children: Numbers 31:2-17, Deuteronomy 2:34, Deuteronomy 3:3 - 6, Joshua 5:21, 1Samuel 15:3, etc, etc.

Concerning adultery, many of the bible's heroes committed it with God's blessing: Genesis 38:8-10, Hosea 1:2, 2 Samuel 11:4 (David was punished for this one but not the death penalty as Rushdoony suggested), to list a few.

But concerning the death penalty, there's the following problem: Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God has God made man." Sounds like a bit of a contradiction with all those OT laws.

“God himself shows little respect for what is best in the Bible. He commands 'Thou shalt not kill', and then promptly orders the killing of many thousands. Moses condemns human sacrifice but God demands the sacrifice of Isaac and accepts that of Jephthah's daughter. Jesus preaches 'whoever shall say 'you fool!', shall be in danger of hell fire', but shortly after this rages at the pharisees saying 'you fools!'.”

— Prof Carl Lofmark, *What is the Bible?*

“The theist must present an intelligible description of god. Until he does so, god makes no more sense than unic; both are cognitively empty, and any attempt at proof is logically absurd.”

— George H. Smith, *Atheism: The Case Against God*

“The belief in eternal torment, still subscribed to by fundamentalist Christian denominations, undoubtedly ranks as the most vicious and reprehensible doctrine of classical Christianity. It has resulted in an incalculable amount of psychological torture, especially among children where it is employed as a terror tactic to prompt obedience.”

— George H. Smith, *ibid.*

“It cannot be emphasised too strongly that Christianity has a vested interest in human misery. Christianity, perhaps more than any religion before or since, capitalized on human suffering; and it was enormously successful in insuring its own existence through the perpetuation of human suffering.”

— George H. Smith, *ibid.*

“Just as Christianity must destroy reason before it can introduce faith, so it must destroy happiness before it can introduce salvation.”

— George H. Smith, *ibid.*

“Reason is not one tool of thought among many, it is the entire toolbox. To advocate that reason be discarded in some circumstances is to advocate that thinking be discarded - which leaves one in the position of attempting to do a job after throwing away the required instrument.”

— George H. Smith, *ibid.*

“I am arguing that faith as such, faith as an alleged method of acquiring knowledge, is totally invalid and as a consequence, all propositions of faith, because they lack rational demonstration, must conflict with reason.”

— George H. Smith, *ibid.*

“All religions are sick men's dreams, false - demonstrably false - and pernicious”.

— Ibn Warraq, *Why I Am Not a Muslim*

“And so the violence continued century after century, fired by a Spirit which gloated with vindictive piety over the suffering of burning heretics on earth with superhuman malice upon their imagined suffering beyond the grave.”

— Mark Mason, *The Christian Holocaust*

“The idea of God implies the abdication of human reason and justice; it is the most decisive negation of human liberty, and necessarily ends in the enslavement of mankind, both in theory and in practice.”

— Mikhail Bakunin, *God and the State*, 1871

“If God is, man is a slave; now, man can and must be free; then, God does not exist.”

— Mikhail Bakunin, *ibid.* p. 25

“People go to church for the same reasons they go to a tavern: to stupefy themselves, to forget their misery, to imagine themselves, for a few minutes anyway, free and happy.”

— Mikhail Bakunin

“I call him free who is led solely by reason.”

— Baruch Spinoza

“Those who wish to seek out the cause of miracles, and to understand the things of nature as philosophers, and not to stare at them in astonishment like fools, are soon considered heretical and impious, and proclaimed as such by those whom the mob adores as the interpreters of nature and the gods. For these men know that, once ignorance is put aside, that wonderment would be taken away, which is the only means by which their authority is preserved.”

- Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics* (1677)

“*The Age of Reason* was responsible for making more people into infidels than any other book except the Bible.”

— Gordon Stein

“Let me tell you that religion is the cruelest fraud ever perpetrated upon the human race. It is the last of the great schemes of thievery that man must legally prohibit so as to protect himself from the charlatans who prey upon the ignorance and fears of the people.”

— Joseph Lewis, American Freethinker

“The division between faith and reason is a half-measure, till it is frankly admitted that faith has to do with fiction, and reason with fact.”

— Sir Leslie Stephen, *Essays on Freethinking and Plainspeaking*

“What I conclude is that religion has nothing to do with experience or reason but with deep and irrational needs.”

— Richard Taylor, "Will Secularism Survive?", *Free Inquiry*

“Jesus, in fact, was typical of a certain kind of fanatical young idealist: at one moment holding forth with tears in his eyes about the need for universal love; at the next, furiously denouncing the morons, crooks and bigots who do not see eye to eye with him. It is very natural and very human behaviour. But it is not supernatural. Many of the great men in history (for example Socrates and Gandhi) have met criticism with more dignity and restraint.”

