

...the wife of noble  
...character who can  
...more than rubies.  
...confidence in her  
...value  
...not harm.

# Ecclesiastes

**Everything Is Meaningless**  
The words of the Teacher,<sup>a</sup>  
the king in Jerusalem:  
"Meaningless! Meaningless!"  
says the Teacher.  
"Utterly meaningless!  
Everything is meaningless!"

What does man gain from all his labor  
which he toils under the sun?  
Generations come and generations go,  
but the earth remains forever.  
The sun rises and the sun sets,  
and hurries back to its place,  
it rises in the west and goes  
down in the east; the wind  
blows from the south and  
turns around to the north;  
the rivers flow and the sea  
is full; the sun is hot and  
the heat is scorching;  
but nothing is accomplished,  
nothing is gained,  
nothing is left behind.

**Wisdom Is Meaningless**  
Q<sup>1</sup> the Teacher, was king over Israel in  
Jerusalem. Q<sup>1</sup> devoted myself to study and  
to explore heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid  
on men! Q<sup>1</sup> have seen all the things that are  
done under the sun; all of them are mean-  
ingless, a chasing after the wind.

What is twisted cannot be straightened,  
what is lacking cannot be counted.  
I thought to myself, "I will  
become great and increase my  
wealth and store up silver and  
gold, and build up mansions  
and palaces; I will plant  
cedars and cypresses, and  
will set vineyards and olive  
trees, and will have orchards  
and fields, and will have  
flocks and herds, more than  
anyone before me in the east  
or west." I became great and  
increased my wealth; I built  
mansions and palaces, and  
planted vineyards and olive  
trees, and orchards and  
fields, and flocks and herds,  
more than anyone before me  
in the east or west. I became  
great and increased my  
wealth; I built mansions and  
palaces, and planted vineyards  
and olive trees, and orchards  
and fields, and flocks and  
herds, more than anyone  
before me in the east or west.



Why  
Is

Ecclesiastes  
So Negative?

- ***“The sayings of the wise are sharp as goads, like nails driven home; they guide the assembled people, for they come from one shepherd”*** [12:11 REB].

- Ecclesiastes 1:1-3 KJV

**The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. (2) Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. (3) What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?**

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## • ***“Vanity of Vanities...”***

- Purposeless, meaningless, empty to a superlative degree!
- *“Used of that which soon vanishes away... like vapor or a bubble... insignificant, worthless”* [Wilson].
- *“The noun appears seventy-one times in the O.T. Thirty-six times it is used in Ecclesiastes where it occurs at least once in each of the twelve chapters except chapter ten”* [TWOT].
- ***(ESV) What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?***
- ***(GNB) You spend your life working, laboring, and what do you have to show for it?***

## Walter C. Kaiser, Jr (*Ecclesiastes, Total Life*)

- *“As he turns away from God... man is gripped by an inexplicable loneliness. Is there no one home in the universe? Perhaps there is life on other planets. Surely if God is dead, as many theologians say... there must be someone or something else there. There has to be, or we are stuck.*
- *But no, the agony, dread, nothingness, and boredom are worse than anyone had imagined. ‘TRUTH’... continues to disappear... in direct proportion to the disappearance of God from modern thought. ‘ALL IS RELATIVE’ is the only absolute left.”*

## TROUBLING Conclusion For HIGHER Consciousness

- **Ecclesiastes 1:13 KJV** *And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.*
  - **Lexham** *I applied my mind to seek and to search by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. It is a grievous task God has given to humans.*
  - The compulsion to “make sense” of life, to grapple with death, to find purpose in our existence is limited to those *made IN HIS IMAGE!*

- **The wise man calls us to LOOK UP!**
- **It is what we were MADE to do!**
- **STARTS by reminding us of where we ARE (without God)!**

**YOUR CHOICE:  
LIGHT OR DARKNESS**



***VANITY***  
**OF LIFE**  
(Under The Sun)  
[1:3-11]





Ecclesiastes 1:4 CEV

**People come, and people go, but still the world never changes.**





**1:9-10**

- ***“Emotionally, man is exactly the same as he always has been. The sins of America today are exactly the sins of ancient Babylon... Man’s basic spiritual need is the same as that of Adam and Eve after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden” [Coffman].***
- ***1 Corinthians 10:13 GW There isn't any temptation that you have experienced which is unusual for humans. God, who faithfully keeps his promises, will not allow you to be tempted beyond your power to resist. But when you are tempted, he will also give you the ability to endure the temptation as your way of escape.***

**1:11**

ALREADY FORGOTTEN



- Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV

He has made everything beautiful in its time.  
Also, he has **put eternity** (OLAM) **into man's heart,**  
yet so that he cannot find out what God has  
done from the beginning to the end.

- *“We have a built-in longing for what is permanent.”*
- The EMPTINESS of this life is **DESIGNED** to make us  
**LOOK UP!**

*“If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.”*

*C.S. Lewis*

- Ecclesiastes 3:12-13 ESV

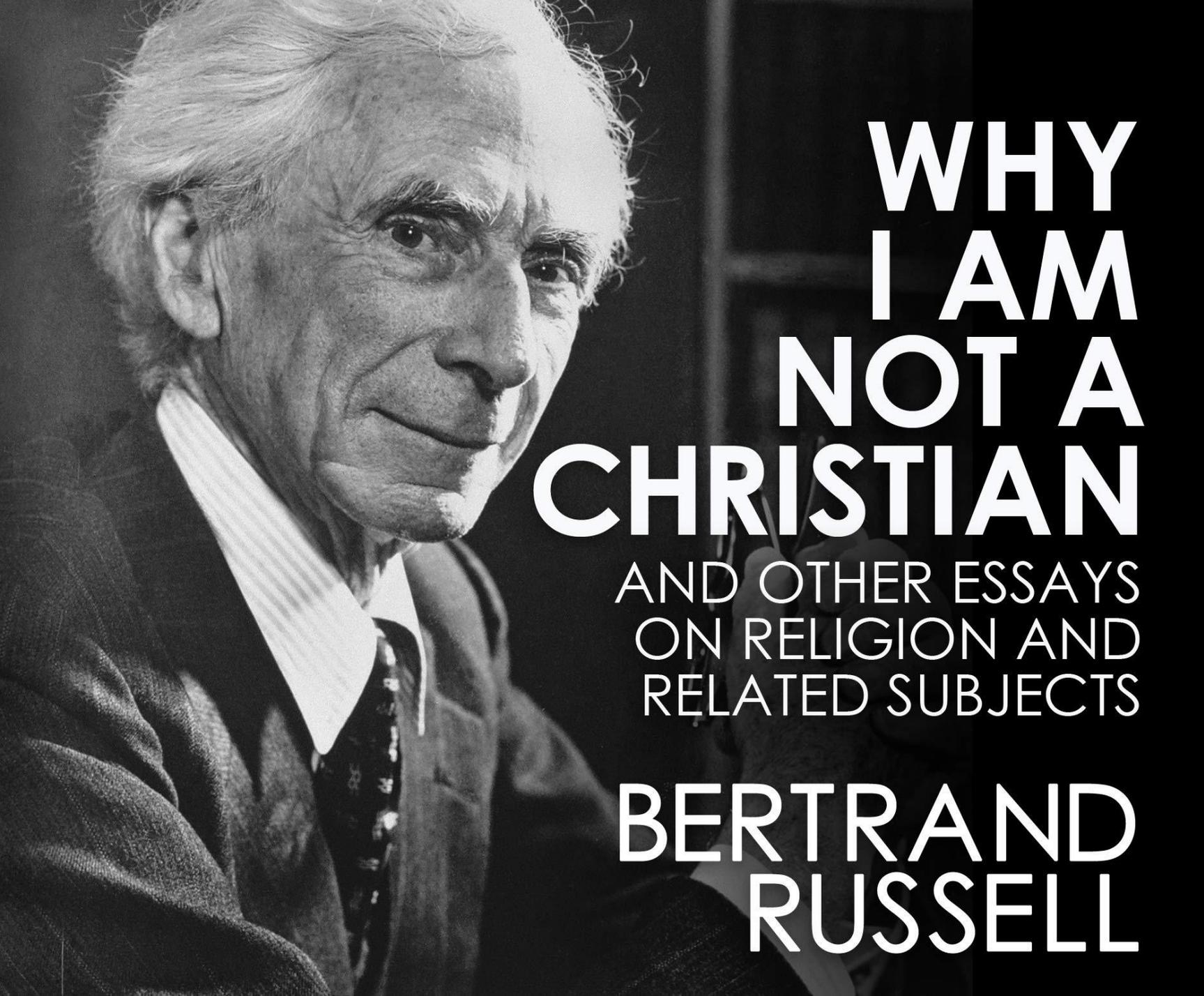
I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; (13) also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

- Ecclesiastes 12:14 ESV

For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

- Giving God His RIGHTFUL PLACE makes ALL the difference! It **makes our life MATTER!** It provides **HOPE** to our existence!



A black and white portrait of Bertrand Russell, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression.

# WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN

AND OTHER ESSAYS  
ON RELIGION AND  
RELATED SUBJECTS

BERTRAND  
RUSSELL

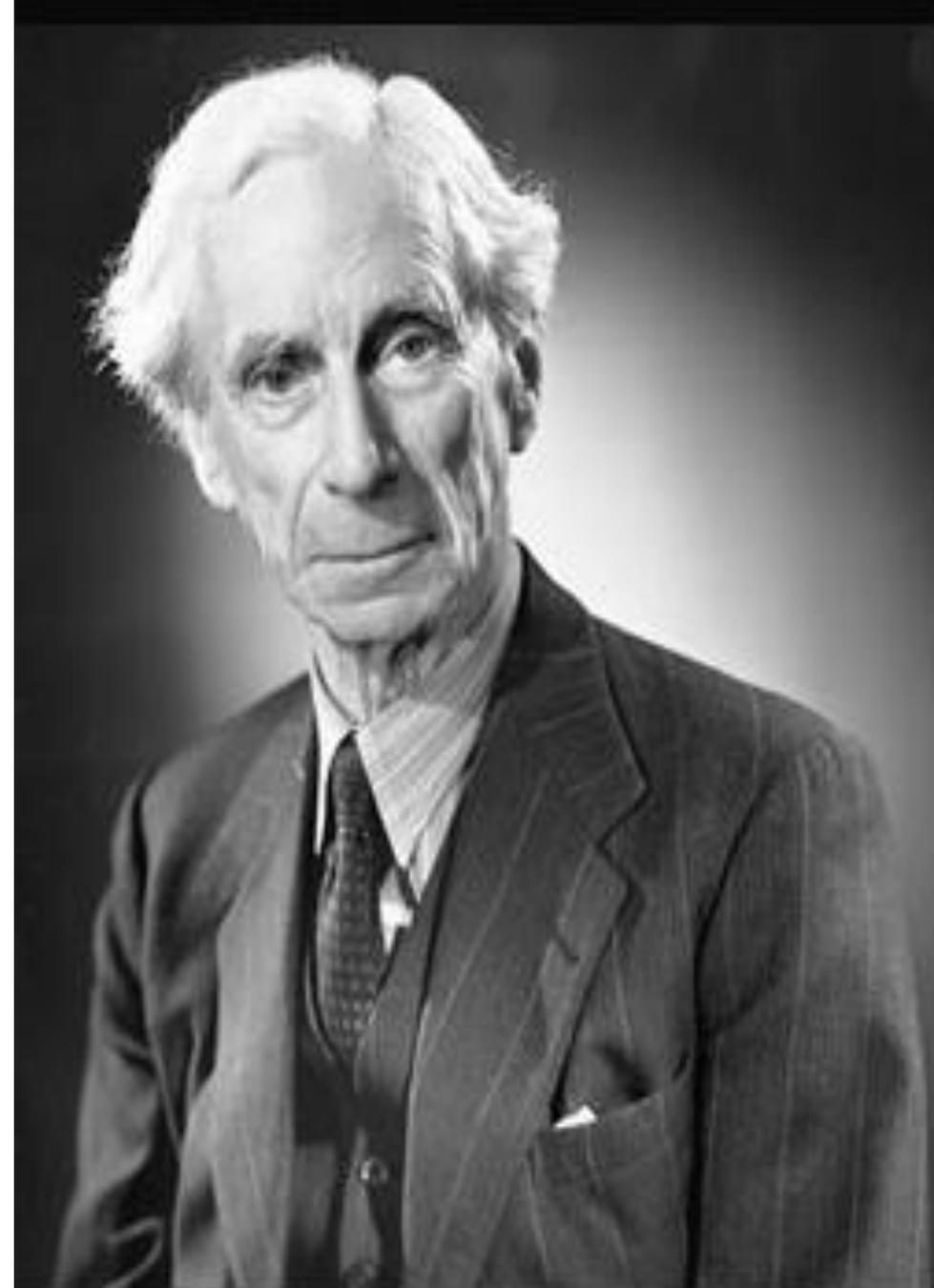
Originally a talk given in March **1927** at Battersea Town Hall, under the auspices of the South London Branch of the **National Secular Society**, it was published that year as a pamphlet and has been **republished** several times in English and in translation.

- ***“That Man is the product of causes which had **no prevision** of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of **accidental collocations of atoms**; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life **beyond the grave**; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are **destined to extinction** in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievement must inevitably be **buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins**—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.***
- ***Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.”***

**--Bertrand Russell (“A Free Man’s Worship”)**

***“Why should you suppose I think it foolish to wish to see the people one is fond of? What else is there to make life tolerable? We stand on the shore of an ocean, crying to the night and the emptiness; sometimes a voice answers out of the darkness. But it is the voice of one drowning, and in a moment, the silence returns.”***

**[Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), A letter to a friend, quoted from *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell*]**





Ecclesiastes 1:8 ISV ***Everything is wearisome, more than man is able to express. The eye is never satisfied by seeing, nor the ear by hearing.***

...the wife of noble  
...character who can  
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...confidence in her  
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The sun rises and the sun sets,  
and hurries back to its place,  
it rises in the west and goes  
down in the east; the wind  
blows from the south and  
turns around to the north;  
the rivers flow and the sea  
is full; the sun is hot and  
the heat is scorching;  
but man stands and  
struggles all day long.  
He toils and he builds  
and he plants vineyards,  
but he does not know what  
will happen tomorrow,  
and he does not know what  
will be the end of his days.  
As he goes about his work,  
he says, "I will be happy  
when I rest."  
But when he sleeps,  
he dreams of his labor,  
and when he awakes,  
he says, "I have labored  
in vain."  
He has not even  
enjoyed his work,  
and he will not be able  
to enjoy his wages.  
This is meaningless,  
and it is a chasing after  
the wind.

...Give her the reward  
and let her works bring her praise  
at the city gate.

**Wisdom Is Meaningless**  
The Teacher,<sup>a</sup> king over Israel in  
Jerusalem,<sup>b</sup> devoted myself to study and  
to explore heaven. What a heavy burden  
God has laid on men! I have seen all the things  
that are done under the sun, all of them  
are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.  
What is twisted cannot be straightened,  
what is lacking cannot be counted.

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

• WISDOM [1:12-18]

- **1 Kings 4:29-34 KJV**

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore. (30) And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt... and his fame was in all nations round about.

- (32) And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. (33) And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

- (34) And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 7:23-24 CEV

***I told myself that I would be smart and try to understand all of this, but it was too much for me. (24) The truth is beyond us. It's far too deep.***

100 WEEKS ON THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER LIST  
THE MILLION-COPY HARDCOVER BESTSELLER

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME

FROM  
THE BIG  
BANG TO  
BLACK  
HOLES

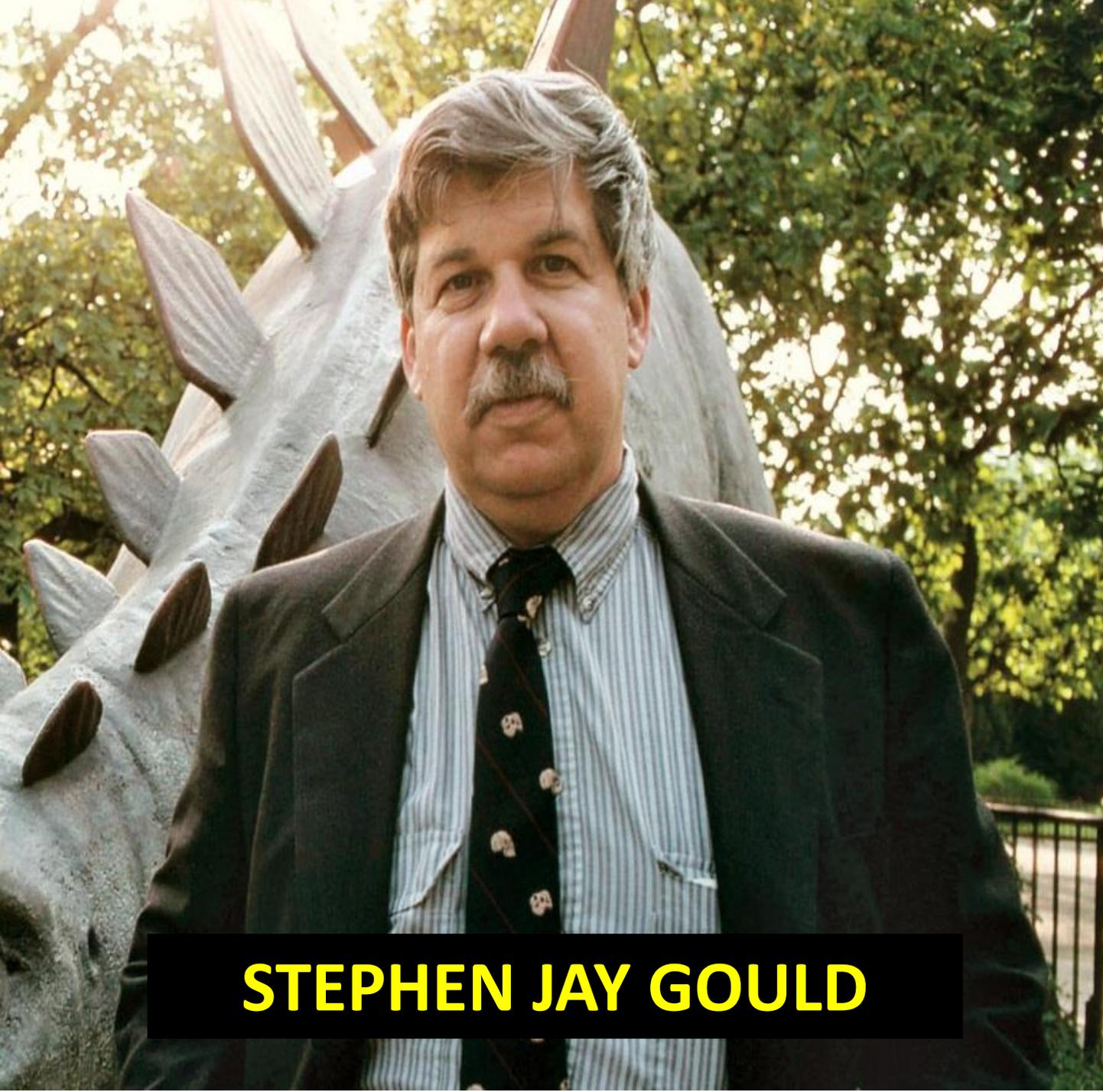


## STEPHEN HAWKING

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY CARL SAGAN

If we find the answer  
[the unified theory], it  
would be the ultimate  
triumph of human  
reason - for we would  
know the mind of God.

