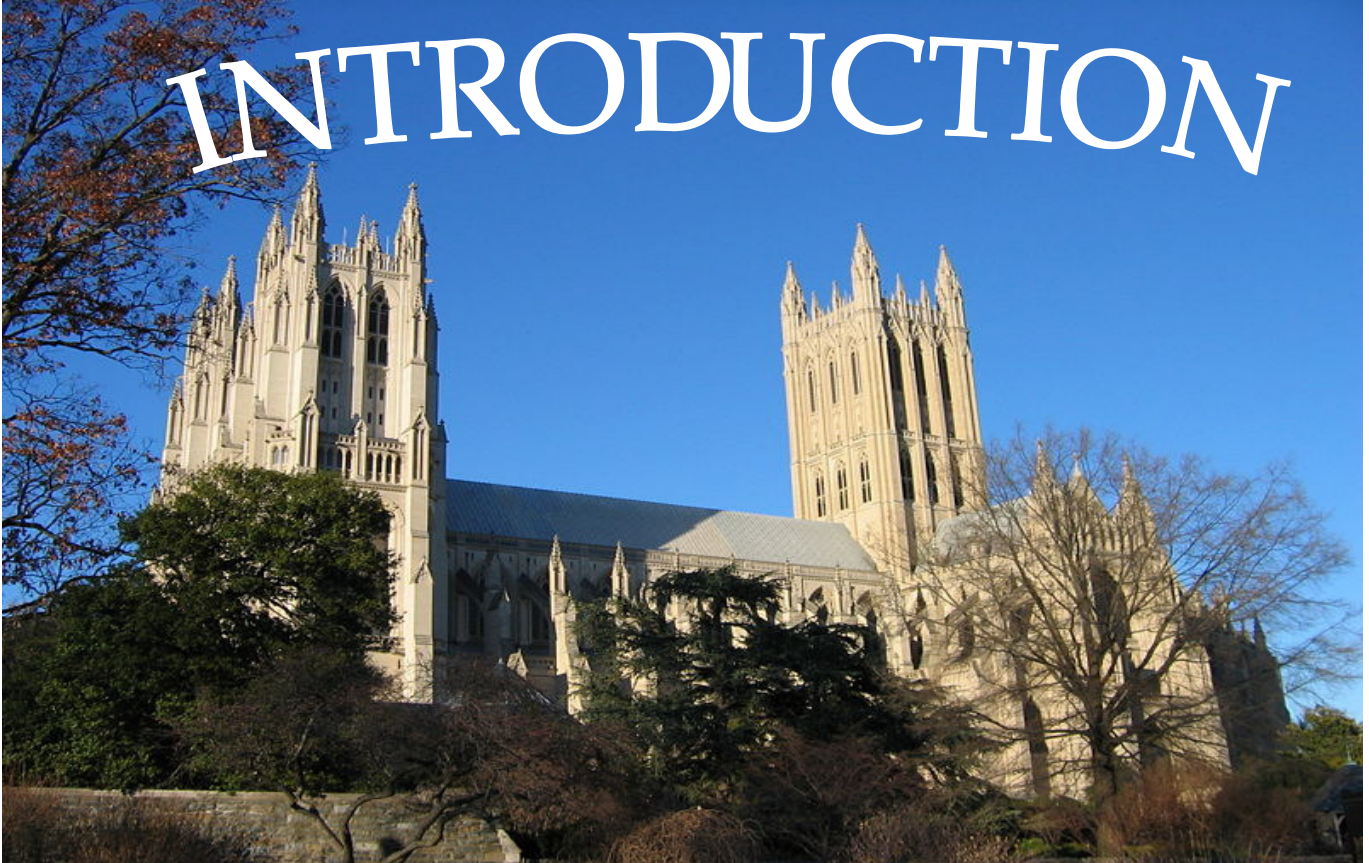# *Religion in America*

THE COMPLETE SPECIAL REPORT

PARTS I, II, III, IV, V AND VI

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PRINTABLE VERSION

INTRODUCTION

Religion is certainly a huge issue in the modern world. You can't get by a day in the United States without hearing the word "God" uttered, without another reference. From huge churches spanning acres to bumper plate stickers and the Pledge of Allegiance, religion is everywhere. It is endlessly imminent, around every corner and in every crack.

I, myself, am one of the few in America who isn't religious at all. I have never even *touched* the Bible, and went to church only once for a baptism ceremony. I am an atheist. I do not believe in any religion – I believe in the laws of evolution, the Big Bang, and the fact that "the only thing above us is sky". Religion has always hassled and bothered me with its mocking and cruel ways – if you're not religious in this world, you are a loser… an outcast, someone who has shunned society with their sick, untrue views.