— Margaret Knight, Lecturer on Psychology, Aberdeen University

“This hideous doctrine of eternal torment after death has probably caused more terror and misery, more cruelty and more violation of natural human sympathy, than any belief in the history of mankind. Yet this doctrine was taught unambiguously by Jesus.”

— Margaret Knight

“There is no justification for the common claim that Christianity was responsible for the abolition of slavery. The Negro slave trade – a far more infamous practice than slavery in the ancient world – was initiated, carried on and defended by Christian men in Christian countries.”

— Margaret Knight

“The dominant Catholic Church jumped through legalistic hoops to make slavery not only acceptable but justifiable as a way of spreading the faith. Indeed, slave owners were obliged by law to baptise their slaves.”

— Phil Grabsky, writer – *An Inconvenient History*, BBC

“It is a terrible commentary on Christian civilisation that the longest period of slave-raiding known to history was initiated by the action of Spain, Portugal, France, Holland and Britain, after the Christian faith had for more than a thousand years been the established religion of Europe.”

— H.A.L. Fisher, *History of Europe*

“Let's not forget that the first holocaust took place not in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany, or Poland, but on the cotton fields of Christian America, the gold mines of Catholic Brazil, and the sugar plantations of the Carribean. One and a half million negroes died in transit from their homeland. We don't know how many were worked, whipped, tortured, hanged or beaten to death but the ultimate toll was considerably greater than the combined toll in Auswitz, Belsen and the like. We're talking about the Christian holocaust.”

— OzHeretic *Prepare Slaughter*

“These attempts to turn courthouses into pulpits will continue to be challenged with facts and defeated with reason.”

— David Condo, Maryland State Director for American Atheists

“The test of a good religion is whether you can joke about it.”

— G. K. Chesterson

“If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him; let us worship God through Jesus if we must - if ignorance has so far prevailed that this name can still be spoken in all seriousness without being taken as a synonym for rapine and carnage. Every sensible man, every honourable man, must hold the Christian sect in horror...”

— Voltaire

“Religion began when the first scoundrel met the first fool.”

— Voltaire

“You will notice that in all disputes between Christians since the birth of the Church, Rome has always favored the doctrine which most completely subjugated the human mind and annihilated reason.”

— Voltaire

“He who is involved in ecstasies and visions, who takes dreams for reality, and his own imagination for prophesy, is a fanatical novice of great hope and promise, and will soon advance to the higher stage and kill men for the love of God.”

— Voltaire

“The quest for God may be likened to a blind man in a darkened room looking for a black cat that isn't there.”

— Anon.

Philosophy is like being in a dark room and looking for a black cat.

Metaphysics is like being in a dark room and looking for a black cat that isn't there.

Theology is like being in a dark room and looking for a black cat that isn't there and shouting "I found it!"

— Anon.

“Philosophy is questions that may never be answered. Religion is answers that may never be questioned.”

— Anon.

“If you are comfortable with a lie, you will never look for the truth.”

— Anon.

“[T]he Court has unambiguously concluded that the individual freedom of conscience protected by the First Amendment embraces the right to select any religious faith or none at all. This conclusion derives support . . . from recognition of the fact that the political interest in forestalling intolerance extends beyond intolerance among Christian sects - or even intolerance among 'religions' - to encompass intolerance of the disbeliever and the uncertain.”

— Wallace v. Jaffree, 472 U.S. 38 (June 4, 1985) at 52-54, taken from Newdow vs. Congress (9th Circuit #00-16423).

“An immoral god – a hangover from stone age minds – still corrupts human mentality with its scapegoat justice and the threat of eternal damnation.”

— Reverend Reginald Howard Bass, *The History of Natural Religion*

“The dignity of man lies in his ability to face reality in all its meaninglessness.”

— Martin Esslin

“Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away.”

— Phillip K. Dick

“I do not consider it an insult, but rather a compliment to be called an agnostic. I do not pretend to know where many ignorant men are sure — that is all that agnosticism means.

— Clarence Darrow, Scopes trial, 1925

“In spite of all the yearnings of men, no one can produce a single fact or reason to support the belief in God and in personal immortality.”

— Clarence Darrow, *The Sign*, 1938

“I contend that we are both Atheists. I just believe in one fewer god than you do. When you understand why you dismiss all the other possible gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours.”

— Stephen Roberts

Mosaic Law orders us to kill anyone who worships a different god, kill anyone who worships idols, kill anyone who blasphemes, kill anyone who works on Saturday, kill anyone who dishonors their parents, kill anyone who commits adultery, kill any woman who has sex before marriage, kill anyone who steals a slave, kill anyone who has homosexual sex, and wage genocidal war against any city that allows religious liberty (see Deuteronomy 13.)

“In those parts of the world where learning and science have prevailed, miracles have ceased; but in those parts of it as are barbarous and ignorant, miracles are still in vogue.”

