



## AN OPEN LETTER TO GRACIOUS ATHEISTS

A friend of mine, Marc, is one of the smartest people I have ever known and is an atheist. He says he will not discuss atheism with me because **he is afraid that he might win the discussion**. Seems to be an odd statement, but his rationale is that he would rather be around Christians than atheists because Christians are characteristically better people (A direct quote).

With all the atheist related groups trying to stop prayers in schools and similar causes, Marc's statement gives one something to think about.

Imagine that you have a country run rampant with people following the teachings of Jesus Christ. Just imagine that everyone would be helping the poor, doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, being a good Samaritan, and the like.

If you think about it, every hospital I have heard of which is not funded by the government is associated with a religious group. Every non-government project helping the homeless I have heard of is related to a religious group.

It is to be sure that there have been some abuses in the name of religion, but they were not doing what Jesus taught. They were simply doing wrong under the guise of religion. The thing we hear of mostly today is Catholic priests abusing children. This is not what Christ taught, it is clearly against what Christ taught. Various religions including Christianity have been hijacked in times past to do all kinds of evil. "Christians" have burned people at the stake when they represented the civil governments. That was again against the teaching of Christ.

There are some "religions" which used religion as a basis for civil conquest. Much of the news today is about a "religious" group started in the 7th century with the goal of world domination. If you live in a country dominated by them and you are not one of them—your life is at risk.

I have never heard of a society which started up without a basic belief in some sort of deity. Perhaps there have been, but I have never heard of it. There seems to be a natural understanding of God.

What I have heard of is societies who try to kick God out. Two major recent examples of this have been Communist Russia and Communist Chinese. Each of these resulted in millions of citizens killed. We are all acquainted with this.

It is frequently said that most wars are caused by religion. I want to suggest to you that zero wars have been caused by someone following the teachings of Christ. Anyone who wants to be aggressive and start a war wants all the excuses they can find. Many wars have been started in the name of Christianity, but none following Christianity.



### HINDU EARLY BELIEF

The flat earth was supported on an elephant's back and the elephant was standing on a tortoise's back (NPR: Engines of our Ingenuity). Sounds like the teachings of a well meaning human philosopher rather than a teaching from God.



## AN OPEN LETTER TO GRACIOUS ATHEISTS, P. 2

Without even looking at whether you believe in God or not, lets simply look at the logic of the belief systems. We are simply going to compare the teaching of Christ with the teachings of atheistic evolution.

You can characterize Christianity with Jesus' statement "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you". Probably the best statement of atheistic evolution is "survival of the fittest".

Can you imagine what the world would be like if everyone was treating others as they would like to be treated. Do you want to be hurt, robbed, cheated, or killed? Would you not want to be treated fairly and equitably? If your family was out of food, wouldn't you like someone to give you some assistance.

Now, imagine that everyone operates according to the motto "survival of the fittest". If your neighbor is stronger than you and wants your possessions, he simply takes them. The ultimate embodiment of the is the strongman wants to run the country and takes over. How many times have we seen this, and how many of his opponents have we seen killed. The fittest survived.

It is clear that living without God does not result in a utopia in which everyone works well together (i.e. do unto others as you would have them do unto you). All history we know of on this is that it results on a "survival of the fittest mentality". The well intentioned "fittest" gives way to the self centered "fittest" and you have a leader not constrained by "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". He is characteristically willing to do whatever it takes to remain in power.

The interpretation of "do whatever it takes" is kill, rape, and maim in most cases. If you are an atheist free thinker, you will not be exempt from the persecution, because you are a free thinker. You will free think about something else and get persecuted for that in the new dictators goal to maintain power.

Now, Mr. Gracious Atheist, you live in the United States and are not being killed, raped, or maimed. You are free to campaign for the tenants of atheism. Why are you free to campaign for the tenants of atheism without the consequence of achieving of what you are teaching?

I want to suggest to you that it is because the United States is basically a Christian nation. That's right, the thing you are campaigning against is providing the shield to allow you to campaign.