If you ask any Christian about the Big Bang or how humans were "created," they will answer that the almighty "God," the one who controls everything and everyone, ordered it. That "He" started the human race and propelled it to its significance and prosperity, that history was all part of "His" "plan". If you ask about the afterlife, they will answer that the dead go to either Hell or Heaven, and that those in Heaven sit beside "God" for eternity. Those to go to Hell live in an underground world of fire and torture that continues forever. What do the Christians think of the scientists? Well, some say that they are sinners and will go to Hell (if there is one) for denying the "power" of "God". Others just don't care what they say – life is fine when you ignore the facts.

Finally, when you ask a Christian about the EVIDENCE of "God," Heaven, Hell, or any other topic, they will ask you about your evidence. They know that they don't have any – that they'll lose the fight one way or another. I want to ask all Christians one question: WHERE IS YOUR EVIDENCE?? What proof do you have of any of your beliefs? Have you ever been to the center of the Earth to see Hell? Have you any evidence of Adam and Eve? Did your ancestors come back from the dead and tell you there is a Heaven or Hell? Have you ever been sent a message by "God"? No?

I believe, like "the Earth is flat" and "alien canals on Mars" theories of the past, religion is another excuse by the human race to explain what we don't know and will never, ever find out. Humans have an annoying habit of whipping up an answer to something nobody will ever figure out. When you are asked a question and don't know the answer, you probably A: lie or B: say "I dunno". When you lie, creating a false answer, people may or may not believe you. It is entirely possible that the Christian religion is based on stories and tales that are completely false. Maybe, thousands of years ago, humans were trying to explain their world. Things that confounded them – such as the creation of the universe, the Earth, and themselves – needed to be explained. If you can answer a confusing question, you look smart, right? So "God" and creationism were possibly whipped up to answer the unknowns, the "what-ifs" of the universe.

The theory we call Christianity was passed on throughout generations by those who created it. Eventually, almost everyone believed it. If you don't want to be an idiot, why not join the Christian Club? As the Christians took over, underdogs also started to appear - those in society who knew that there was something wrong with the idea of "God". Eventually, in 1838, they attacked in the form of Charles Darwin. The book *On the Origin of Species* was written by Darwin, who challenged the theory of creationism with his report – which, if you think about it, makes more sense than some giant invisible man in the sky who has superpowers. Since the publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1838, the principles of religion have been continually challenged by science. When science and religion are compared, they both rule each other out. Science's theories rule religion's obsolete and unintelligent, and vice versa. As the battle for truth continues, we must admit that neither side will actually win. Humans will *never* know how the Big Bang occurred, or how life was created, or how the planets were formed. No matter how long we live, we will NEVER find out – so why not try to explain everything now? Religion is another excuse by the race to explain what we really, really want to know.

There are many, many reasons why the "God" theory is impossible. The one I favor most is this: if God was the "cause," or "created" everything, what created "God"? You can't say that "God" was the "creator" if "He" wasn't

"created" – that "He" just "happened". If you say that "God" "happened," than I could also fairly say that the Big Bang just "happened" as well.

People, still, do not pay attention to the fact that we are hopeless to explain what we will never know. In the United States of America, the most Christian country on Earth, "God" is everywhere. Huge churches are built in every neighborhood, even in the middle of nowhere. The cross and Jesus are peppered across the land. Praying to "God" happens all the time in the U.S.A. Even though the Constitution separates church and government, Christianity somehow has slipped into a crack, and the U.S. government is failing to keep up its duty to stay away from religion. Besides the government, the Christians of America have pushed Christianity into places where it simply does not need to be. The American media, mostly Christian, has introduced many stereotypes about the non-Christian population. While the United States is a free country, it is too Christian to be a friendly country. Since I am the only one who is really thinking about it, I will reveal to you what America the "Free" has done to become the most Christian chunk of land in history. So sit back, and be stunned by what America has to offer to its Christian citizens.

I. – CHRISTIANITY AT SCHOOL

American schools, besides being under funded and full of errors and flaws, also have another bad characteristic – the introduction of religion. While in the United States religion is not allowed to be inducted into the school curriculum, somehow the government has overlooked some flaws with the law. The first problem can be found at any school in the early morning – the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Allegiance is a sadistic push by the United States government to force its students ("little, worthless mice") to pledge their allegiance to the country. Besides being a pointless waste of time, there are two words in the pledge that completely change its religious perspective.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America,
one nation, **under "God"**, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Yes, that's right – **UNDER "GOD"**. First, not everyone in the school is Christian – some are Muslims, Jewish, or atheists - so why force the students to say "under 'God'" every morning? That's just how the United States wants to show off its worthless students – by making them all Christian. Then they'll all be smart because they can explain the unexplained! But, I must ask for the millionth time, *what if* there is no "God"?? If I don't believe in it, then why should I be forced by

the government to say it? It is really stupid to say that the U.S. is "under" something if it might be under nothing.

"Under 'God'" has not been in the pledge since it was first drafted in the 1800s. The Knights of Columbus, a Roman Catholic organization, felt that the pledge needed some sort of religious direction in it. In 1951, the KC decided to inject the words into the pledge. The new pledge spread throughout the KC community. But it wasn't until February 1954 that the evil modification was thrown into the government.

