



## Does rejecting the idea of God make you free?

Reading Rom 1.18-25, Ecc 1.2-3 and Matt 9.27-30a

First of all, God isn't an idea, He's a Person, He created ideas. And the only reason we know what a person is, is because we're created in His image. But I'm getting ahead of myself, let's backup a bit.

Those two last readings may seem unrelated but they're not, they're vital when it comes to this subject. The blind men and Solomon's "vanity vanity"- or "meaningless meaningless". I hope you'll see as we go on, their relevance.

There is a curious temptation that arises with people, that, when fully formed, ends with the idea that if "I just get rid of belief in God, then I'll be free to live as I want and think as I want." This can happen, especially in young people who grow up in the Church, like many in this class.

They hit upon the 'genius' idea that, if they decide they don't believe in God, all their supposed restrictions, rules and feelings of guilt will go away and they'll be free to live a happy, fulfilling life, however they please, just like those in the world around them. But are all those assumptions true? Are people truly happy and fulfilled without God?

Well, let's just examine this idea for a brief moment and peel back a few layers and push this rather undeveloped idea to it's natural conclusions.

Firstly, if a person thinks they can just disbelieve in God and then easily make sense of life then they'll have a rather rude awakening. All sorts of things have to be believed in order to disbelieve! For example, how did everything get here? Why does the universe follow laws? Why do I think in terms of right and wrong, good and evil? Why does rational thinking follow logical rules? Why do I think about any of these things at all!?

Usually some form of big bang, evolutionary scientific rationalism is brought into play and the person thinks that's enough to snuff out the Divine, easy peasy! But that simply won't do. For example, the idea of life coming from a random bunch of chemicals isn't mathematically tenable and a rather bigger gap than even single celled organisms to humans, which is a massive gap in itself. Not to mention the fact that life has never been observed to have come from non life. Life isn't like a cup-a-soup- just add water! Then there's the *process*; there is no observable process by which you can add information to an organisms' genetic code. So how did simple life, with little genetic information, turn into more complex life, with much, much more genetic information, with no way for that to happen? 'Mutations' people cry! But that won't do either, mutations can only change or reduce information, they can't add to it. That's not even the half of the problems the budding Atheist is up against. Quite apart from the fact that Science can only ever be provisional (it's 'truth' is only true until proved false by the next experiment or observation), and things such as quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity put man at the centre of his own experiments, making scientific 'truth' rather subjective. Why can we even do science in the first place? Why does the universe follow natural laws, laws of mathematics? How can you be sure these laws of tomorrow will behave like they did today? What gives you the authority to trust your own reason? If it wasn't given by God then it's a product of chemistry and biology- why trust it's conclusions any more than throwing a dice? How do you know your memory or senses are even accurate? Atheism can't answer any of these. Only belief in the God of the Bible can make sense of these things, because it says- He made your senses and made them trustworthy. Some say Christianity is irrational and unscientific. They couldn't be more wrong. Only belief in God can allow you to use science and reason and explain why you can trust them.

You see, it's not so simple to just say "I don't believe in God", you must explain life without Him, otherwise you're just using things you can't explain- being arbitrary, living in a world you can't explain, living in a body, and inhabiting a mind, you can't explain. You'll be using your, God given, reason, to try to explain away God, without a reason for that reason! There's no tenable alternative to the 'mind' of God providing that reason for you to use in the first place! All the world can offer is poor guesses and say "we don't know yet". Atheism doesn't make sense and answers nothing. It claims science as its own, but science has been kidnapped by the Atheist and put on a pedestal, higher than its remit. Science is simply not equipped to make statements outside of the material realm. It's a useful tool but not an ultimate arbiter of all truth!

But let me get onto the real core of this supposed 'Freedom' and 'Meaning and purpose' the Atheist or Agnostic (someone who says they don't know) thinks they can have. I think you can probably see that this 'freedom' the unbeliever thinks he's getting isn't really all it's cracked up to be. You see, if there's no God, then life can't really be made to have any meaning. But people like to have meaning, otherwise freedom just becomes a nightmarish agoraphobia of soul, ending in despair. Freedom from the rules of a game, rob you of enjoying the game, freedom from following a map's directions, means you end up lost. Freedom from rules of right and wrong means you can't impose your ideas of right and wrong onto anyone else- so don't try to talk about other people 'doing you wrong' or anything being 'unfair' after rejecting God, the idea doesn't make any sense if, ultimately, nothing means anything. Trying to give your life meaning in a meaningless universe is fruitless.

But men will try. With art and music and film and novels and all kinds of things. The question isn't; whether they're successful in fooling themselves, it's; why do they do that in the first place? Why do unbelievers behave like life should have a meaning, when they're telling everyone they should disbelieve in God, which makes life meaningless?

I don't think anger solves many problems but sometimes it's justified. I'm angry at Atheism. Why? Because of what it does to people. It promises freedom and leaves a person with nothing. No meaning or purpose. You may be able to convince yourself you're a machine, but machines don't usually try to make art and convince themselves that their life has purpose and needs to be enjoyable and fulfilling!

Atheism robs you of your humanity! It's ironic that the false optimistic belief system, that springs from this thinking, calls itself Humanism! When it turns a young person into something sub-human.

