

END-TIMES ISSUES



#49 Commandment #1 – Denying the existence of God.

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1

FOOL!

"You shall have **no other gods** before Me."
Exodus 20:3 (BSB); also Deuteronomy 5:7.

The **fool** says in his heart,
"There is **no God**."
Psalm 14:1a (BSB); also Psalm 53:1a.

FOOL!

- In passages like Psalm 14:1, the word "fool" describes a moral issue. It's not a matter of low intelligence. These people are moral fools.
- This passage applies to all people who, in their hearts, deny the God of the Bible, regardless of what their mouths may claim.
- But perhaps there is a special relevance for the person who claims that this God doesn't even exist, or who claims that there is no way to know if such a God exists. These people are typically called atheists and agnostics.

2

It's sad, its ironic, that those who say these things are **SURROUNDED** by evidence of God's existence, and **they themselves** are evidence of God's existence...

AND THEY SUPPRESS IT ALL.

... people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since **what may be known about God is plain to them**, because God has made it plain to them.

Romans 1:18b-19 (NIV)

>> These people **are NOT unbiased or neutral**. <<
They deliberately suppress what is clearly knowable.

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been **clearly seen, being understood from what has been made**, so that people are **without excuse**.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

3

For although **they knew God**, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ...

Romans 1:21-22 (NIV)

Modern moral fools often think they're wise by claiming that there is no God, or that any "god" is unknowable.

The fools of the past were at least wise enough to realize that there was some god – although they rejected the invisible Creator and went after visible substitutes.

... and **exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images** made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

Romans 1:23 (NIV)

4

ALL CREATION REVEALS GOD!

The heavens ...

The **heavens declare the glory of God**; the **skies proclaim** the work of His hands.
Day after day they **pour forth speech**; night after night they **reveal knowledge**.

Psalm 19:1-2 (BSB)

The earth ...

(according to God) " ... as surely as I [=God] live and as surely as **the whole earth** is filled with **the glory of the LORD**, ..."

Numbers 14:21 (BSB)

(according to angelic beings) And they were calling out to one another:
"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts; **all the earth** is full of **His glory**."

Isaiah 6:3 (BSB)

And the people themselves ...

5

These very people who are *making* these claims are *inescapably* revealing something about God in their very beings – because:

Humans were created in God's image.

Even the nature of "man" as "male and female" tells us something about the nature of "God" (who is "Father, Son and Holy Spirit")!
(There is unity/oneness and plurality at the same time.)

Then God said, "Let Us make man **in Our image, after Our likeness**, ..."

So God created man **in His own image; in the image of God** He created him; **male and female** He created them.

Genesis 1:26a, 27 (BSB)

GOD REAFFIRMS THIS FACT, when giving instructions to Noah.

"... for **in the image of God** has God made mankind."

Genesis 9:6b (NIV)

Furthermore ...

6

... this God, who's existence they deny (or claim is "unknowable"), has embedded within their consciences the moral law, which is a reflection of God's own nature...

"GENTILES" – REFERS HERE TO PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW THE LAW, AS GIVEN TO MOSES (BY GOD).

(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that **the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness**, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.)

Romans 2:14-15 (NIV)

... and they choose to NOT live by the law they know.

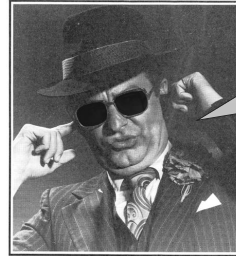
Although **they know God's righteous decree** that those who do such things [=sins] deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 1:32 (NIV)

7

THEY SUPPRESS THE TRUTH. THEY LIE ABOUT THE TRUTH. YET IN ALL THIS, THEY WILL CLAIM TO BE "NEUTRAL AND UNBIASED."

It might be tempting to *laugh* at such people...



EVIDENCE OF GOD? I DON'T SEE ANY, AND I DON'T HEAR ANY!



... **people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,** ... **what may be known about God is plain to them ... clearly seen, being understood from what has been made,** so that people are **without excuse.**

Romans 1:18b, 19a, 20b (NIV)

8

Perhaps we should respond with *sadness*, instead.



It's such an **empty** way of life, with nothing but **pretension** to keep it going ...

And **nothing good** to look forward to, when the **judgment** arrives –

a **horrifying judgment** that **they suppress their awareness of**, and that **their consciences warn them about**,

and which they will have to face, when their **pretensions have been burned away.**

!! **And in the meantime, the devil is using them to accomplish his purposes.** !!

9

ALL THEY KNOW HOW TO DO IS TO DESTROY.

THAT'S NOT TRUE!! I KNOW SOME ATHEISTS WHO DO GOOD THINGS!