It was February 7, or Lincoln Sunday. The Reverend George M. MacPherson was to make a speech about the Gettysburg Address at the Lincoln pew, a pew rented by Lincoln during his presidency. Many members of government were attending the speech, including President Dwight Eisenhower. In the speech, the Reverend called for the addition of the words "under 'God'" to the official pledge. Eisenhower liked the idea, and the president discussed it in Congress the next day. Eventually, Representative Charles Oakman wrote up a bill to add the words to the Pledge. His speech on the bill offended many by suggesting that Christianity is an essential part of "American life":

Last Sunday, the President of the United States and his family occupied the pew where Abraham Lincoln worshipped. The pastor, the Reverend George M. Docherty, suggested the change in our Pledge of Allegiance that I have offered [as a bill]. Dr. Docherty delivered a wise sermon. He said that as a native of Scotland come to these shores he could appreciate the pledge as something more than a hollow verse taught to children for memory. I would like to quote from his words. He said, 'there was something missing in the pledge, and that which was missing was the characteristic and definitive factor in the American way of life.' Mr. Speaker, I think Mr. Docherty hit the nail square on the head.

Eisenhower signed the bill into law on Flag Day (June 14) 1954. The pledge, since that fatal day, has remained untouched. For almost 54 years, American children have been forced to speak the words of the Christians, whether they like it or not.

I am appalled that the United States government could be so easily convinced into promoting the Christian religion when it is clearly violating its own principles. Numerous court cases have been filed against the Pledge for its religious leaning, and *all* of them have found that the words "under 'God'" are in violation of the Constitution. Also, one 2006 court case in Florida found that even *requiring* students to say the Pledge was in violation of the 1st and 14th amendments of the Constitution. There, currently, is no way to avoid having to do something during the Pledge. Even *standing*, according to the 2006 case, which is required regardless of whether or not the student got parental permission to opt out, is unconstitutional.

If you don't know already, I am just a 6th grader at Spring Forest Middle School, possibly one of the most annoying schools in the city of Houston, Texas. At SFMS, the pledge is required every morning. As you can guess, I *despise* reciting it. It wastes precious time and goes against my religious views. Also, being an Australian citizen, I don't want to pledge my allegiance to the United States – I just live here, I don't *love* this country.

Now, I didn't just write this long, long report just to tell you the truth – I am going to do some of the things I have written down. First, **I will not say the words "under 'God'" when reciting the Pledge.** If I have a choice, I will not take part in the Pledge at all. Also, I will **try to convince the school (without getting a detention) to abolish the requirement of the pledge.** I am *not* American! Why should I give my allegiance to a country that I have no relations to?

Besides the Pledge of Allegiance, many teachers in the United States' public schools are Christian – so they may insert their own religious views into a punishment. The best example is of saying the sentence "Oh my 'God'" in a Christian teacher's classroom. "Oh my 'God'" is a common exclamation used by teenagers all the time, whether in the OM"G" form or saying the entire thing. I bet I'm not the only one who has experienced this – a couple of friends in class are talking, and then one of them exclaims "Oh my 'God'!" The teacher looks up and says "Don't say that!" The student asks why, and the teacher responds "It is disrespectful".

Yeah, it really is disrespectful – to *you!* All Christians have different views on the growingly controversial sentence. Most Christian children and teenagers have not been taught the rule about "Oh my 'God'". Why? Because the parents probably use it – so why not them? If their parents are approving of "Oh my 'God'," why can't they use it at school? Simply because of the one teacher who takes it as "taboo". Besides, it could be used as "Oh my god," which is not directed to the Christian "God" but rather their own little god. Use it *that* way, and no-one will get mad at you.

II. – CHRISTIANITY VS. ISLAM

Islam, firstly, is not a *bad* religion! Whenever people (Christians) here in America talk about Muslims in a bad way – just because they're Muslims – it makes me want to call them evil and stupid. Muslims are the most misunderstood people I have ever seen. Just because a handful of terrorists were Muslims, that doesn't mean that **all** of them are.

Ever since September 11, the Islamic religion has been under a lot of anger and hate by Americans. Apparently, Christians in the U.S. have pushed the idea that Muslims are "evil" and will throw a grenade at you if you don't shut up and do what they say. They will fly airplanes into your buildings! They will bomb your parking garages! They will *steal your iPod!* RUN!

For all the idiots in this country that actually are *afraid* of Muslims, I hate to break it to you – they aren't walking down the street to put a bomb in a trash can. I can guarantee you that 99.999999% of all Muslims are just like everyone else. They are not "possessed" or "crazy". They are nice, caring people that have obviously been affected by the terrors of 9/11 and the London bombings just as much as you have, if not more. *Trust* me, I know many Muslims, and they are not trying to kidnap me right now.