Solomon knew this by bitter experience. He reached the conclusion a long time before the world caught up. Meaningless, meaningless (vanity, vanity) he said in Ecclesiastes, was the end of a merely earthly life without thinking of the spiritual, the eternal, the Divine.

But how do you know what's true then? Well I said God is more than an idea, He's a Person and not only that, He is a person who does things. He acts, then He applies the results of that action.

Why do we care about a thing we call right and wrong? (Even though man tries to rewrite the rules to suit himself). The answer is, because God is the Great judge of right and wrong. How can we demand fairness and justice in life, but expect God not to be absolutely perfectly just with us? That justice means condemnation for us..... unless there was a way to balance the scales of justice and make us free from guilt. There is a way, the scriptures (God's revealed truth) reveal. It's by a Substitute taking our place, paying for our crimes. That's what the cross of Calvary is. The place of sacrifice, all the Old Testament sacrifices prefigured.

God is three persons, the Bible reveals,  
the Father, calls for the work to save men,  
the Son, does the work,  
and the Spirit, applies the work.

God works salvation, then He works faith in you in order to recognise that truth, then, crucially we can trust our senses and science and reason, which backs up our faith, confirming the Bible as reliable and trustworthy.

It's like having the ability to recognise a real diamond in a pile of fake ones. Some say, it's hopeless, how can anyone know? But if you have those eyes to discern, then you could pick out the real from the fake. If you don't have the eyes, then you don't have the hope. That's why faith is vital. Faith is like this discernment and can recognise the real truth of God from the fake beliefs of the world. It's a gift of God and once He opens your eyes you'll be able to see what He's done for you. Like the blind men. The blind men asked for sight, you can ask for faith!

Verses- Solomon's life is meaningless without God;

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?"

and Jesus heals the blind;

"And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened;"

This revealed truth means that when conscience works to make us feel guilt and even fear, it's not a bad thing like the Devil would have you believe. It's a good warning, like a smoke alarm. No one would say that a smoke alarm is bad just because it disturbs your sleep!

So if you've been tempted by this notion, and lured into thinking you'll find freedom and satisfaction without God, then know this, the idea isn't intelligent, it's a foolish attempt to jump out of a plane without a parachute because you were told the plane was constricting you and making you unhappy! The idea of being free without God is foolish.

Real freedom is found in truth, and being free from sin. A life without God will increasingly make you bound up in more and more sin, until you're at the mercy of your lusts and passions and habits. You'll be left with more questions than answers, never being able to make sense of life. Life won't be full, but a never-ending quest to find fulfilment, that, can never be had.

In the end you'll wonder why you still feel desperately empty, and why you did it all, and wore yourself out, for nothing, and what was it all for, because it didn't give you what you expected. The substance of the great castle of your future life turned out to be a sand castle when you reached it and tried to grasp it, and it will all crumble before your very eyes.

Youth is a time when people still think the deeper thoughts and ask those ultimate questions. Adults often give up trying to answer these questions and lapse into a bland life of the accumulation of material things, and feeding never ending appetites, and serving unworthy idols. Don't let the Devil convince you of lies in youth that, by the time you realise they're not true, He's convinced you it doesn't matter anyway.

Your life matters, your life isn't pointless, life isn't meaningless, you're not a result of forces and chemistry, you're not merely a higher animal. That's not what God has told us. Don't let the world convince you of that lie, then try to tell you to live a meaningful life. That's like taking a person's food and clothing and telling them they're worthless, and then sending them on a long journey, and wishing them all the best! It's heartless and cruel at best, wicked and evil at worst.

You are a precious soul made in the image of God. A God who you're estranged from because of unrighteousness and unholiness. This isn't a myth thought up by man, it's a revelation from God. Man is usually very easy on himself, and would never come up with such an offensive thing to himself. This revealed truth is given from the Scriptures which have never been disproved, and when men try to explain them away, it just proves them all

the more true, because they explain that man is hostile to God naturally and will act that way. The act of rejecting Him is just what the Bible says men would try to do. The very act of Atheism actually proves the Bible right!- Rom 1.18-25

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

So realise that if you've heard the whisper of Atheism saying "reject God and be free", then know it's a lie and the man who believes it is the biggest of fools. Escape to God instead of ending up being the man that all the world will see was the fool in mental chains who thought he could be free without the God who breaks our chains.

It's a warning out of love and concern for our fellow man. Why do we bother? Because God worked our salvation for us, and we didn't deserve it. So we hold out the same hope for you. Turn from the world's lies and put your hope and trust in Christ. Turn on the news; does the world seem like a place that has it all sorted out? You'll see darkness and empty lives, resulting in self destruction. Look at the fruit of true conversion though; lives changed for the better, sinners turned to saints. Not perfect in this life, but getting there. Look at true Christians and see free men. Men given a righteousness not their own, declared justified and forgiven and adopted by God. Now they know that, far from being restrictive, God's commandments are protective and guiding. They are a rod that drive us to Christ, who kept them perfectly for us. And after conversion, they are a rod to walk with on our journey. Can you see! If you're struggling, ask the One who richly gives to those who pray. Don't waste a moment! Tomorrow is promised to no man. So seek him while you still can.