**I have called you a gracious atheist** because the protection of Christianity allows you to be comfortable while you criticize Christianity. **So few of you went to Russia when atheism was in full control to live in an actual atheistic system that each person doing so was front page news.** Millions escaped atheistic communism to reach a Christian nation. But you are still here. Are you sure you believe what you are teaching?

I suggest that you listen to Marc and quit trying to convert others to atheism, but rather keep it a secret. You should encourage everyone else to become a Christian because it makes a better world.

At the very least, there is a standing offer in this newsletter to prove that atheistic evolution is impossible. Take the challenge and prove creation is wrong or quit kidding yourself about the subject.

## REGRETS OF THE DYING

Wish you and your loved one's A Very Happy & Prosperous New Year!

Here is an article by Bronnie Ware that was sent to me by a friend, which I feel is worth reflecting upon.



For many years I worked in palliative care. My patients were those who had gone home to die. Some incredibly special times were shared. I was with them for the last three to twelve weeks of their lives.

People grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality. I learnt never to underestimate someone's capacity for growth. Some changes were phenomenal. Each experienced a variety of emotions, as expected, denial, fear, anger, remorse, more denial and eventually acceptance. Every single patient found their peace before they departed though, every one of them.

When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again. Here are the most common five:

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

This was the most common regret of all. When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made.

It is very important to try and honor at least some of your dreams along the way. From the moment that you lose your health, it is too late. Health brings a freedom very few realize, until they no longer have it.

2. I wish I didn't work so hard.

This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret. But as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence.

By simplifying your lifestyle and making conscious choices along the way, it is possible to not need the income that you think you do. And by creating more space in your life, you become happier and more open to new opportunities, ones more suited to your new lifestyle.

3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.

Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result.

We cannot control the reactions of others. However, although people may initially react when you change the way you are by speaking honestly, in the end it raises the relationship to a whole new and healthier level. Either that or it releases the unhealthy relationship from your life. Either way, you win.

## REGRETS OF THE DYING

### 4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

Often they would not truly realize the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying.

It is common for anyone in a busy lifestyle to let friendships slip. But when you are faced with your approaching death, the physical details of life fall away. People do want to get their financial affairs in order if possible. But it is not money or status that holds the true importance for them. They want to get things in order more for the benefit of those they love. Usually though, they are too ill and weary to ever manage this task. It is all comes down to love and relationships in the end. That is all that remains in the final weeks, love and relationships.

### 5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content. When deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again.

When you are on your deathbed, what others think of you is a long way from your mind. How wonderful to be able to let go and smile again, long before you are dying.

Life is a choice. It is YOUR life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness.

## SPRING BRANCH CHURCH OF CHRIST

Spring Branch had a dedication of their new facility at 5300 Hammerly last Sunday. It is about 1 block east of Blalock. They have Spanish, English, and Korean services

Bible Class is at 9:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship is at 10:00 a.m.  
Evening Worship is at 6 p.m.

For more information contact Jim Culpepper at  
[jim@culpepperlaw.com](mailto:jim@culpepperlaw.com)



## **Acappella Spiritual Music Ensemble**

# ***Psalom***

With Russian Composer  
**Konstantin Zhigulin**

**Memorial Church of Christ  
900 Echo Lane, Houston 77064  
on Wednesday Night  
February 9, 2011 7:00 PM**

# THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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1				
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## WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT

A local group of Christians who believe that the Bible can be updated by contemporary council decisions.

A church which receives the permission from an earthly headquarters to plant a new congregation.

A church which attempts to duplicate a 19th or 20th century pattern for a church.

A church which believes you can pick and choose what part of the Bible you want to believe and follow only those parts.

A church which believes that we should judge that we are all in a community of believers as long as we say we believe in Jesus, irrespective of what we do and preach. A church which should assure all others that they are saved.

A group who makes decisions based on popularity rather than scriptural basis.

A group which simply skips over Acts 2:38.