Really, who *cares* if Barack Obama's middle name is Hussein? It's just a name, folks! Obama is not going to become a terrorist dictator just because his middle name was the last name of the former dictator of Iraq. Arab people in the mall are not going to pull out an AK-47 and start shooting people while yelling "Mighty Allah!!" While I can understand how American Christians felt about Muslims after the attacks, it's got to STOP NOW. It's been almost *six years* since a few demented Muslims flew airplanes into buildings and grassy fields in Pennsylvania. All people in the United States who despise, hate, or have prejudicial views about Muslims have "religious intolerance" (the religious term for being a racist). The people in this under-educated country who are afraid of Muslims obviously haven't met one or read about the ideas of Islam.

But it isn't just the citizens' fault – it's the American media (CNN) that started this horrible anger against Muslims. Since 9/11, CNN has portrayed Muslims as terrorists, and with the millions of people who watch this terrible network, word spread. Eventually, CNN had started an American revolution against Muslims. The Cable News Network has continually aired reports showing Arabs and Muslims killing and bombing each other, with no remorse. This violence has brainwashed the public into believing that the unrest in the Middle East may happen here, too. Over and over, CNN pushes the anti-Muslim agenda into the public. Now, since their success, Muslims wearing their traditional clothing and practicing their beliefs are continually stared at, gossiped about, laughed at, and overall harassed by Americans. American children usually play games that run like this: "Last one to the driveway is a Muslim!" They are *so* evil!

For whoever is reading this right now, I must ask – at any time in your life, did a Muslim attack you? Kidnap you? Were you ever afraid (even just a little) of Muslims? The first two probably never happened… but the third either happened in 2001 – 2002 or, hopefully, never occurred to you. Since a Middle

Eastern person has never actually hurt *you*, why should you be afraid of them? It's not a "natural" response, is it? – it's a fear of something you don't understand. There are a few simple solutions to becoming a Muslim-friendly person.

1. **Be nice to Muslims.** – There are way too many people in this country that have angry feelings towards Muslims. The evil, terrible humans in society that pick on or hurt Muslims deserve to be thrown in a jungle and be eaten by unusual animals. If you want to be a friendly person, get Muslim friends. When someone insults Muslim people, get really, *really* mad at them. If you want, you can hit them. When Muslims are portrayed as "bad" people on TV (CNN), write angry and swear-full emails and letters to Lou Dobbs. If teenagers are laughing at a Muslim walking by, go over to them and tell them off. If they have bats, rocks or paper airplanes, stay away. Finally, remind the person sitting next to you on a bench that "Hussein" is just a name, not an "I'm a terrorist!" badge for Barack Obama.

2. **Don't stare at Muslims. –** Americans have a tendency to stare at Muslims wearing their traditional clothing. When in the mall, on the bus or in the park, make it a habit *not* to look at them. When you stare at a Muslim person, it's usually because you are having problems with different religions. Muslims are no different than Christians, so if you see a traditional Muslim walking by, don't stare at them for long periods of time like they're aliens or something. They are human beings too, not any different from the casually-dressed people on the street.

3. **For security guards, police, and Customs inspectors: don't treat Muslims more hastily than Christians.** – I hate it when the security guards and inspectors in this country treat Muslims worse just because they're Muslim, and therefore *must* be the dangerous cellphone-snatching terrorists. Not only is this illegal under a numberless amount of laws, it is just plain wrong. Only if a Muslim (or any other person, for that matter) is carrying a bomb or gun onto the plane or across the border should you become suspicious. Don't add extra, more thorough security checks to Muslim people – treat them like any other person in line. Police shouldn't be any more hostile towards a Muslim than any other person who was speeding on Interstate 10. Finally, *never, ever, ever* shoot a dangerous Muslim if they don't need to be shot. Treat every situation equally!

4. **Don't gossip about Muslims. –** Gossiping is just for people who have no life. When you see a Muslim walking by, don't suddenly

start talking about them. So they're wearing their custom clothes – so what? They're still human, and if you gossip about them, you aren't!

5. **Don't get mad at Muslims for being Muslims. –** At public schools, social studies classes teach the ideas of the Islamic religion as part of the curriculum. Don't be one of those annoying, in-your-face religious people who want everyone to believe in "God". I hate it when those in-your-face Christians criticize other people for being different. Never go up to your kid's history teacher asking that they stop teaching about Islam in school. Don't get stirred up with hatred against the local Muslims for being so – gosh – *different*. Stop passing out letters encouraging people to go to church – there are too many churches to notice, and everyone in this country knows that there is a Christian church down the road that they can join. You don't have to push it! Just let the Muslims be Muslims! It's their life, people!

Muslims have a life just like yours. They are not evil or hating. *Muslims are people*. Don't be a stupid idiot! Treat Muslims equally. You'll set a great example.