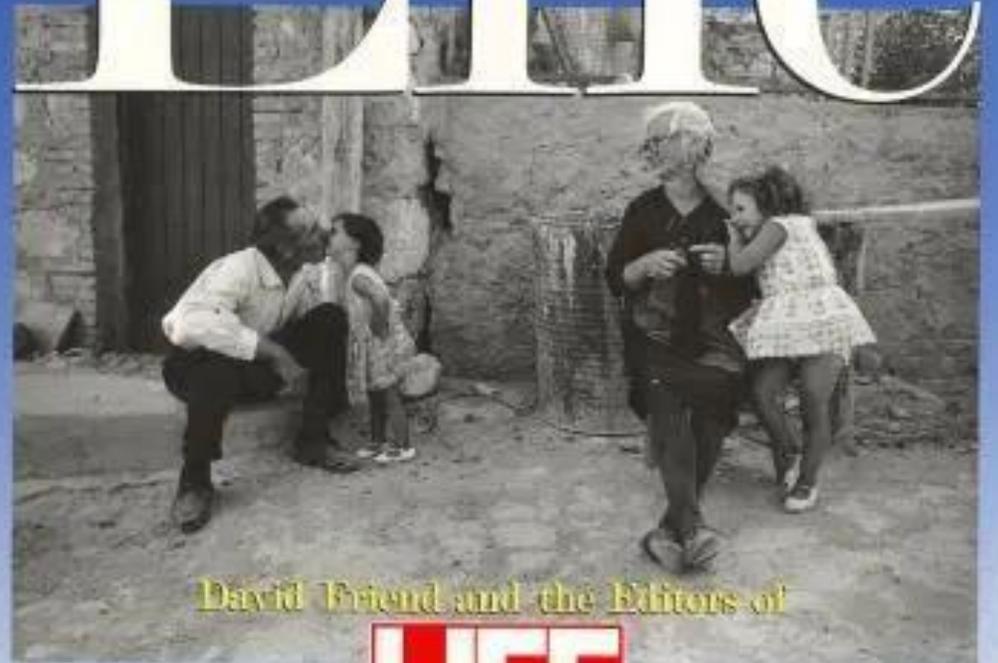
Stephen Hawking



**STEPHEN JAY GOULD**

Reflections in Words and Pictures  
on Why We Are Here

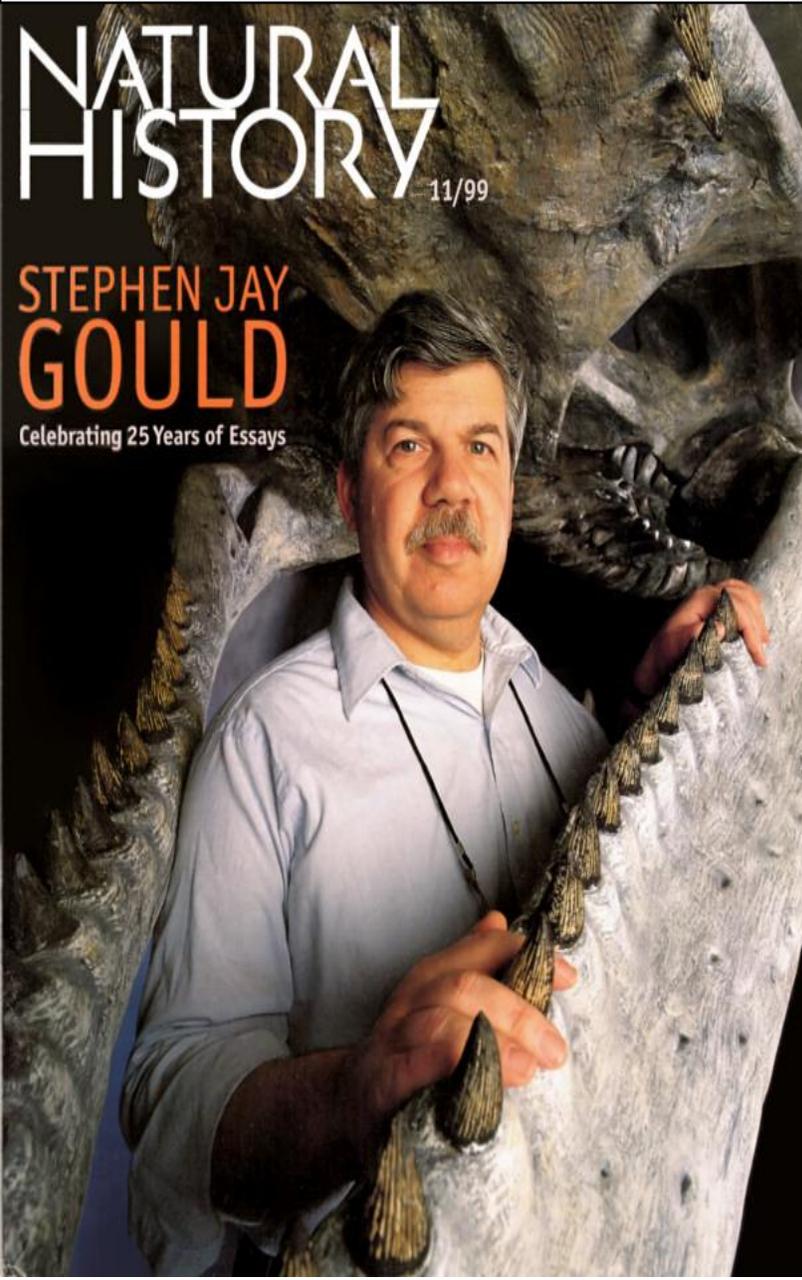
# The Meaning of Life



David Friend and the Editors of



# On The Meaning Of Life In An “Evolved” World:

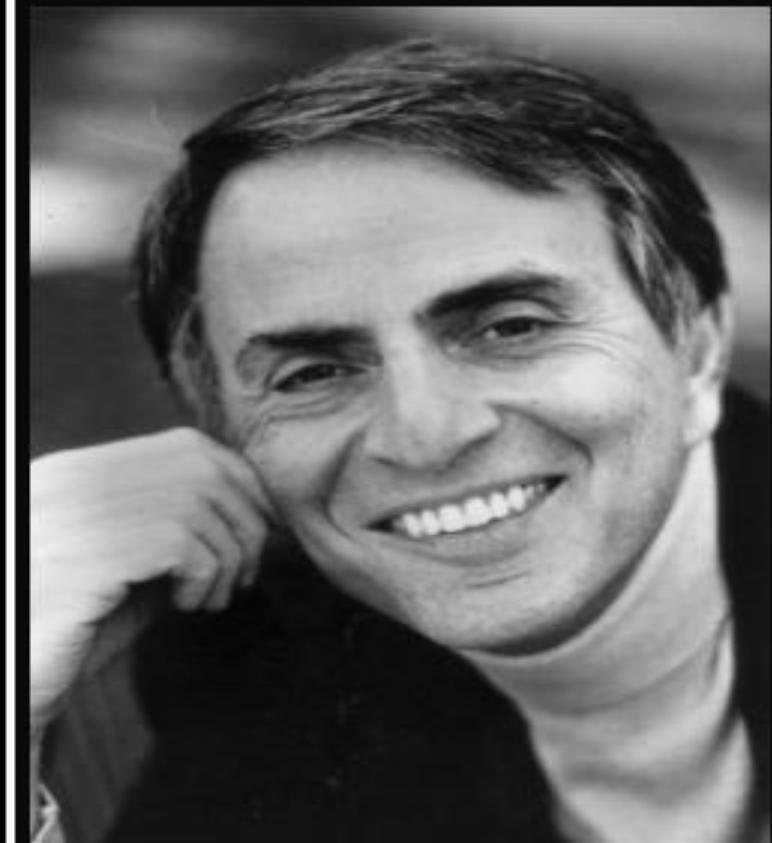


- *“We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures; because the earth never froze entirely during an ice age; because a small and tenuous species, arising in Africa a quarter of a million years ago, has managed so far, to survive by hook and by crook.*
- *We may yearn for a ‘higher’ answer—but none exists. This explanation, though superficially troubling, if not terrifying, is ultimately liberating and exhilarating. We cannot read the meaning of life passively in the facts of nature. **We must construct these answers ourselves—from our own wisdom and ethical sense. There is no other way.”***

# THE REIGN OF TERROR

1793-1794





Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge. Its goal is to find out how the world works, to seek what regularities there may be, to penetrate to the connections of things — from subatomic particles, which may be the constituents of all matter, to living organisms, the human social community, and thence to the cosmos as a whole.

(Carl Sagan)

- **“SCIENCE” is the god of the modern world (“What men deem infallible.”)**
- **Science can NEVER answer the most important questions in life (HOW we should live, MORALITY).**
- **Science cannot prove that rape is evil. Science cannot prove we should love our neighbor. In fact, such impulses to self-sacrifice seem counter to cold logic. Science can describe how the natural world is, but moral truth carries an “oughtness” (how things should be) that goes beyond what merely is.**

**HUMAN WISDOM DOES NOT HAVE THE ANSWERS!**

*I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. (15) What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted. [1:14-15 ESV]*