WELL THEN, WE SHOULD CLARIFY THE ISSUE.

We have to remember that:

- Some atheists and agnostics (especially "first generation" ones) have been influenced by the Bible.
- Some are only *partially* successful in suppressing the truth that God has embedded within their consciences.

The [moral] fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

They are **corrupt**; their ways are **vile**. There is **no one who does good**.

Psalms 53:1 (BSB); see also Psalm 14:1.

So, though it's their nature to do evil, God-given influences may leave them with an inconsistent life.

10

EVEN WHEN THEY DO "GOOD" (because they have been influenced by the Bible), **IT'S FOR SINFUL REASONS!**

I CAN DO JUST AS MUCH GOOD AS THE CHRISTIANS CAN, AND DO IT WITHOUT GOD!

And the devil uses it to accomplish his purposes.

- The devil's immediate goal:** To get people's focus *off* of God; to get people to consider it acceptable to *omit* God from the activities of life.
- The devil's long-term goal:** To corrupt the good, and use it as a tool *against* God – and ultimately against people.

Some of the greatest advances in modern civilization were started by Christians, as an expression of love for God and people. Later, the "God focus" was downplayed. Today, in many cases, organizations started by Christians no longer permit Christians to express a God-honoring focus.

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OUR REVISED STATEMENT:

EVEN IF THEY SOMETIMES DO SOME SUPERFICIAL GOOD (because Christian influence is *not totally gone* from them) **IN THE LONG RUN, ALL THEY KNOW HOW TO DO IS TO DESTROY.**



And in doing so, they accomplish the will of the devil – who's existence they often deny!



To start with, they destroy themselves – their own souls.

- The day is coming when they will bow down before the God who's existence they presently deny. The pretension will be over. *Even in death, they will not escape.*

... at the name of Jesus **everyone** in heaven, on earth, and **in the world below** will kneel and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:10-11 (GW)

12

THEY DESTROY GOD

THEY DESTROY other people – their trust in God; and ultimately, their souls.

THEY DESTROY societies and nations – moral consciousness and justice.

LIFE CAN FUNCTION QUITE WELL WITHOUT GOD!

WE CAN PUSH OUR VIEWS ON YOU, BUT YOU MUST KEEP YOUR RELIGION TO YOURSELF.

CHRISTIANITY IS NO BETTER THAN ANY OTHER RELIGION.

MORAL VALUES ARE JUST AN INVENTION BY SOCIETY!

"FAITH" IS A CRUTCH, AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH REALITY AND FACTS.

WE CAN MAKE OUR OWN LAWS!

WE NEED TO KEEP GOD OUT OF ANY SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF LIFE!

SOCIETY CAN SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS WITHOUT GOD!

WE NEED TO GET RID OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS!

ULTIMATELY:

WE CAN'T EVEN CALL IT A "LIFESTYLE." IT'S A "DEATHSTYLE."

DEATH TO THEIR OPPONENTS
PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS
MURDER OF THE UNBORN
HIDDEN MOTIVES WHEN DOING "GOOD"
REDEFINING LANGUAGE SO AS TO REMOVE ANYTHING GOD-HONORING
INJUSTICE
CRIME
MORAL DEPRAVITY
SUPPRESS TRUTH
INVENT YOUR OWN VALUES
ECONOMIC INSTABILITY
SLANDER, LIES
HOPELESSNESS
ATTACK ON THE FAMILY, AS WELL AS GENDER
PROUD OF SIN
"ME, MYSELF AND I"
OPPRESSION
CONTROL OVER ALL AREAS OF LIFE
REJECTION OF ALL CHRISTIAN VALUES
MURDER OF THE WEAK, INFIRM, AGED
LONELINESS
GIVING ANIMALS MORE "RIGHTS" THAN HUMANS
HOSTILITY
"SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST"
THE INNOCENT PUNISHED
HUMANS TREATED LIKE COMMODITIES
PRETENSION
MEANNESS
... AND SO MUCH MORE.

The *typical fruit* of this way of life is described in *many* passages.

But know this: Hard times will come in the last days.

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, demeaning, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the form of godliness* but denying its power. Avoid these people.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (CSB)

They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.

Romans 1:29-31 (NIV)

* (They won't always be opposed to "religion" – *as long as it's NOT true Christianity.*)

AT THIS POINT IN TIME, THE DEVIL IS USING THESE PEOPLE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL – AND THEY BLINDLY GO ALONG WITH IT.