III. – WHY "GOD" IS IMPOSSIBLE

There are so many reasons why the idea of a "God" is impossible. There is no, and never has been any physical evidence of "God". According to the Christians, their "evidence" is that "God" is "inside us and all around us. 'He' is everywhere". Seriously? If "God" was inside me and all around me, wouldn't I feel "Him"? Well, right now I feel just normal. There is no spiritual feeling flowing through my body right now – I'm just sitting here, writing away while listening to Pink Floyd on my iPod.

According to science, "God" is impossible in every way. As I said before, there isn't any real, genuine evidence of anything in the Bible, especially "God," Jesus, Heaven, or Hell. For the last 1,000 years of religion, there has never been a single artifact of anything related to "God" or Jesus. Yet in the last few decades, scientists have found irrefutable evidence of evolution and the Big Bang. I mean, our DNA is about 99% similar to that of apes – yet so many people still think that some thing in the sky, with no evidence of "His" existence, made the human species?

Humans will never find evidence for this "almighty God". It is impossible to go back in time, right? So that means we will never be able to go back to see if Jesus existed, or to see how the universe was created, or to view how the human

species started out. Since there is no evidence of this so-called "God" starting us, how can we know if "He" is real? We can't! But there is plenty of scientific evidence of the Big Bang and evolution. There have been skeletal remains of our ancestors, the primates before *Homo sapiens*, and our DNA is 99.5% similar to theirs. There is also evidence that the universe started because of the Big Bang, not because of the invisible man in the sky who used lightning to create everything. Since the universe expands, it must have started out as being extremely small at one point, and that was before the Big Bang, which caused the universe to start expanding outward. Also, cosmic background radiation clouds have been discovered, and since they are so far away the image of them in space is from the beginning of the universe, since light takes billions of years to travel the distance. After the Big Bang, the universe was at a different temperature than it is now. These radiation clouds are about the same temperature as the universe soon after the Big Bang. Also, according to the theory, stars didn't appear until 500 million years after the Big Bang. The oldest discovered stars are as old as 13.2 billion years – but no older, which supports the theory.

Yet still, after all this evidence of scientific creations, 3 billion people still think that a "God," with no proof of existence and with no-one ever seeing or hearing from "Him," created the universe, Earth, and life. Wow. To think that people are so gullible that they believe an unverifiable god created the universe, when the universe quite certainly created itself.

Besides the scientific facts, there are also many errors in Christian beliefs. For example, most Christians state that everything has to be "created" – *everything*. They state that the "creator" is the Christian "God". But still, if everything has to be "created," (it can't just happen) what created "God"? There is no possible way to say that "God" is the "creator" if "He" wasn't "created" in the first place. To simplify that, I will use the *modus tollens** explanation:

- "God" is called the "creator" of the universe and everything in it.
- If Christians say that <u>everything</u> had to be "created," something must have "created" "God".
- Nothing "created" "God" – "He" is an "uncaused cause".
- Therefore, "God" cannot exist.

Now it's time for Jesus Christ. Jesus, apparently, is the messiah of the Christian religion, and therefore was the ruler and savior. While many back in his day thought he was crazy and crucified him, "God" brought him back from the dead and dragged him up to heaven. The Bible states that Jesus will return to Earth in the "Second Coming," bringing the dead back to life to live in the newly established "Kingdom of 'God'".

In the last 5,000 years, over *6 billion* people have died – and every two seconds, that number grows. To think that over 6 billion zombies would be

added to the world population is horrifyingly unimaginable – in the matter of a day or so, the world population would grow 100%.

Out of the many, many predictions that have been made about when the Second Coming will occur, *none* of them have been right – that's probably because (whoa!) Jesus never existed!! Not to be offensive or anything, but what if the story of Jesus is just a big, fat lie? There has never been any evidence of this holy man, the burial site for Jesus has never been found. And, even if it is found, what will that show us? That some man died? Well, every two seconds that happens – someone dies – and finding the old world of Jesus would mean nothing in proving that "the 'God'" exists.

Besides Jesus, other Biblical stories are just plain impossible. For example, the story of Noah's Ark is so impossible that I almost laugh at the way people portray it. For example, how could the entire world be flooded? Since water evaporates and condenses into clouds, wouldn't such large amounts of water be taken up that the ocean level decreased? Also, how is it possible to fit every animal in existence (actually, *two* of each) onto one ark? There are millions of different animals on Earth, and it would be impossible to fit all of them onto one small ark. What happened to the rest of the human race? If Noah and his family were the only ones who didn't drown, how did the species reproduce and grow back to its pre-flood size? If Noah landed the ark on the mountains of Arart in Turkey, how come searches for the ark there have turned up fruitless? If the Earth was flooded for 40 days and nights, how did that one plant – the grove – survive on a mountain thousands of feet in the air?

These problems completely rule out the flooding of the world – which sounds awfully unusual anyway. There are so many problems with religion, so many almost obvious flaws and completely impossible stories. Still, over 60% of the world's population is stuck with the three monotheistic religions. Even if this "God" stuff was real, there would be no way of proving it. I'm not saying that I'm an agnostic (someone who thinks that there is no way of knowing if there is a "God"), I strongly believe that the world wasn't formed by this Pi in the Sky. Besides possibly being untrue, religion also has another annoying drawback – war.