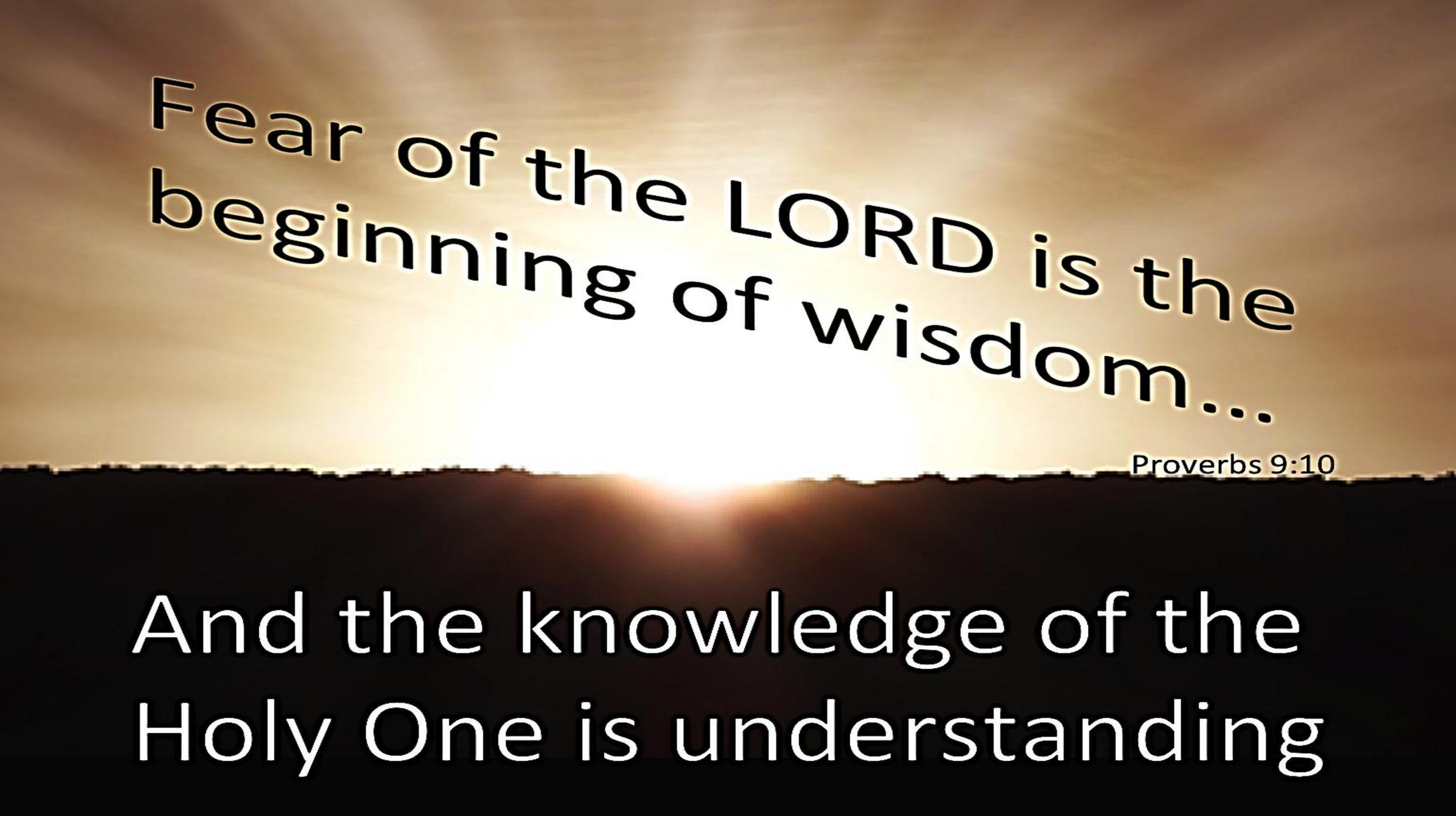


• Ecclesiastes 3:11 GW

**It is beautiful how God has done everything at the right time. He has put a sense of eternity in people's minds.**

**Yet, mortals still can't grasp what God is doing from the beginning to the end of time.**





Fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom...

Proverbs 9:10

And the knowledge of the  
Holy One is understanding



# AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

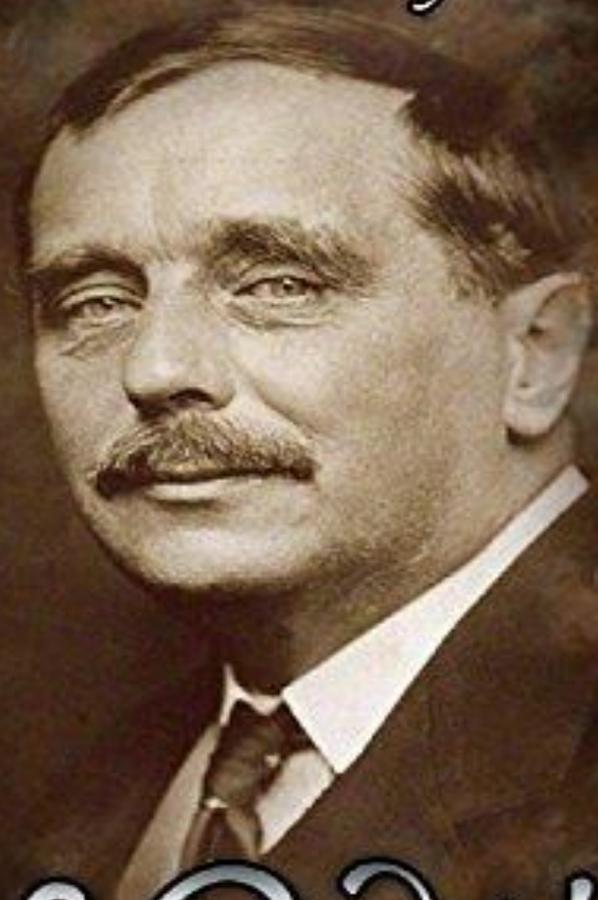
GOOD WITHOUT A GOD

**NEW  
WORLD  
ORDER**

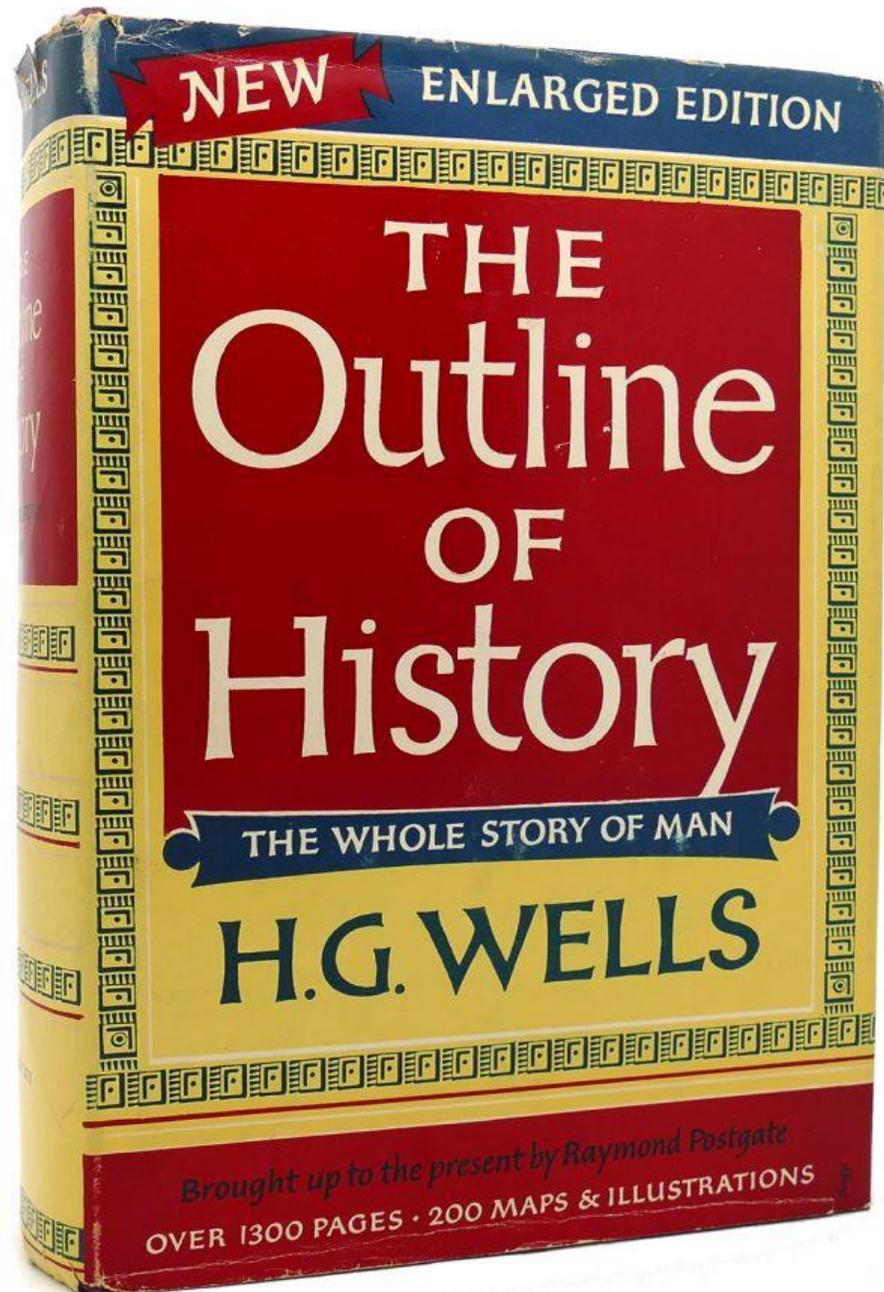
## SECULAR HUMANISM

Secular humanism is a non-religious worldview rooted in science, naturalistic philosophy, and humanist ethics. Rather than faith, doctrine, or mysticism, secular humanists use reason, compassion, and common sense to find solutions to human problems. We promote universal values such as integrity, benevolence, fairness, and responsibility, and we believe that with reason, an open marketplace of ideas, good will, and tolerance, progress can be made toward building a better world for ourselves and future generations.

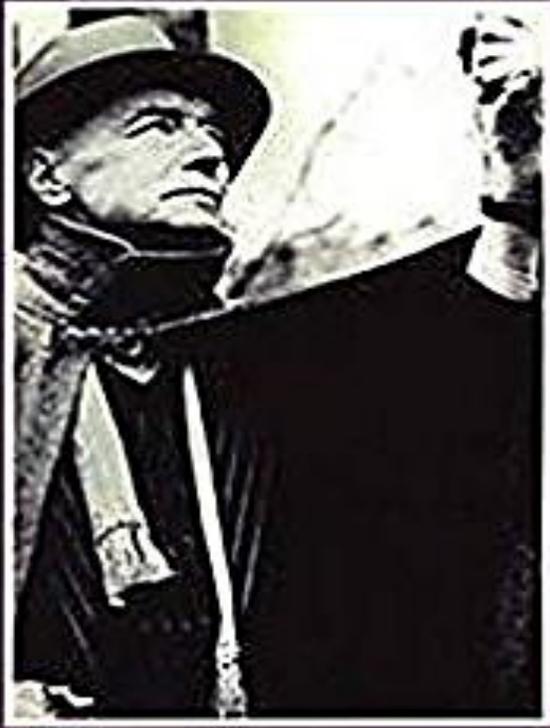
*The Collected Complete  
Works of*



*H. G. Wells*



THE LAST BOOKS  
*of*  
**H.G. WELLS**



THE HAPPY TURNING :  
A DREAM OF LIFE

&

MIND AT THE END OF ITS TETHER

NEW FOREWORDS BY  
RUDY RUCKER & COLIN WILSON

- *“Our universe is not merely bankrupt; there remains no dividend at all... After all, **the present writer has no compelling argument to convince the reader that he should not be cruel or mean or cowardly...***
- *He would rather our species ended its story in dignity, kindness and generosity, and not like drunken cowards in a daze or poisoned rats in a sack. But this is **a matter of individual predilection** for everyone to decide for himself.”*

Ecclesiastes 1:18 GW

***With a lot of wisdom comes  
a lot of heartache. The  
greater your knowledge, the  
greater your pain.***

- Ecclesiastes 3:18-21 KJV

I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that **God might manifest them**, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

- (19) For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

- (20) All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. (21) Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?