— Ethan Allen (1738-1789) American Revolutionary, *Reason the Only Oracle of Man* (1784)

“A tyrant must put on the appearance of uncommon devotion to religion. Subjects are less apprehensive of illegal treatment from a ruler whom they consider god-fearing and pious. On the other hand, they do less easily move against him, believing that he has the gods on his side.”

— Aristotle (ca. 384-322 B.C.E.) Greek philosopher, from *2000 Years of Disbelief*, James A. Haught, ed.

“If we go back to the beginning we shall find that ignorance and fear created the gods; that fancy, enthusiasm, or deceit adorned or disfigured them; that weakness worships them; that credulity preserves them, and that custom, respect and tyranny support them in order to make the blindness of men serve its own interests.”

— Baron d'Holbach, *Système de la Nature*

“Prejudice, not being founded on reason, cannot be removed by argument.”

— Samuel Johnson

“It is impossible to defeat an ignorant man in argument.”

— William G. McAadoo

“Humanity is in the highest degree irrational, so that there is no prospect of influencing it by reasonable arguments... Against prejudice one can do nothing.”

— Sigmund Freud

“A prejudice is a vagrant opinion without visible means of support.”

— Ambrose Bierce

“The mixing of government and religion can be a threat to free government, even if no one is forced to participate.... When the government puts its imprimatur on a particular religion, it conveys a message of exclusion to all those who do not adhere to the favored beliefs. A government cannot be premised on the belief that all persons are created equal when it asserts that God prefers some.”

— Harry Andrew Blackmun, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, majority opinion in *Lee v. Weisman*, 1992

“No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion.”

— Hugo L. Black, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, majority opinion in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 1947

“In the words of Thomas Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a wall of separation between church and state. It is only in recent times that separation has come under attack by judges in the federal court system who oppose separation of church and state.”

— Hugo L. Black, *ibid.* “Americans practice different faiths in churches, synagogues, mosques and temples. And many good people practice no faith at all.”

— George W. Bush, 43rd U.S. President, Easter Address of 2002

“We have the most religious freedom of any country in the world, including the freedom not to believe.”

— William Jefferson "Bill" Clinton, 42nd U.S. President

“We cannot permit any inquisition either within or without the law or apply any religious test to the holding of office. The mind of America must be forever free.”

— Calvin Coolidge, 30th U.S. President, Inaugural Address, March 4, 1925

“We have abundant reason to rejoice that in this Land the light of truth and reason has triumphed over the power of bigotry and superstition ... In this enlightened Age and in this Land of equal liberty it is our boast, that a man's religious tenets will not forfeit the protection of the Laws, nor deprive him of the right of attaining and holding the highest Offices that are known in the United States.”

— George Washington (1732-1799) 1st U.S. President, letter to the members of the New Church in Baltimore, January 27, 1793, in Anson Phelps Stokes, 'Church and State in the United States', Vol. 1. p. 497, quoted from *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“I am tolerant of all creeds. Yet if any sect suffered itself to be used for political objects I would meet it by political opposition. In my view church and state should be separate, not only in form, but fact. Religion and politics should not be mingled.”

— Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) 13th U.S. President (1850-1853)

“In 1850, I believe, the church property in the United States, which paid no tax, amounted to \$87 million. In 1900, without a check, it is safe to say, this property will reach a sum exceeding \$3 billion. I would suggest the taxation of all property equally.”

— Ulysses Simpson Grant, 18th U.S. President, quoted in *2000 Years of Disbelief*, James A. Haught, ed.

“I learned how valuable our Constitution is and how valuable the separation of church and state is.”

— Cynthia Dwyer, American hostage held in Iran 444 days (1979-1981) February, 1981, *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“The way to see by faith is to shut the eye of reason: The Morning Daylight appears plainer when you put out your Candle.”

— Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) American public official, writer, scientist, and printer. *Poor Richard's Almanack*, 1758

“The way to see by Faith is to shut the eye of Reason.”

— Benjamin Franklin, *Poor Richard's Almanack*, 1758

“It was, of course, a lie what you read about my religious convictions, a lie which is being systematically repeated. I do not believe in a personal God and I have never denied this but have expressed it clearly. If something is in me which can be called religious then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it.”

— Albert Einstein, from *The Human Side*, edited by Helen Dukas and Banesh Hoffman

“I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own - a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. Neither can I believe that the individual survives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear or ridiculous egotisms.”

— Albert Einstein (1879-1955) German-born American theoretical physicist, *The World As I See It*

“I see only with deep regret that God punishes so many of His children for their numerous stupidities, for which only He Himself can be held responsible; in my opinion, only His nonexistence could excuse Him.”

— Albert Einstein, letter to Edgar Meyer, Jan. 2, 1915

“A man's ethical behavior should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death.”

— Albert Einstein

“The further the spiritual evolution of mankind advances, the more certain it seems to me that the path to genuine religiosity does not lie through the fear of life, and the fear of death, and blind faith, but through striving after rational knowledge.”