- **By promoting idolatrous practices** – "rebranded," deceiving Christians into believing they are "non-religious."
- **By convincing Christians that God can be *excluded* from many aspects of life** – splitting life into "sacred" and "secular" parts, and claiming that God is not involved in the "secular" parts.
 - ★ Scripture tells us that we must include God in *all* areas of life:

And whatever you do, in word or deed, **do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:17 (RSB); see also 1 Corinthians 10:31.

- **By getting people to view Christianity as just "one of many religions"** – all of *equal value*.
- **By persecuting and killing Christians**, whenever they get the power to do so. **(See the following pages.)** →

In the last CENTURY (1901-2000), more Christians were killed by atheists, than by *all other groups*.
(This includes people who *claim* to be "Christian," whether or not they actually follow the Bible.)

THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE NON-CHRISTIANS THEY HAVE KILLED.

Persecution in the 20th Century

The Persecutors

Communist (Atheists)

Buddhist

Hindu

Muslims

Catholics

Nazi Germany

Other

The Persecuted

Orthodox (Soviet Union)

Protestant

Catholic

Various

Other Orthodox

Chinese

Independent

Messianic Jews

Ethiopian

Anglican

Armenian

(About 3/4 of the total number.)

An estimated 44,933,000 martyrs

From The Future of the Global Church
www.TheFutureOfTheGlobalChurch.org

There are plenty of sources you could use; but this source put it in an easy-to-view chart form.

Atheists have killed more Christians* *in one century* than were killed *in the entire previous history of Christianity.*

* (Includes those who *claimed* to be Christians, whether or not they were "genuine.")

Century	Est. number killed
2	0
3	0
4	~1,000,000
5	~1,000,000
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	0
13	~8,000,000
14	~6,000,000
15	~1,000,000
16	~4,000,000
17	~1,000,000
18	~1,000,000
19	~2,000,000
20	~45,000,000

Based on data found in *The Future of the Global Church* Digital Collection: www.TheFutureOfTheGlobalChurch.org

THE GOD THEY CLAIM DOESN'T EXIST, OR ELSE CAN'T BE KNOWN TO EXIST ⇒ HE IS USING THEM TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSES!

- We don't always understand *how* God is using them at the time things are happening. Many things will be understood only afterwards, when we look back in *history*. Some might not be understood until the *final judgment*, when *all* will bow down and proclaim that Jesus is Lord.
- We *do* know that God will use the situation to accomplish good for those who love him. But: ① this applies only to those who love God (not to church-going fakes); and ② we might not fully understand things until we are in Jesus' presence.

And we know that God works **all things** together **for the good of those who love Him**, who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28 (BSB)

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Some possible ways that God might use them.

- God might be judging the wicked – people who reject the truth they have been exposed to. If they don't want the truth, God might let them have the lie (and its consequences), similar to what we read about here:

For this reason God will send them a powerful delusion so that they believe the lie, **in order that judgment may come** upon all who have disbelieved the truth and delighted in wickedness.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 (BSB)

- God might be judging the church (i.e., the *visible* "institution" that calls itself the "church"). If they *claim* to be following Jesus, but *cease* to do so...

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its savor, how can it be made salty again? **It is no longer good for anything**, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

Matthew 5:13 (BSB)

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- For God's people, there may be persecution. Hatred toward God often translates into hatred toward God's people.



"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Acts 14:22b (NIV)

- God can use it to accomplish good in our lives – now and forever.

Endure suffering as discipline; God is treating you as sons. ... No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, **it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace** to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:7a, 11 (BSB)

Now if we are [God's] children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we **share in his sufferings** in order that we may also **share in his glory**.

Romans 8:17 (NIV); see also James 1:12.

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Your MISSION:

Our focus should probably be in two directions.

#1 Focus: Prayer and love directed toward them.

But I [= Jesus] tell you, **love** your enemies and **pray** for those who persecute you, ...

Matthew 5:44 (NIV)

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, ...

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. ..."

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:19a, 20b, 21 (NIV)

(Also: 1 Thessalonians 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9; etc.)

⇒ LOVE requires speaking the truth – Ephesians 4:15 – even though they will hate you for it.

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#2 Focus: Self-examination: Do you *live* like an atheist?

- Is there any part of your life that you *omit* God from? Do you *dishonor* God in the way you live? Do you do all things for the Lord?

Whatever you do, **do it** from the heart, **as something done for the Lord** and not for people, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ.

Col 3:23–24 (CSB)

- **There is no neutrality.** ALL of life involves submitting to *someone/something*. If there is *any* part of your life that you *don't* submit to God, you will be submitting it to the devil – even if it's being done *passively*, instead of *actively*.

⇒ NEXT TIME: We can look further at the concept of "How to do all for the glory of God."

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