1. Both DIE [3:19a]

2. One BREATH (rûach) [3:19b]

3. BODY of both returns to DUST [3:20]

4. Fate of SPIRIT (again, RUACH) is unseen [3:21]

a. [Brenton] *“And who has seen the spirit of the sons of man, whether it goes upward? and the spirit of the beast, whether it goes downward to the earth?”*

b. The Scripture as a whole agrees with Henry that, *“As to their spirits there is indeed a vast difference, but not a visible one.”*

c. Is this the WHOLE story?

• If ungodly are right: NO significant difference!



# Our Ape Heritage

## Adapted for Flexibility

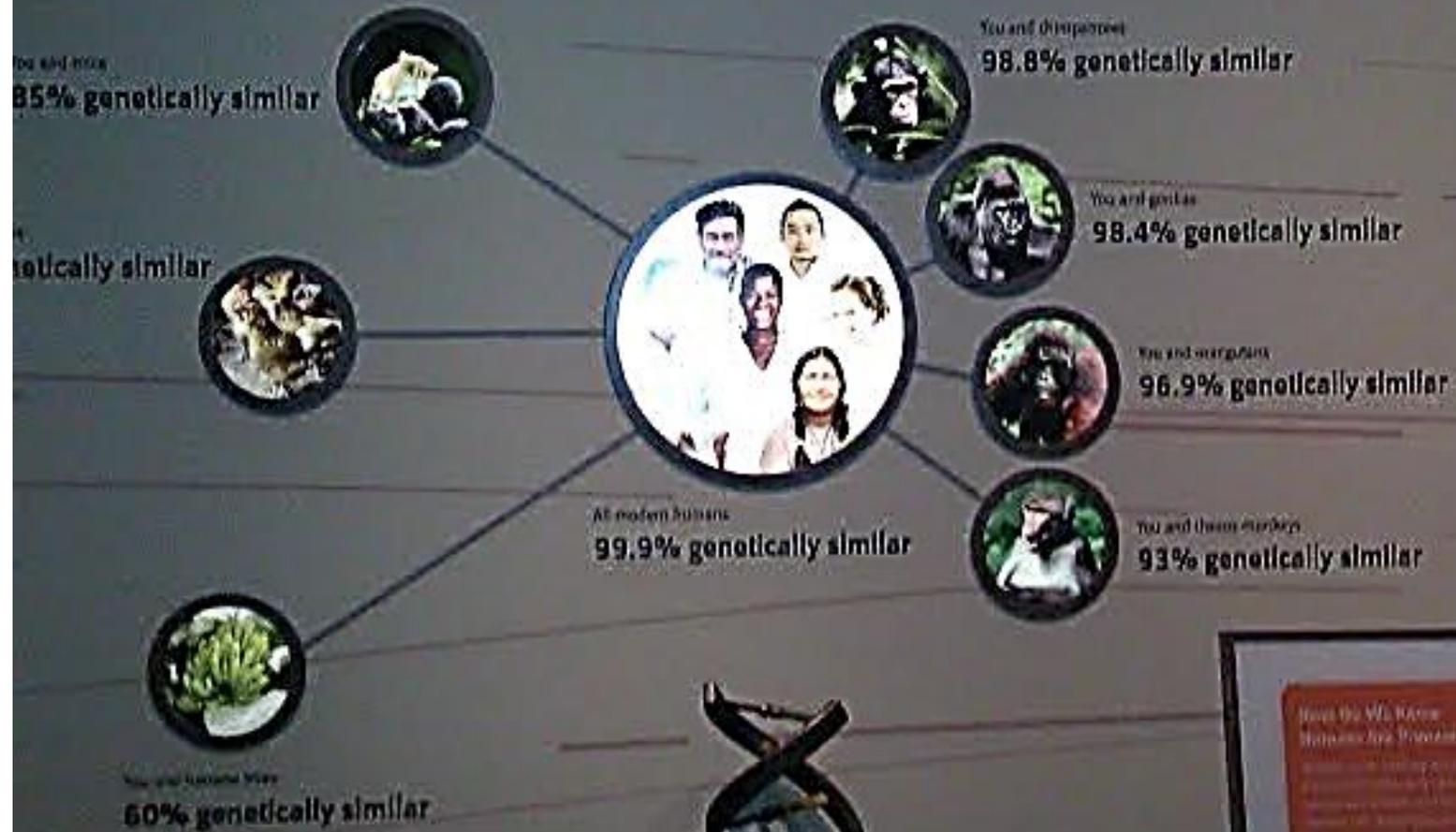
Fossils and DNA confirm that humans are primates and members of the great ape family. Although we did *not* evolve from any of the apes living today, we share characteristics with chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, and other apes.

Early apes evolved adaptations that provided the flexibility to climb and swing through trees and also move easily on the ground. They passed these adaptations down to some of their descendents, including modern humans: *Homo sapiens*.

# PHYSIOLOGICAL SIMILARITIES



# How Are You Related to Other Living Things?



## Humans, Chimpanzees, and Bananas

Due to billions of years of shared evolutionary history, we share genes with all life on Earth, even banana trees! The percentage of genes that organisms share is a measure of how closely related they are. We share more genes with organisms more closely related to us. How genetically similar are you to some of your close and distant cousins?