— Albert Einstein

“The minority, the ruling class at present, has the schools and press, usually the Church as well, under its thumb. This enables it to organize and sway the emotions of the masses, and make its tool of them.”

— Albert Einstein

“True religion is real living; living with all one's soul, with all one's goodness and righteousness.”

— Albert Einstein

“In the fullness of time, educated people will believe there is no soul independent of the body, and hence no life after death.”

— Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the double helix structure of DNA

“There's no way to put God to the test, and that's exactly what you're doing when you design a study to see if God answers your prayers.”

— The Rev. Raymond Lawrence, director of pastoral care at a New York hospital

“I don't want to see religious bigotry in any form. It would disturb me if there was a wedding between the religious fundamentalists and the political right. The hard right has no interest in religion except to manipulate it.”

— William Franklin "Billy" Graham (1918-) American religious leader. Parade, Feb. 1, 1981, in *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“Being a conservative in America traditionally has meant that one holds a deep, abiding respect for the Constitution. We conservatives believe sincerely in the integrity of the Constitution. We treasure the freedom that document protects.... By maintaining the separation of church and state, the United States has avoided the intolerance, which has so divided the rest of the world with religious wars. Throughout our two hundred plus years, public policy debate has focused on political and economic issues, on which there can be compromise.... The great decisions of government cannot be dictated by the concerns of religious factions. This was true in the days of Madison, and it is just as true today. We have succeeded for 205 years in keeping the affairs of state separate from the uncompromising idealism of religious groups and we mustn't stop now. To retreat from that separation would violate the principles of conservatism and the values upon which the framers built this democratic republic.”

— Barry Goldwater (1909-1998) Republican Senator from Arizona. U.S. Senate Address, Sept. 16, 1981, in *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“I believe in the American tradition of separation of church and state which is expressed in the First Amendment to the Constitution. By my office - and by personal conviction - I am sworn to uphold that tradition.”

— Lyndon Johnson (1908-1973), 36th U.S. President, in *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“To announce that there must be no criticism of the president, or that we are to stand by the president, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public.”

— President Theodore Roosevelt

“Encourage free schools and resolve that not one dollar appropriated for their support shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian schools. Resolve that neither the state nor nation, nor both combined, shall support institutions of learning other than those sufficient to afford every child growing up in the land of opportunity of a good common school education, unmixed with sectarian, pagan, or Atheistical dogmas. Leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church and the private school supported entirely by private contributions. Keep the church and state forever separate.”

— Ulysses Simpson Grant (1822-1885) 18th U.S. President (1869-77) address to the Army of the Tennessee, Des Moines, Iowa, September 25, 1875, from *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“The God of hell should be held in loathing, contempt and scorn. A god who threatens eternal pain should be hated, not loved; cursed, not worshipped. A heaven presided over by such a god must be below the meanest hell.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1889) American politician

“Ignorance is the soil in which belief in miracles grows.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, in his speech "Superstition"

“Ignorance worships mystery; reason explains it; the one grovels, the other soars.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, in his speech "Humbolt"

“Every church that has a standard higher than human welfare is dangerous.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Truth Seeker*

“Take from the church the miraculous, the supernatural, the unreasonable the impossible, the unknowable, and the absurd, and nothing but a vacuum remains... Religion has not civilized man - man has civilized religion.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, in his speech "The Ghosts"

“Heresy is a cradle; orthodoxy is a coffin.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, in his speech "Heresies and Heretics"

“It is contended by many that ours is a Christian government, founded upon the Bible, and that all who look upon the book as false or foolish are destroying the foundation of our country. The truth is, our government is not founded upon the rights of gods, but upon the rights of men. Our Constitution was framed, not to declare and uphold the deity of Christ, but the sacredness of humanity. Ours is the first government made by the people and for the people. It is the only nation with which the gods have had nothing to do. And yet there are some judges dishonest and cowardly enough to solemnly decide that this is a Christian country, and that our free institutions are based upon the infamous laws of Jehovah.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, *Individuality* (1873)

“The Old Testament filled this world with tyranny and injustice, and the New gives us a future filled with pain for nearly all of the sons of men. The Old Testament describes the hell of the past, and the New the hell of the future.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“When I became convinced that the universe is natural, that all the ghosts and gods are myths, there entered into my brain, into my soul, into every drop of my blood the sense, the feeling, the joy of freedom. The walls of my prison crumbled and fell. The dungeon was flooded with light and all the bolts and bars and manacles became dust. I was no longer a servant, a serf, or a slave. There was for me no master in all the wide world, not even in infinite space. I was free - free to think, to express my thoughts—free to live my own ideal, free to live for myself and those I loved, free to use all my faculties, all my senses, free to spread imagination's wings, free to investigate, to guess and dream and hope, free to judge and determine for myself . . . I was free? I stood erect and fearlessly, joyously faced all worlds.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“For ages, a deadly conflict has been waged between a few brave men and women of thought and genius upon the one side, and the great ignorant religious mass on the other. This is the war between Science and Faith.