A group which finds more convenient ways to simulate baptism.

A group which votes on what it suits them to believe and preach or a group which believes that they are still getting direct revelations from God.

A group who believes we are here to entertain ourselves.

## WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS

The church of Christ is a local group of Christians which try to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the first century pattern and teaching of the New Testament era at each location.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the scriptural organization of the church at each location.

The church of Christ has members who believe they are following the scriptural teachings as best they can.

Church of Christ members believe that we should not judge others' eternal reward, but that it is not reasonable to give comfort to others who follow their own preferences rather than teachings of the Bible.

A non-instrumental body as instruments were available in the first century and not used, and not used for several centuries.

A group who teaches Acts 2:38.

A group which teaches baptism by immersion for the remission of sins as that is what is taught in the Bible.

A group which believes all revelation was given in the first century.

A group which believes we are responsible to take the Gospel to the world.

## MONEY PAGE

### GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH

If your congregation does the following, BCE Publications guarantees that it will grow.

Poll your congregation three times at 6 months intervals with the following results:

- 50% of the members know who their elder is
- 50% of the members will say that a minister is their friend
- 50% of the members will say that they are uplifted by the song services
- 50% of the men will say that their input is considered before physical decisions are made
- 50% of the members will say they are an important part of the work
- 50% of the members will say they are aware of the goals of the congregation
- 50% of the members will say that they know what their part is in achieving your goals

**GUARANTEE:** For the first congregation which does this and does not grow by at least 10%, we will send \$1000 to the church related children's home of your choice in your name.

I have never met a person who said that if they did this their church would not grow. If your congregation is not growing, what have you got to lose? (Offer made since 2001)

### **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION?**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the first law of thermodynamics and have come into existence without God.**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the second law of thermodynamics and have existed forever without God. (Offer first posted 8/08)**

### **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!**

This publication continues (since 1991) to make a standing offer of \$100 to the first person who can give any reason (1 or more) as to why atheistic evolution is a better explanation for the universe and/or life than creation by God, The Father of Adam, Abraham, and Jesus; as revealed in the Bible.

We will also give you \$100 if we cannot give you 12 reasons why atheistic evolution is impossible as an explanation for our existence.

We will discuss this any place, any time, and in any forum. (Offer posed since June, 1991)

### **RUN AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT:**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can refute the logic that a person can in fact run at the speed of light as presented in the September 2009 issue of this newsletter.**

### **THE MONEY PAGE:**

This page may seem odd, even irreverent to offer money for something like this. It is 3 simple statements on church growth, that we cannot be here without God, and evolution is not possible. The steadfastness of putting money on the line for this is to try to be of assistance against those who would discourage church growth, believe in atheism, or promote atheistic evolution.

The page is intended to be a continuing reinforcement.

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## AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

- 2/11/11 Discovery Youth Foundation Golf-A-Thon (Fifth Ward) at Northgate Country Club, contact at [www.discoveryyouthfoundation.org/](http://www.discoveryyouthfoundation.org/)
- 3/11-12/11 Area Wide Men's Retreat at Trinity Pines Conference Center, [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org)
- 5/17/11 Foster Home For Children Golf Tournament at Blackhorse, contact [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org)
- 6/20/11 Arms of Hope Golf Tournament, Woodlands Country Club, Kevin McDonald [[kmcdonald@armsofhope.com](mailto:kmcdonald@armsofhope.com)]  
More information at: <https://aofh.siteblox.com/pages/events/item/2VMU27XGO6Q6/>.
- 2nd Tues. Preacher's Luncheon at Golden Island Buffet, 901 N. Shepherd, confirm with Dale Foster at [dalefost@gmail.com](mailto:dalefost@gmail.com)
- December Annual Sacred Harp Singing

## YAHOO GROUP

*HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [[steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net)] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.*

## The Christian Array Newsletter

This newsletter will be sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org) and it will be stopped.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org). All past copies of the newsletter can be found on the website "thearray.org".

## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate:

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor. BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org).