**SIMILAR COMPOSITION**



All modern humans  
**99.9% genetically similar**



You and chimpanzees  
**98.8% genetically similar**



You and gorillas  
**98.4% genetically similar**



You and orangutans  
**96.9% genetically similar**



You and rhesus monkeys  
**93% genetically similar**

You and mice

**85% genetically similar**



You and chickens

**75% genetically similar**



All modern humans

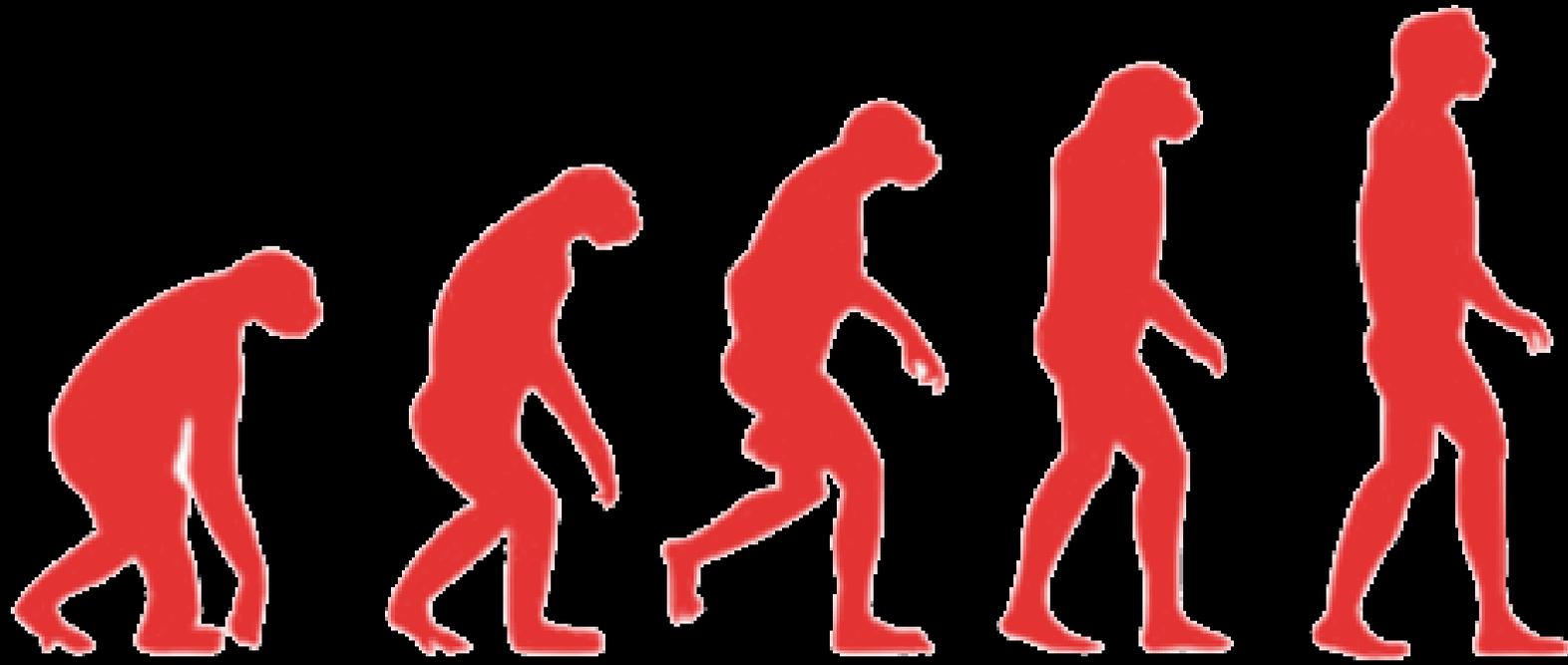
**99.9% genetically similar**



You and banana trees

**60% genetically similar**





evolution

***“Do You Believe In Evolution?”***

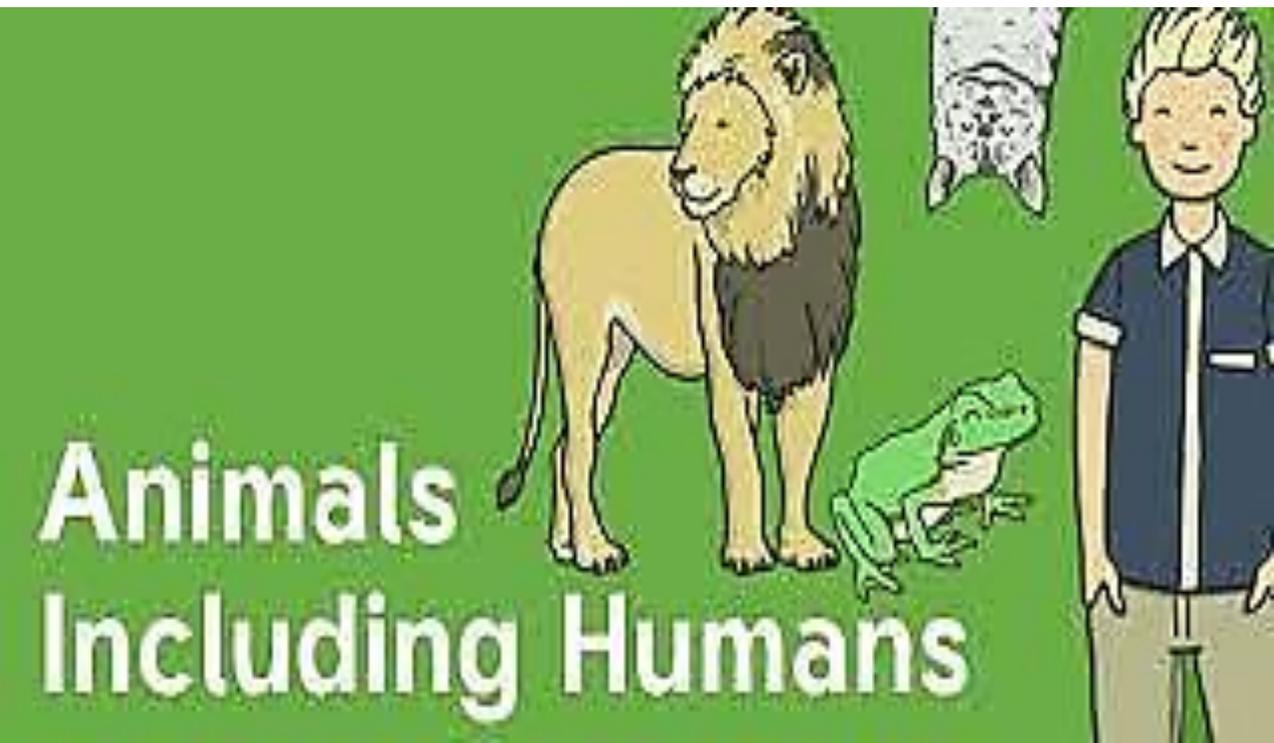
- Note The Similarity Of Composition And Form.
- **Did The Chest Evolve From Nightstands?**
- Do These Pieces Share A Common Ancestor?



# **SIMILARITY AS PROOF OF WHAT?**

- It this evidence of a common ANCESTRY or for a **common CREATOR?**
- God **designed us to live in the same biosphere, the same food chain.** It is not surprising that we have a common genetic code.
- *“In a world **governed by certain physical and chemical laws...** we should expect some creatures to have similar designs.”*

# THE CHOICE IS CLEAR!



Animals  
Including Humans

**Psalms 8:4-9 KJV** What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? (5) **For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. (6) Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;** thou hast put all things under his feet: (7) All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; (8) The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. (9) O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

- But if the ungodly are right, then “*man IS a mere animal*” and the death of **your child** is no more significant in the grand scheme than a **dead possum** on the highway, etc.
- When men dethrone **God**, they humiliate themselves!
- As K&D put it, “***They are like beasts to themselves, i.e., in their own estimation... if one loses sight of God, the distinction between the life of man and of beast disappears.***”



*equal  
rights  
for all  
species*

# CREATED FROM ANIMALS

THE MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF DARWINISM

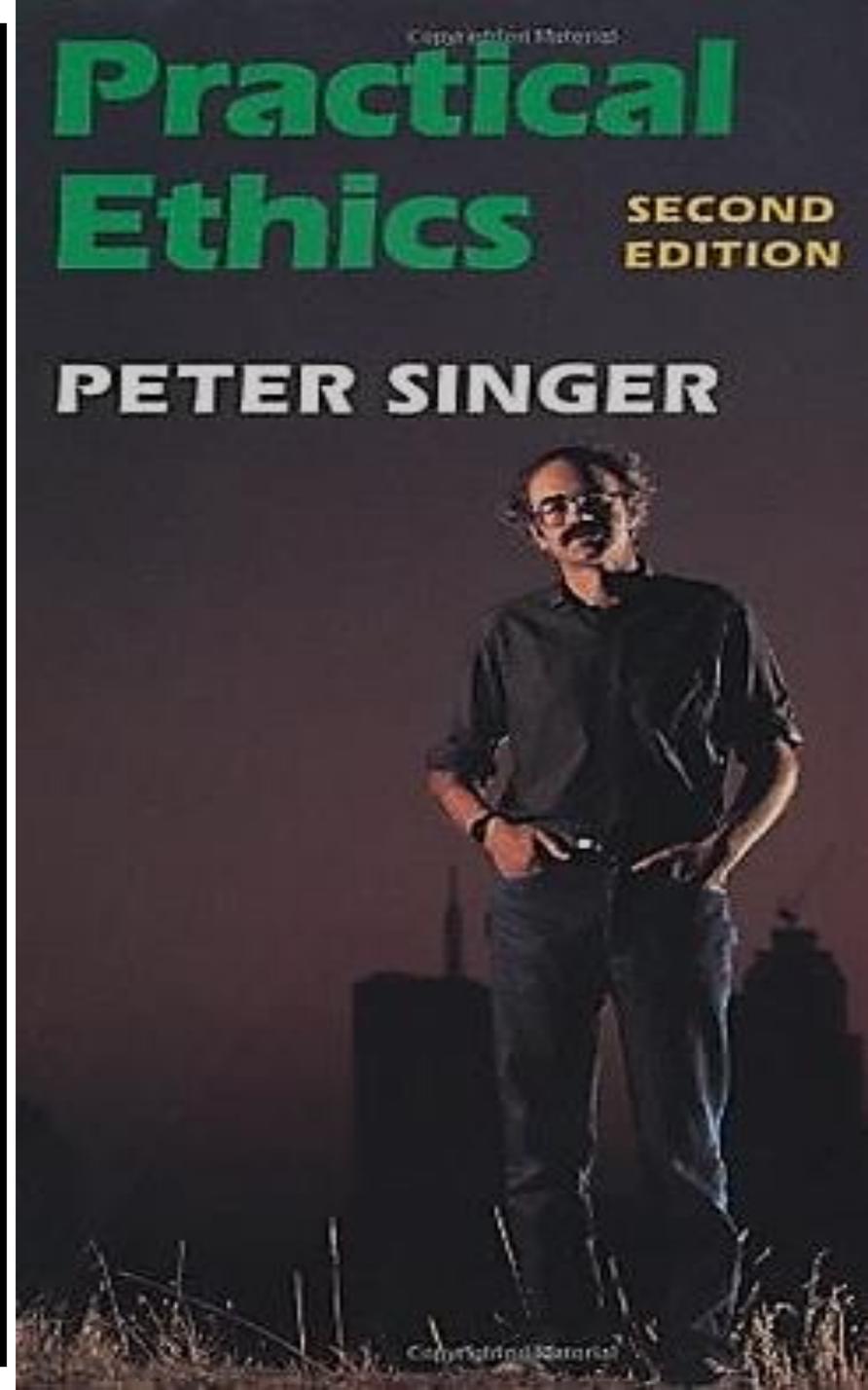
JAMES RACHELS 

- ***“Human life will no longer be regarded with the kind of superstitious awe which it is accorded in traditional thought, and the lives of non-humans will no longer be a matter of indifference. This means that human life will, in a sense, be devalued, while the value granted to non-human life will be increased. A revised view of how we should treat animals, will result... reconstructing morality without the assumption of man’s specialness” [p.5].***
- ***“Therefore, any adequate defense of human dignity would require some conception of human beings as radically different from other animals. But that is precisely what evolutionary theory calls into question. It makes us suspicious of any doctrine that sees large gaps of any sort between humans and all other creatures. This being so, a Darwinian may conclude that a successful defense of human dignity is most unlikely” [pp. 171-172].***

# PETER SINGER

(Princeton professor & Darwinist)

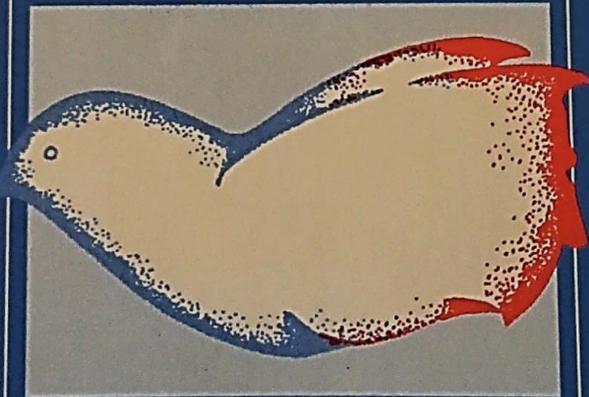
- *“Human babies are not born self-aware, or capable of grasping that they exist over time. They are not persons...”*
- *“If the fetus does not have the same claim to life as a person, it appears that the newborn baby does not either, and the life of a newborn is of less value than the life of a pig, a dog, or a chimpanzee.”*