The few have appealed to reason, to honor, to law, to freedom, to the known, and to happiness here in this world. The many have appealed to prejudice, to fear, to miracle, to slavery, to the unknown, and to misery hereafter.

The few have said, Think! The many have said, Believe! The first doubt was the womb and cradle of progress, and from the first doubt, man has continued to advance.”

— Robert Ingersoll

“All religions are inconsistent with mental freedom. Shakespeare is my bible, Burns my hymn-book.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“It may be that ministers really think that their prayers do good, and it may be that frogs imagine that their croaking brings spring.”

Robert G. Ingersoll, *Which Way?* (1884)

“Infidelity is liberty; all religion is slavery.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“With soap, baptism is a good thing.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“The time to be happy is now. The place to be happy is here. The way to be happy is to try to make others so.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll, in his speech "The Limitations of Toleration"

“The church has always been willing to swap off treasures in heaven for cash down.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“All that is necessary, as it seems to me, to convince any reasonable person that the Bible is simply and purely of human invention—of barbarian invention—is to read it. Read it as you would any other book; think of it as you would of any other; get the bandage of reverence from your eyes; drive from your heart the phantom of fear; push from the throne of your brain the cowed form of superstition—then read the Holy Bible, and you will be amazed that you ever, for one moment, supposed a being of infinite wisdom, goodness and purity, to be the author of such ignorance and of such atrocity.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“If a man would follow, today, the teachings of the Old Testament, he would be a criminal. If he would follow the teachings of the new, he would be insane.”

— Robert G. Ingersoll

“The day that this country ceases to be free for irreligion it will cease to be free for religion - except for the sect that can win political power.”

— Robert H. Jackson (1892-1954) Associate Justice, U.S. Supreme Court (1941-1954) dissenting opinion, *Zorach v. Clauson*, (April 28, 1952)

“I could not do otherwise without transcending the limits prescribed by the Constitution for the President and without feeling that I might in some degree disturb the security which religion nowadays enjoys in this country in its complete separation from the political concerns of the General Government.”

— Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), 7th U.S. President (1829-1837), 1832 statement refusing to proclaim a national day of fasting and prayer, "Correspondence" 4:447

“Believing that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their Legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church and State.”

— Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), 3rd U.S. President (1801-1809), letter to Danbury Baptists, 1802

“If you must believe in anything, believe in yourselves, in your senses, in your minds. To accept a religious creed is to accept another mind in place of your own and generally contrary to your own. When religious belief comes in brains go out”

— Marrila M. Ricker (1840-1920)

“No actual tyrant known to history has ever been guilty of one-hundredth of the crimes, massacres, and other atrocities attributed to the Deity in the Bible.”

— Steve Allen

“Theology asserts propositions that cannot be proven true; ideologues hold stoutly to a worldview despite being contradicted by what is generally accepted as reality. When ideology and theology couple, their offspring are not always bad but they are always blind. And there is the danger: voters and politicians alike, oblivious to the facts.”

— Bill Moyers

“The general root of superstition is that men observe when things hit, and not when they miss, and commit to memory the one, and pass over the other.”

— Francis Bacon, quoted in *2000 Years of Disbelief* by James A. Haught

“Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all of which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, even if religion vanished; but religious superstition dismounts all these and erects an absolute monarchy in the minds of men.”

— Francis Bacon

“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.” (Matthew 22:21)

— Jesus, Mythical founder-figure of the Christian religions

“Today, almost half a century after the publication of the Encyclical [of Pius IX], new knowledge has led to the recognition in the theory of evolution of more than a hypothesis. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favor of this theory.”

— Pope John Paul II Roman Catholic Pontiff, revising Pius IX's Encyclical and substantially updating the Church's position on the teaching of evolution in an Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (October 28, 1986), quoted from Victor J. Stenger, *Has Science Found God?* (2001)

“In India, as elsewhere in our darkening world, religion is the poison in the blood. Where religion intervenes, mere innocence is no excuse. Yet we go on skating around this issue, speaking of religion in the fashionable language of 'respect.' What is there to respect in any of this, or in any of the crimes now being committed almost daily around the world in religion's dreaded name?”

— Salman Rushdie, author

“When you once attribute effects to the will of a personal God, you have let in a lot of little gods and evils - then sprites, fairies, dryads, naiads, witches, ghosts and goblins, for your imagination is reeling, riotous, drunk, afloat on the flotsam of superstition. What you know then doesn't

count. You just believe, and the more you believe the more do you plume yourself that fear and faith are superior to science and seeing."

— Elbert Hubbard, lecturer, author, printer

"The lessons of the First Amendment are as urgent in the modern world as the 18th Century when it was written. One timeless lesson is that if citizens are subjected to state-sponsored religious exercises, the State disavows its own duty to guard and respect that sphere of inviolable conscience and belief which is the mark of a free people."

