

Why An Atheist Can Believe In God

Contributed by Steve Gillman
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Think an atheist can't believe in God? Then you may not know what an atheist is.
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Contrary to what many believe, many atheist - if not most - would never say "God doesn't exist." Unfortunately, many dictionaries also have definitions like "Denial of the existence of God," which is a misrepresentation. In fact, if once you understand what atheism really means, you'll see why an atheist can believe in God. Here are the three basic beliefs that lead one to be an atheist:

- Evidence and experience should be the basis for any belief.
- An assertion should be proven by the person or persons who make it.
- The case for God has not been proven.

{bot_wrgoogle}With no experience to convince me, and no proof of the existence of God, I don't have a reason to believe in the existence of he or she or it. But I can't say he doesn't exist, since I can't prove this belief either. In fact, why would an atheist waste his time trying to prove a concept as nebulous as God can't or doesn't exist? Suppose I told you that a blue snake in the sky ruled the universe. If all I had for evidence was a some speculative story-book as evidence, you wouldn't believe me would you? No?

That would make you an "aserpentist," by the way. Now, would you start gathering evidence to "prove" that no invisible blue snake was up there? No. As the maker of the assertion, I have would have the obligation to prove it did exist. You would be entirely justified in dropping and ignoring the whole matter until given some reason to look at it again.

Atheism is simply non-belief due to unconvincing evidence.

Where does this leave agnostics then? An honest classification would be as a type of atheist, right? If a person won't say he believes in God, he is atheistic. Although there is confusion in the terms, sometimes those who call themselves agnostics are just afraid of the other "A" word label. "Agnostics" are more accepted in society after all.

Now, since words refer to something - even if it is only to ideas - we can say that God exists as an idea, and a powerful one. perhaps some atheists even like various versions of this idea (I like "the force" from the movie "Star Wars.") The various concepts of gods are often the cause of wars and horrible crimes, but they can also can be an uplifting concept, or at least useful in some way.

I refer to these ideas as "useful lies." Regardless of their truth or falsity, some ideas can be beneficial as "operating principles" or "guides to life." Consider the idea that everything happens for a reason, for example. It doesn't have to be true to be useful, since it certainly can get you looking for the lessons and other values to be found in bad scenarios.

An atheist could say then, that a god exists as a common belief, or "useful lie," and that as such, he may even do some good. But more than that, since an atheist simply hasn't been convinced, he can believe in a God in heaven too. For this, he just needs God to come down and shakes his hand, or otherwise make his presence known.

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