# MORAL PROBLEMS

A Collection of  
Philosophical Essays,  
Second Edition

Edited by  
James Rachels



## ANIMAL LIBERATION

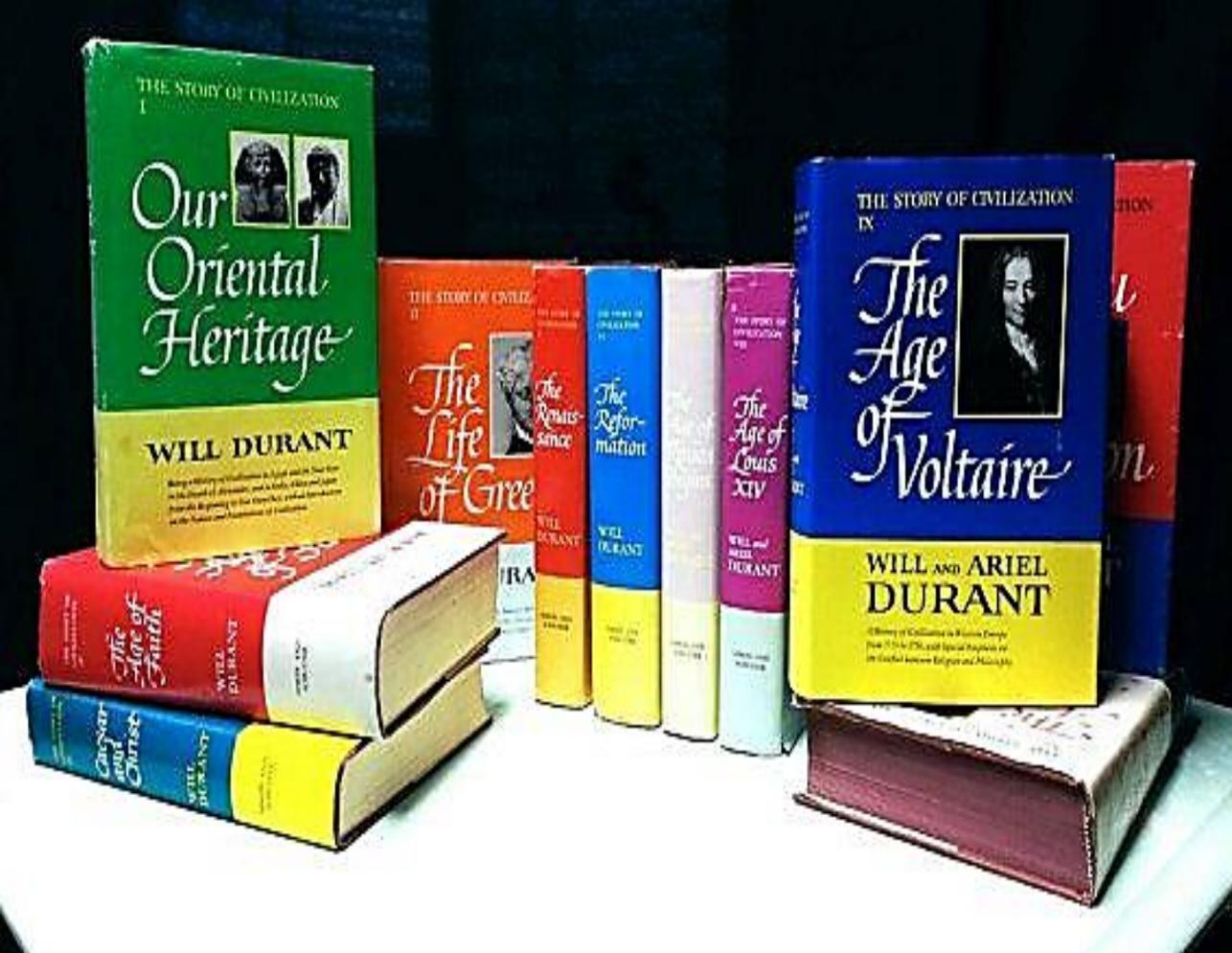
(Peter Singer, 1979)

*“Nor have I considered all the detailed questions that need to be asked once we start thinking about other species in the radically different way presented by this book. What, for instance, are we to do about genuine conflicts of interest like rats biting slum children? I am not sure of the answer, but the essential point is just that we DO see this as a conflict of interests, that we recognize that rats have interests too.”*

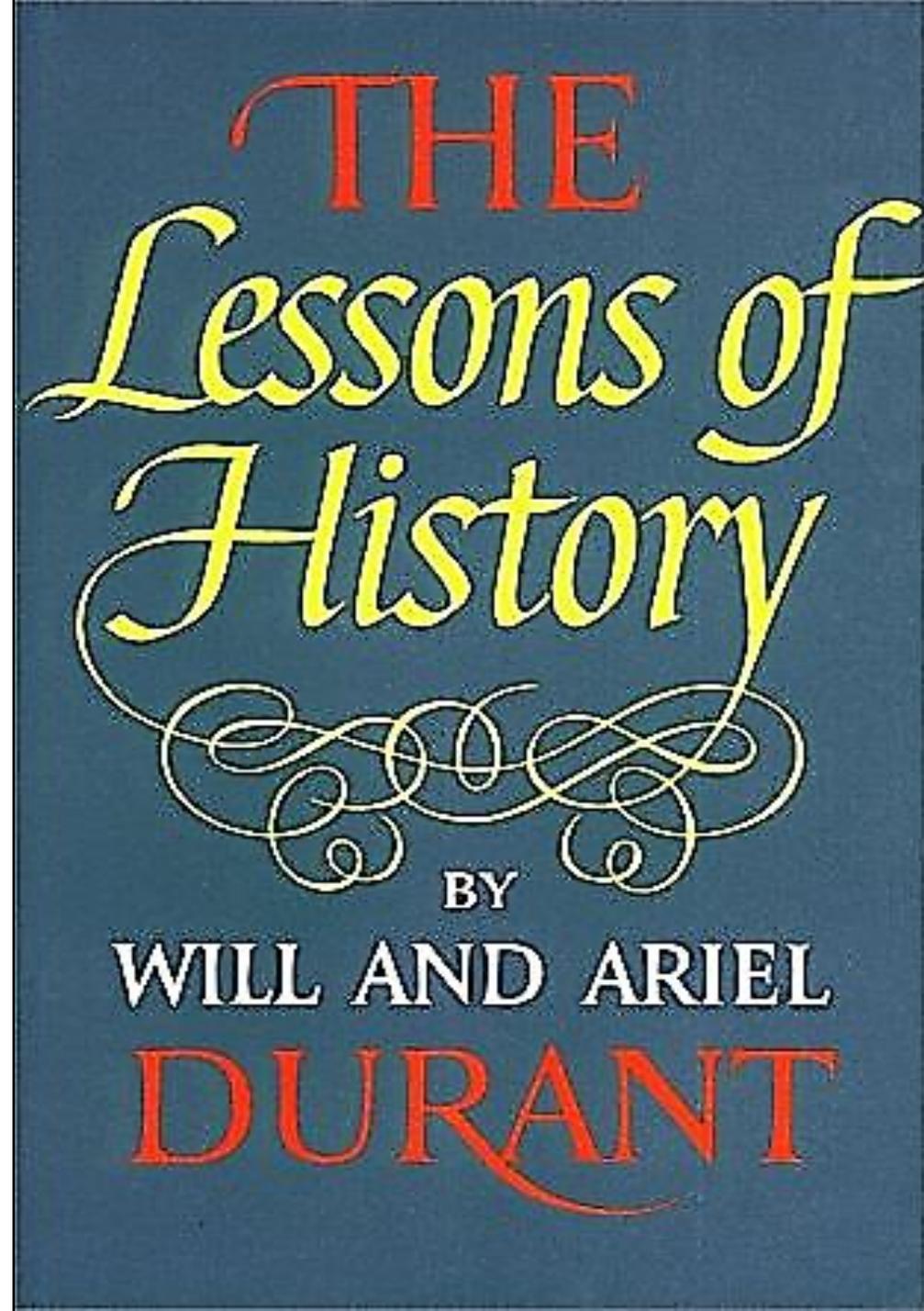


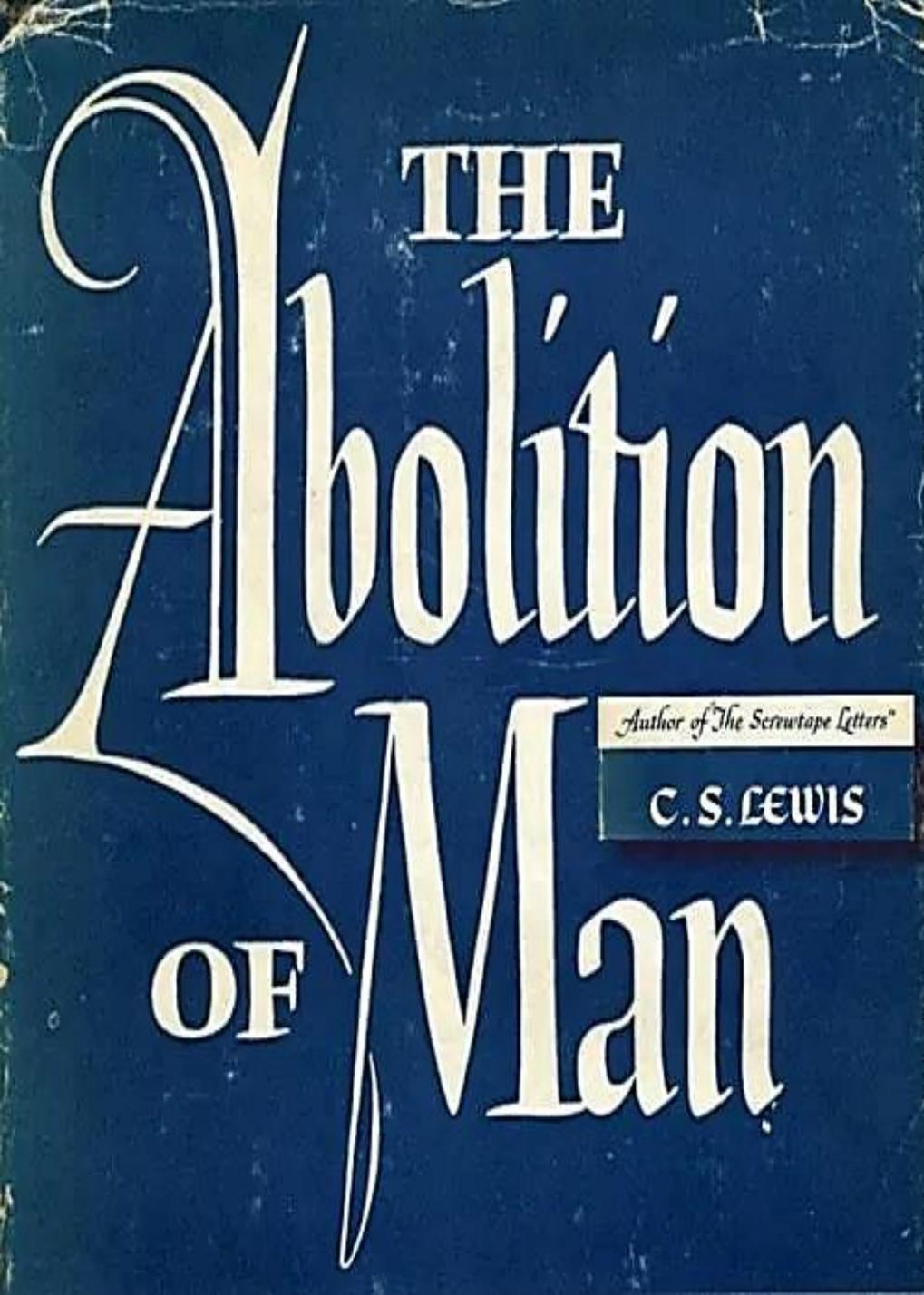
**POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS**