— Anthony M. Kennedy (b. 1936) Supreme Court Justice, appointed by Reagan, confirmed 97-0 for the majority, *Lee v. Weisman* (1992), dismissing as unacceptable the cruel idea that a student should forfeit her own graduation in order to avoid commencement prayers and invocations, quoted from "The Case Against School Prayer," a [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#) pamphlet

"I believe in an America where religious intolerance will someday end ... where every man has the same right to attend or not attend the church of his choice."

— John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) 35th U.S. President (1961-1963) address to the Ministerial Association of Greater Houston, September 12, 1960, from Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr, *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

"I believe in an America that is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish - where no public official either requests or accepts instructions on public policy from the pope, the National Council of Churches or any other ecclesiastical source - where no religious body seeks to impose its will directly or indirectly upon the general populace or the public acts of its officials."

— John F. Kennedy, address to the Ministerial Association of Greater Houston, September 12, 1960

"I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute - where no Catholic prelate would tell the president (should he be Catholic) how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote - where no church or church school is granted any public funds or political preference - and where no man is denied public office merely because his religion differs from the president who might appoint him or the people who might elect him."

— John F. Kennedy

"I can't take my Catholic belief, my article of faith, and legislate it on a Protestant or a Jew or an Atheist. We have separation of church and state in the United States of America."

— John Kerry

"People who believe they are acting with the mandate of God, who see others who don't share their beliefs as inferior in the eyes of God, make dangerous leaders. Just ask Osama Bin Laden."

— Ron Reagan, son of President Ronald Reagan

"We will be a better country when each religious group can trust its members to obey the dictates of their own religious faith without assistance from the legal structure of the country."

— Margaret Mead (1901-1978) American anthropologist, *Redbook* magazine, February, 1963, from Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr, *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

"I have something to say to the religionist who feels atheists never say anything positive: You are an intelligent human being. Your life is valuable for its own sake. You are not second-class in the universe, deriving meaning and purpose from some other mind. You are not inherently evil - you are inherently human, possessing the positive rational potential to help make this a world of morality, peace and joy. Trust yourself"

— Dan Barker in *Losing Faith in Faith: From Preacher to Atheist*

"For though a man should be a complete unbeliever in the being of gods; if he also has a native uprightness of temper, such persons will detest evil in men; their repugnance to wrong disinclines them to commit wrongful acts; they shun the unrighteous and are drawn to the upright."

— Plato (ca. B.C.E. 428-347) Greek philosopher, acknowledging that Atheists can lead an honest life, in *Against the Faith* (1985), p. 22, by Jim Herrick

"I do not believe it right for one group to impose its vision of morality on an entire society."

— Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller (1908-1979) Governor of New York (1959-1973), U.S. vice-president (1974-1977) Veto Message, May 13, 1972. Rockefeller vetoed a bill to repeal New York's 1970 abortion law. Quoted from Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr, *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“The Founding Fathers were neither passive, death-worshipping mystics nor mindless, power-seeking looters; as a political group, they were a phenomenon unprecedented in history: they were thinkers who were also men of action. They had rejected the soul-body dichotomy, with its two corollaries: the impotence of man's mind and the damnation of this earth; they had rejected the doctrine of suffering as man's metaphysical fate, they proclaimed man's right to the pursuit of happiness and were determined to establish on earth the conditions required for man's proper existence, by the 'unaided' power of their intellect.”

— Ayn Rand (1905-1982) American novelist and philosopher *For the New Intellectual*

“Anyone who knows history will recognize that the domination of education or of government by any one particular religious faith is never a happy arrangement for the people.”

— Anna Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) American diplomat, writer, and First Lady of the United States (1933-1945) letter to Cardinal Spellman, July 23, 1949, from *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*, Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr

“I hold that in this country there must be complete severance of Church and State; that public moneys shall not be used for the purpose of advancing any particular creed; and therefore that the public schools shall be nonsectarian and no public moneys appropriated for sectarian schools.”

— Theodore Roosevelt, 26th U.S. President, October 12, 1915, from *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*, Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr

“I'm an Atheist, and that's it. I believe there's nothing we can know except that we should be kind to each other and do what we can for other people.”

— Katharine Hepburn (1909 - 2003) American Actress, *Ladies' Home Journal*, October 1991, from *2000 Years of Disbelief*, James A. Haught, ed.

“The term that best describes me now is 'secular humanist.'”

— Charles Schulz (1922-2000) American comic artist: creator of "Peanuts" to David Templeton in 1999, in *My Lunch with Sparky* (2000)

“By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.”