Modus tollens is Latin for "the way that denies by denying"

IV. – HOLY WAR, BATMAN!

The basic fact is that nobody, not even the most evil, vile, despicable creatures on Earth, like wars. Wars are pointless ways of showing power that you don't have, and they're bad for everything. Wars are bad for economies, the environment, people overall. Take WWII – it caused overall global temperatures to rise for the first time in history, killed 60 million people and destroyed entire countries.

As we all should know, many wars are started because of religion. There are way too many religions, first of all, and way too many people caring way too much about their precious "God". The War on Terror was caused by Islamic extremists (remember, not *all* Muslims are bad!), and numerous wars in the 16th and 17th centuries were started by disagreements about religion. Religion is not always a good thing, especially in modern times where there are terrorists in Afghan— I mean *Pakistan* who are angry at the unholy Americans… especially the Bush in the White Forest. Imagine if there were no religion – people would probably be much happier, more open to new ideas and less stubborn about beliefs. The world would be a more lean, relaxed and calmer place. No more religious discrimination, religious wars or huge, land-wasting churches that should be much smaller than they are now.

While not all wars are caused directly by religion, many are indirectly. World War II in Europe was partly caused by Hitler's discrimination of Jews, scuffles in the Middle East are usually caused by Muslim extremists or disputes over the Holy Land. Most wars against communist nations are indirectly caused by the lack of free religion in those countries, most of them officially being atheist nations.

Also, there are those wars that are directly caused by religion. The most annoyingly imminent battles are between Israel and Hezbollah. Israel is the Holy Land, home of the most important religious sites in the three monotheistic religions. Of course, when three different religions supposedly started in the same chunk of land, you know that the future will be bad. Fighting between the Jewish nation of Israel and other Muslim countries has dragged on for 40 years with only a few years of rest until another mini-war starts. While it's improbable that there will ever be peace in such a strongly religious region, we could try to make the quieter periods of time last for as long as possible… unless everyone forgets about religion.

If there were no religion, there probably wouldn't be terrorists at all; there would be less genocide; no wars about who gets their chunk of the holy cities; and no-one would be so angry at the other over their religion. For those who

don't like church, there wouldn't be church. For the first time, atheists would be allowed to join the Boy Scouts. Homosexuals wouldn't be under so much scrutiny for their ways of life because no-one would care that the Bible (behold its power!) says that men and women should be married – not men and men. So what if the Bible (POWER!) says that? It's their life, and their choice. So they're being "unholy" – anti-gays are being stupid for injecting their flawed beliefs into others' lives.

<u>THIS FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH IS CONTROVERSIAL!</u>

Still, so many people are making the unhealthy choice to be religious. We should be more like the Eastern religions – those that don't have any gods and are based on the teachings of *real* people (hello?) Asian religions have never started wars over retarded religious differences; they're all peaceful and more democratic than the Western religions. In Asia, you can be gay (not that I'd want to be) and you can mess around with embryos as much as you want without any stupid, in-your-face Christians telling you that you'll go to their stupid place called Hell. The "God"-believers always start wars over their stupid beliefs that the "Almighty" "God" "told" them to kill the "sinners" next to them. So primitive!

The Middle East is the worst religious place ever. Not to say that the Muslims over there are bad, but a good chunk of the people (mostly men) are just crazy about Islam. Living in the Middle East means that you have practically sold yourself to Islam. Women are continually deprived of basic living rights and are forced to do things under the power of men. This is especially evident in Iran, another annoying country, where women aren't even allowed to go outside their homes without their husbands tagging along. Women must cover their hair at all times, and gays are usually sentenced to the death penalty. Just because they are "sinning" under the rules of the Qur'an, they must die (remember the POWER of the Testaments!) To deprive someone of their life just for going outside or being a little bit different is so wrong that every government official in Iran should just die. That would definitely take pressure off Bush, with President Ahmadinejad dead.

America is also one of the most unstable religious areas. With so many Christians packed into one country, no matter how hard you try there is no way to get away with being in a different religion. This, coupled with America's stereotypes towards every other religion in the world, makes the United States a target for criticism and anger, especially from the religious terrorists who have fantasized "God" telling them to kill large quantities of the "evil" Americans. Obviously, this must be an excuse for their hatred of this country because of how it stereotypes Muslims. I mean, Muslims are being continually slapped in the face by Americans (especially the media) for their ways of life, and these terrorists are mad. Not to defend them, they're doing everything the wrong way

in this situation. Eventually, the Muslim community will be even more badly treated by the American community because of how the terrorist groups and dictator countries in the Middle East behave. Who knows, maybe someday WWIII will be caused by religion. It all depends on the future of terrorism and the Muslim community, and how it is treated by the world. Luckily for the Asians, it's definitely not going to be in the East. Sadly, for the Americans, they're certainly going to be in the world's next big holy war.

