

ATHEISM (Part 1 of 2)

When you study the history of cultures (beginning with the Greek culture) you will find three definite, if not dominate mind-sets. And it would appear that through these mind-sets all other forms of beliefs are filtered. First, there is the mind-set of theism. I am a theist. A theist believes there is one God, and that God is the God of the Bible. He (God) exists beyond and in the world. Second, there is the mind-set of polytheism which dominated much of the ancient Greek thought.

Polytheism is a belief or worldview that many finite gods exist in the world. All the gods are more or less equal, and each has a personal sphere or domain. In some forms of polytheism, the gods form a hierarchy (they are classified according to rank or authority). Third, there is the mind-set of atheism. Atheists believe there is no God either beyond or in the world. There is only a universe and nothing more.

In the tenets (fundamental beliefs) of Atheism, you will find that not all atheists believe alike, any more than do theists. However, there is a core belief common to most atheists, much like that of theists.

In the core belief system of Atheism, there are six (6) basic tenets: (1) God did not create man; people created God. (2) The universe is eternal. If it is not eternal, then it came into existence “out of nothing and by nothing.” The astronomer Carl Sagan said, “The Cosmos [universe] is all there is, all there was, and all there will ever be.” Bertrand Russell, when replying to a question about the world, stated: “...that it was not caused; it is just there.” (3) Unlike pantheists who deny the reality of evil, atheists strongly affirm it. “In fact, while pantheists affirm the reality of God and deny the reality of evil, atheists, on the other hand, affirm the reality of evil and deny the reality of God. They believe theists are inconsistent in trying to hold to both realities. (4) A human being is matter in motion with no immortal soul. They hold to the position that there is no mind apart from the brain. When the body dies, so does the soul. (5) No moral absolutes exist, certainly no divinely authorized absolutes. There are only values. And values are only achieved through trial and error. There is no divine Law Giver! (6) Most atheists see no eternal destiny for individual persons. However, some speak of a kind of collective immortality of the human race.

It has been said that atheism is having its day in our modern world. This statement could very well be true, but its belief system is highly flawed – as we will note in our next lesson.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 14:1-4; Romans 3:10-19

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