— Gloria Steinem (b. 1934) American writer and political activist, quoted in *Breaking the Last Taboo* (1996), James A. Haught

“I don't think any religion makes any sense and I think people who are into that are really getting duped, and I don't think Judaism makes any more sense than Christianity, and I don't think Christianity makes any more sense than Scientology. But here's a guy, L. Ron Hubbard, who told all his friends, 'Look, I'm gonna start a religion, 'cause I can't make any money as a science fiction writer.' I mean, he admitted that publicly! At least with Jesus Christ, you can't go talk to the guy.”

— Howard Stern, American radio personality, May 18, 2001, after his guest Leah Remini mentioned that she is a Scientologist

“Why is that people are quick to label Roman gods and goddesses as myth seeded from lack of understanding, while entertaining their own theological beliefs that are based on the same fear and ignorance?”

— Jae Marston

“I do not believe in the divinity of Christ, and there are many other of the postulates of the orthodox creed to which I cannot subscribe.”

— William Howard Taft, 27th U.S. President (1909-1913) 10th Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (1921-1930) letter to Yale University, on turning down an offer for its presidency, *Breaking the Last Taboo* (1996), from James A. Haught

“We have gone a long way toward civilization and religious tolerance, and we have a good example in this country. Here the many Protestant denominations, the Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church do not seek to destroy one another in physical violence just because they do not interpret every verse of the Bible in exactly the same way. Here we now have the freedom of all religions, and I hope that never again will we have a repetition of religious bigotry, as we have had in certain periods of our own history. There is no room for that kind of foolishness here.”

— Harry Truman, 33rd U.S. President (1945-1953) quoted in *The Great Quotations on Religious Freedom*

“So I'm sorry, I don't respect people who believe in religion. I was religious when I was a kid. We all had dumb stuff drilled into our head. It doesn't mean when you get to be an adult you can't drill it out. I tell you something else they drilled into my head when I was a kid, mercury in my cavities. We found out later mercury is so bad we shouldn't even eat it when there is a trace of it in fish. But it was drilled into my teeth. So when I got older, I had it drilled out. You can do the same thing with religion. To talk about this terrorism situation without talking about

religion is like talking about AIDS in America without talking about homosexuality. You can do it; it will get you applause on Oprah; but it's not true."

— Bill Maher on Larry King Live

"The bible contains six admonishments to homosexuals and 362 admonishments to heterosexuals. That doesn't mean that god doesn't love heterosexuals. It's just that they need more supervision."

— Anon

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

— Francis Bellamy, The original Pledge of Allegiance, as it appeared in the issue of 'The Youth's Companion' (11/08/1892)

"Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

"If faith is a valid tool of knowledge, then anything can be true 'by faith,' and therefore nothing is true. If the only reason you can accept a claim is by faith, then you are admitting that the claim does not stand on its own merits."

— Dan Barker, of [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#)

"There is no evidence for a god, no coherent definition of a god, no good argument for a god, good positive arguments against a god, no agreement among believers about the nature or moral principles of a god, and no need for a god. We can live happy, moral, productive lives without such belief, and we can do it better."

— Dan Barker, of [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#)

“When people expect God to plan their lives for them, and protect them, they tend to lose their motivation to guide and control their own lives.”

— Charles W. Faulkner

“Just in terms of allocation of time resources, religion is not very efficient. There's a lot more I could be doing on a Sunday morning.”

— Bill Gates

“When talking about unicorns, minotaurs, or compassionate conservatives, one does not normally have to prove their non-existence; the mere lack of any evidence is sufficient reason not to believe in any of them.”

— Peter Stone

“The more I study religions the more I am convinced that man never worshipped anything but himself.”

— Richard Francis Burton, explorer and writer (1821-1890)

“I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do because I notice it always coincides with their own desires.”

— Susan B. Anthony

“Say what you will about the sweet miracle of unquestioning faith. I consider the capacity for it terrifying and absolutely vile.”

— Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

“A myth is a religion in which no one any longer believes.”

— James Feibleman

You know your god is man made when it hates all the people you do.

— Unknown

“Why would an all-powerful god become flesh in order to sacrifice himself to himself so that his creation might escape the wrath of himself. Couldn't this god, in his infinite wisdom, come up with something a little more efficient?”

— Omphaloskeptic2@aol.com

“What is the purpose of prayer? What can a finite being on Earth possibly tell an omnipotent, omniscient, Universe-creating deity that he/she/it doesn't know already? If prayer actually worked, the Pope would live forever.”

— [Infidel Guy](#)

“The present custom of orthodox Christendom, in packing their sins upon the back of a God, is just the same substantially as that of various heathen nations who were anciently in the habit of packing them upon the backs of various dumb animals.”

— Kersey Graves, *Sixteen Crucified Saviours*

“There is no shortcut to intellectual honesty. Atheism requires sacrifice — in that you sacrifice the illusion of immortality and the sense of transcendent purpose. But, religion requires the sacrifice of critical thinking, self determination, your time, your money, and logic.

— Kate, on [atheistempire@yahoo.com](#)

“Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful without having to believe that there are fairies at the bottom of it too?”