V. – AGAINST THE ATHEISTS

When it comes to America, everyone hates atheists. There's no denying that in the United States, whoever doesn't believe in "God" is automatically thrown out of the pack and left behind. Unfortunately for me, I am one of them.

Americans are so obsessed with Christianity that they are pushed into making cruel and stupid decisions. The Boy Scouts of America is a great example. Even in what has been titled the world's "freest" country, there is overwhelming discrimination of atheists for such a democratic nation. The Boy Scouts, the world's largest organization for children and teens, is openly critical of atheists and gays. They are so Christian-based that they ban atheists and gays from becoming a scout or applying for a job. Try to join if you don't follow the monotheistic religions, and they will automatically deny your admittance.

Many people over the decades have tried to get the Boy Scouts to lighten up and let everyone join, but to no avail. Why? Because the Boy Scouts is a private organization, and therefore can rule out certain minority groups from joining their "club". The Boy Scouts have kept up their anti-atheist agenda, but under growing scrutiny. As the number of Christians drops and non-theistic soars, many are opposing the Boy Scouts over their positions. The U.S. Defense Department stopped direct funding of the Scouts in 2004 over the issue, and many communities across the country have stopped funding and have even kicked out Boy Scout camps for their policy. Of course, they haven't stopped enforcing even under pressure, because that was the will of the founders of the Scouts in 1911 and is inscribed in the stupidly created "Boy Scout Law". The "Boy Scout Oath" also requires the Scout to pledge his duties to "God". The founder of the Boy Scouts of America, Robert-Banden Powell, wrote in the first Scout handbook that "no man is much good unless he believes in 'God' and obeys 'His' *[sic]* laws." That goes beyond insulting atheists – that means insulting atheists and many Eastern religions which are quite popular (like Buddhism).

If the United States is to be called a "free country," shouldn't it be free for all, not just the ones who have read the Bible? Americans are so disapproving of

atheists that in a 2007 Gallup poll showed that over 50% of Americans wouldn't vote for an atheist presidential candidate even if he or she was better qualified than the opponent. That's like asking if you'd want either Homer Simpson or an atheist as your president – *over 50% would choose Homer Simpson!* That shows how stupid some people in this country are – to think that they would vote for an idiot rather than a well-qualified atheist just because of their beliefs.

Many states have constitutions banning atheists from taking office in that state, yet all of these laws are void under the U.S. Constitution. A good example is Texas, which will not allow one to take office in the state unless he or she "acknowledges the existence of a higher being". Well, what if there was no higher being? That would be a pretty stupid law…

While not as many people may care about this specific issue, in Iran you are not considered a citizen if an atheist. While this may not be as bad as being executed if you're gay, it's pretty bad since the Islamic religion (which seems to be much more evil than Christianity, yet not all its followers are) says, plainly, that "non-believers" deserve to die. Atheists in Iran are probably being pelted with rocks in a dirt street by crazy Muslim followers right now.

When will we earn our right to freedom? There are 24 million irreligious people in the United States that deserve to be treated equally. So we don't believe in your giant man sitting on a cloud in the sky who controls everything that happens all the time with his fingers, like he's using the Force. So? It's our life, and we want complete control over it. We don't care about you snobby Christians (most notably my neighbors) who keep on saying that we're going to go to Hell. So what? We don't even believe in Hell – why should we be afraid of it? To the Christians who say that Christianity is a good thing: what has religion ever given us besides more to argue about and a more divided society? What has it ever given us besides more wars, discrimination and suffering? What has it ever done for us besides give us more to do, less time to work and more resources wasted on churches, books and guides? Really, has religion improved your life at all – or has it just made everything more complicated? In my point of view, religion is just another way humans have overcomplicated the workings of the world, by introducing new ways of life that have almost no benefit at all besides the brief religious feeling you may or may not have. It provides careless answers to complex, impossible questions. It spreads throughout the world and eats its way through people's lives, until they realize that they wasted all their time on something that they shouldn't worry about so much. Religion is a lie, a scam to make the world seem more explainable when it just becomes so much more complex, so much angrier and darker. Maybe in the future people will come to their senses. But until then, the world will remain shattered and torn, lying in pieces thanks to religion, the idea that has torn society apart.

VI. – FINAL THOUGHTS

I live in Texas, one of those annoying religious states. Around here, the churches are everywhere, around every corner and immensely large in size. To think that we could've built a school or a park on this huge piece of land – but no, we wasted it on a church. It seems odd that people would build such an immense building that they only use briefly on religious days, and then it lies empty for the rest of the week.

I, personally, have never been associated with any religion, which is why I decided to become an atheist. Unlike many kids in the U.S. that are forced to be just like their parents, my family isn't very religious at all. Because I never became affiliated with any religion, I got to choose my own path. But by becoming an atheist, I had to be careful. I couldn't join religious discussions because I knew that I would be pounded with stupid questions about why I didn't believe in "God" or what my evidence was for the Big Bang. Of course, I have more evidence than they do about my thoughts on the beginning of life. I know they don't have answers to my questions.

By becoming an atheist, I made sure that I wouldn't go to any of those church summer camps – the ones that have Bible groups and make you prey every morning. That meant I had steered away from every summer camp in the city, practically, and now I have to spend my summer without anything to do.

I only have one atheist friend – *one* – out of so many. All my other friends are Christians. My neighbors are some of the most deeply religious people I have ever met – one of them is a Christian Republican, the complete opposite of me. We frequently get into arguments over religion (although I never start them) and it seems that no-one ever wins. This is how I learned that science (the clear winner, although no-one wants to admit it) and religion will never triumph over each other. For the last 1,000 years, neither has actually won, although religion has taken some tough blows (Earth is not at the center of the solar system, nor is it flat). I guess until many generations from now, there will still be religion. Maybe in the future, the new generations will think about how stupid we all were, thinking these ridiculous things. Who knows, we might all be stupid.

In the time I have written this report, I have learned so much about religion, and have come to despise it. Religion has not improved the world at all; it has just made it angrier, more stubborn and more volatile. Religion has started so many wars, started so many arguments, and has wasted so much time. The many that have been eluded into this dark, dark world may have wasted their entire lives on something that we shouldn't care about. Religion is a collection of

myths and lies that are used to explain the complicated, impossibly deep questions of the universe, life and the unknown. The sad fact is that, no matter what we do, some questions will never be answered in full. How *did* the universe start? What started life on Earth? Did the Big Bang actually happen? These questions, while simply written, are impossible to answer. They are so dangerous that we shouldn't even try to answer them. If we do try, we'll spend the rest of our lives trying to figure it all out. Ever since religion was introduced into the world, we have just complicated the questions we were trying to answer. Now we have injected all the questions about how Jesus died, if "God" is real, when the Second Coming will occur, and all that junk that has just been added to the impossible questions pile. Now we have even more to figure out, making the journey into reality much, much harder. Only those who don't care about religion can find out the clues to possibly unlock the secrets of the universe. Those who are deeply religious have thrown themselves into a deep hole which they will never get out of. They have surrounded themselves with lies about the past and don't have the capability to go after reality. The fact is that those who aren't religious are much more intelligent than those who are. They don't surround themselves with the endless texts of religion; they do the research without the guidance of any "God" or philosophy. They have freed their minds of religion and can use that extra power to answer the harder questions in life, the ones religious people will say that "God" did it or say that, under their beliefs, that question is stupid or dumb because the answer is right there in their guide book. Sadly for them, they don't have the capability to free themselves of the restraints of religion and actually *do the research*, *compile the facts* and use the own minds to find the answer, not rely on a holy book written thousands of years ago. The religious, especially Christians, have been dumbfounded into letting go of their curiosity and putting their mind into a book of lies. Religion has ruined the minds of so many people who could have done so much.

Humans are intelligent and curious. Unfortunately, we made one huge mistake – we created religion and we stuck with it. Now only a few of us, instead of all of us, are able to answer the harder questions. Religion has consumed the lives of so many and reduced them to a dull, eventless future where those who are religious have doomed themselves to a life of ultimate normality. Only the people who forget the rules of the religions and become more open and outgoing can learn and make a difference in their lives. Religion holds people back and makes sure that they stay loyal to everything that religion says. Since when has going to church or praying ever helped you? It's like making a wish – it isn't going to come true. Every prediction about religion has been wrong. All that time praying to "God" hasn't paid off. Dumping entire nights on reading the Bible hasn't helped – you're still the same old person the next day. The irreligious, though, have grown up successful. Elton John and John Lennon both criticized religion and grew up rich and famous. Elton John is gay and he hasn't

been killed by "God," has he? Almost all scientists are skeptical of religion and many of them have grown up renowned for their research, for jumping into new topics and going against the flow of religion to find the answer to a tough question instead of citing the Bible. Sadly, many of those who are religious have grown up in an average life without event. Why? Because they are too religious, too dependent on the Bible and "God". They never try to go against the flow and do something new.

As the world changes and we all discover new things, religion will become obsolete and untrue. All its fundamentals will fall apart, eventually. As many people switch to atheism and non-theism, the world will change its views on the big three religions. While I respect everyone's beliefs, I think that they are incorrect – the Bible is flawed, "God" is laughably unreal, and Jesus was just a man who tricked everyone. As we move on, I encourage you to make the change. Join the atheists and discover new things beyond your religion. When has religion ever *helped* you? It never helped me, and it never will. The world would be better off without religion, which over complexes every simple question and gives badly thought answers to an impossibly deep query. The future is bad for religion. Science is starting to overtake all the ideas of Christianity. While America is a free country, it still hasn't freed itself from the limits of religion. Religion in America is flawed. The people who follow it are flawed.

Are you?

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