— Douglas Adams, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

“The mind gives meaning to anything but the meaning it gives is meaningless.”

— J. Krishnamurti

“The trouble with born-again Christians is that they are an even bigger pain the second time around.”

— Herb Caen, "The San Francisco Chronicle"

“All it takes for America to become a theocracy is for nonbelievers to do nothing.”

— Judith Hayes, [The Happy Heretic!](#)

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

— Edmund Burke

“If faith cannot be reconciled with rational thinking, it has to be eliminated as an anachronistic remnant of earlier stages of culture and replaced by science dealing with facts and theories which are intelligible and can be validated.”

— Erich Fromm

“Humanity has the stars in its future, and that future is too important to be lost under the burden of juvenile folly and ignorant superstition.”

— Isaac Asimov

“To surrender to ignorance and call it God has always been premature, and it remains premature today.”

— Isaac Asimov

“Imagine encouraging a child to participate in such 'twisted' rituals and worshipping of tortuous crucifixes and such like this from birth. No wonder we have so many hateful and sadistic people in our society.”

— Brent Allsop

“Fear of serious injury alone cannot justify oppression of free speech and assembly. Men feared witches and burnt women. It is the function of speech to free men from the bondage of irrational fears.”

— Justice Louis D. Brandeis, 1927, *Whitney v. California*

“God and Country are an unbeatable team; they break all records for oppression and bloodshed.”

— Luis Buquel

“All religions are ancient monuments to superstition, ignorance, ferocity; and modern religions are only ancient follies.”

— Baron D'Holbach

“Even the weakest disputant is made so conceited by what he calls religion, as to think himself wiser than the wisest who thinks differently from him.”

— Walter Savage Landor

“It is one thing to show a man that he is in error, and another to put him in possession of truth.”

— John Locke, English philosopher

“A Christian is a man who feels repentance on a Sunday for what he did on Saturday and is going to do on Monday.”

— Thomas R. Ybarra

“My religious superstition gave place to rational ideas based on scientific facts, and in proportion as I looked at everything from a new standpoint, I grew more happy day by day...”

— Elizabeth Cady Stanton

“Only those who have lived all their lives under the dark clouds of vague, undefined fears can appreciate the joy of a doubting soul suddenly born into the kingdom of reason and free thought.”

— Elizabeth Cady Stanton

“I view it as one of the greatest crimes to shadow the minds of the young with these gloomy superstitions, and with fears of the unknown and the unknowable to poison all their joy in life.”

— Elizabeth Cady Stanton

“The bible teaches that women brought sin and death into the world. I don't believe that any man ever talked with god. The bible was written by man out of his love of domination.”

— Elizabeth Cady Stanton

“Materialism is the worldview or term describing application of reason, science and the human experience in understanding the world around us and in making decisions or living our day-to-day lives, as opposed to faith, dogma, prayer or superstition, etc. As materialists we conclude there is no god or higher power and we therefore declare ourselves to be atheists or people who live without theism or religion. Modern materialism is rooted in the work of the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Democritus (460-370 BCE), who is also known as the Father of Atomic Science. Antonyms to materialism are spiritualism or immaterialism; the worldview of materialism is not to be confused with consumerism. Atheism is a conclusion, not a religion or ideology.”

— Larry Darby of [The Atheist Law Center](#), in a letter to Alabama Gov. Bob Riley, Jan. 22, 2005

“The only good thing to come out of religion was the music.”

— George Carlin, on his [website](#)

“Religion convinced the world that there's an invisible man in the sky who watches everything you do. And there's 10 things he doesn't want you to do or else you'll go to a burning place with a lake of fire until the end of eternity. But he loves you! ...And he needs money! He's all powerful, but he can't handle money!”

— George Carlin

“If it turns out that there is a God, I don't think that he's evil. But the worst that you can say about him is that basically he's an underachiever.”

— Woody Allen

“To YOU I'm an atheist; to God, I'm the Loyal Opposition.”

— Woody Allen

“The actions taken by the New Hampshire Episcopalians (inducting a gay Bishop) are an affront to Christians everywhere. I am just thankful that the church's founder, Henry VIII, and his wife Catherine of Aragon, and his wife Anne Boleyn, and his wife Jane Seymour, and his wife Anne of Cleves, and his wife Katherine Howard, and his wife Catherine Parr are no longer here to suffer through this assault on traditional Christian marriages.”

— Betty Bowers, of [Landover Baptist Church](#)

“It's hard to be religious when certain people are never incinerated by bolts of lightning.”

— Calvin, "Calvin & Hobbes"

“Suppose we've chosen the wrong god? Every time we go to church, we're just making him madder and madder.”

— Homer J. Simpson

“Nothing defines humans better than their willingness to do irrational things in pursuit of phenomenally unlikely payoffs. This is the principal behind lotteries, dating and religion.”

— **Scott Adams**, creator of "Dilbert"