*“If our grossly wicked society really wants the explanation of the irresistible tidal wave of violent crimes which are destroying our cities and threatening the collapse of civilization itself, they must find it in this very conception, that there is no God and that man is merely an animal. There is only one reason why it's wrong for one man to kill another; and that reason is that every man is created in the image of God; and his destruction is against God Himself. A godless society has no more rights than a society of brown rats” [Coffman].*



***“There is no significant example in history... of a society successfully maintaining a moral life without the aid of religion...”***





- “Under cover of teaching English... propagate their philosophy... intending to make a clean sweep of traditional values... (denying) that certain attitudes are really true, and others really false.”
- “Another little portion of the human heritage has been quietly taken from them before they were old enough to understand.”
- “In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ, and demand the function. We make men without (hearts) and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful. The practical result of (this) education... must be the destruction of the society which accepts it.”

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

- WISDOM [1:12-18] [7:23-24]
- PLEASURE/HEDONISM [2:1-3]

# “Enjoy **PLEASURE**”

- Ecclesiastes 2:1-3 KJV

I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. (2) I said of **laughter**, It is **mad**: and of **mirth**, What doeth it?

- (3) I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.

LIFE IS SHORT

PLAY MORE



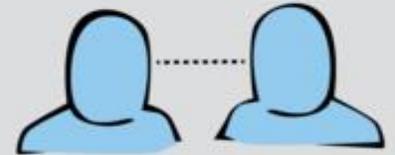


# NETFLIX

You've watched 9 straight episodes.  
Please try one of the following:



Physical Activity



Human Interaction



"IF WE WASTE  
MONEY WE CAN  
ALWAYS MAKE  
MORE... BUT IF  
WE WASTE  
TIME, IT'S  
GONE FOREVER"

GEORGE CARLIN



PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT LYRICS



- **“I said of laughter: 'It is mad'; and of mirth: 'What doth it accomplish?'”** [JPS].
- Pleasure is NOT evil. Hedonism IS. *“Sensual self-indulgence... Hedonism is a school of thought that argues that the pursuit of pleasure is the primary or most important goals of human life.”*
- **Laughter** (śechôq/sekh-oke)— *“Laughter (in **merriment or defiance**): - derision, laughter (-ed to scorn, -ing), mocked, sport”* [Strong].
- **Mad** (hâlal/haw-lal’)— *“To make oneself shine, to boast of oneself, to be foolish; to be puffed up with vain glory, **to rave with foolish conceit**... madness implies **so great a departure from wisdom**, that the mind, **without control**, rushes on with a **blind fury**”* [WWS].
- **Mirth** (śimchâh/sim-khaw')—Used of gladness, festivities, whether evil or good. But as a **foundation of life**, what does it accomplish? How much is it worth?

WINE  
WOMEN  
and SONG  
ENOUGH  
SAID





***“I Decided To Make Myself Happy With Wine”***

[2:3 CEV]

- Proverbs 23:29-35 ESV

- Who has **woe**? Who has **sorrow**? Who has **strife**? Who has **complaining**? Who has **wounds** without cause? Who has **redness of eyes**? (30) Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine.
- (31) Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. (32) **In the end** it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. (33) Your eyes will **see** strange things, and your heart **utter** perverse things.
  - (34) You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, like one who lies on the top of a mast. (35) “They struck me,” you will say, “but I was not hurt; they beat me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake? **I must have another drink.**”

1 Kings 11:1-3 KJV But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites; (2) Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. (3) And he had **seven hundred wives**, princesses, and **three hundred concubines**: and his wives turned away his heart.



- Ecclesiastes 7:25-28 ESV

I turned my heart to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the scheme of things, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness that is madness. (26) And I find something **more bitter than death**: the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her.

- (27) Behold, this is what I found, says the Preacher, while adding one thing to another to find the scheme of things— (28) which my soul has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but **a woman among all these I have not found.**

- Ecclesiastes 7:2-6 KJV

*It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*

- (3) Sorrow *is* better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is **made better**. (4) The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.
- (5) *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.* (6) For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity.

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

- WISDOM [1:12-18] [7:23-24].
- PLEASURE/HEDONISM [2:1-3]
- POSSESSIONS/MATERIALISM [2:4-11]

## **SILVER AND GOLD**

- 1 Kings 10:14-27 GW

***(21) All King Solomon's cups were gold, and all the utensils for the hall which he called the Forest of Lebanon were fine gold.***

***(Nothing was silver, because it wasn't considered valuable in Solomon's time.) (22) The king had a fleet headed for Tarshish with Hiram's fleet. Once every three years the Tarshish fleet would bring gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.***

- ***(23) In wealth and wisdom King Solomon was greater than all the other kings of the world... (27) The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as plentiful as fig trees in the foothills.***

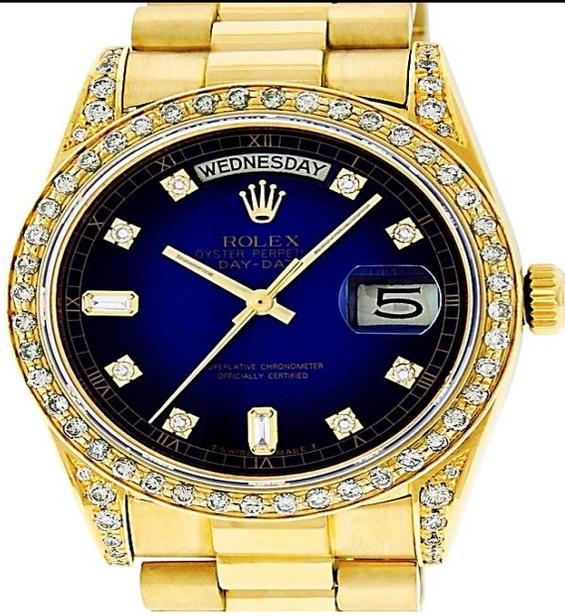
## **SILVER AND GOLD**

- 1 Kings 10:14-27 GW

***The gold that came to Solomon in one year weighed 49,950 pounds, (15) not counting the gold which came from the merchants, the traders' profits, all the Arab kings, and the governors of the country.***

- ***(16) King Solomon made 200 large shields of hammered gold, using 15 pounds of gold on each shield. (17) He also made 300 small shields of hammered gold, using four pounds of gold on each shield. The king put them in the hall which he called the Forest of Lebanon.***
- ***(18) The king also made a large ivory throne and covered it with fine gold. (19) Six steps led to the throne. Carved into the back of the throne was a calf's head. There were armrests on both sides of the seat. Two lions stood beside the armrests. (20) Twelve lions stood on six steps, one on each side. Nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom.***

[10] ***“If something appealed to me, I did it. I allowed myself to have any pleasure I wanted, since I found pleasure in my work. This was my reward for all my hard work”*** [GW].



2:4-19

# LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT



..., residing ...  
... certainty of death, do ...

... being of sound mind and ...  
... this instrument to be my last ...

...ious wills and conf...

- **Ecclesiastes 5:10-16 KJV**

He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: *this is also vanity.*

- (11) When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good *is there* to the owners thereof, saving the beholding *of them* with their eyes?
- (12) The sleep of a laboring man *is* sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.
- (13) There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. (14) But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand. (15) As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.
- (16) And this also *is* a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?

- Ecclesiastes 2:11 CEV ***Then I thought about everything I had done, including the hard work, and it was simply chasing the wind. Nothing on earth is worth the trouble.***
  - After all ADDED UP, Solomon ***“realized that it didn’t mean a thing”*** [TEV]
  - **Vanity** (heh'-bel)
    - *“Emptiness or vanity; figuratively something transitory and unsatisfactory”* [Strong].
    - *“The greatest evil that television has done to our society...”*
    - Materialistic values are a danger to ALL (including Christians!)
    - *“I got a better job.” “Nice neighborhood.”*
    - *“What is your life?”*
  - **Vexation of spirit** (re`ûth/reh-ooth')—
    - Wesley, following the KJV, explains: *“Vexation - I found myself wholly dissatisfied. No profit - The pleasure was past, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before.”*
    - *“Money CANNOT buy happiness, peace of mind!”* BELIEVE Solomon (HE should know!)

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

- FAME/ACCLAIM OF MEN [4:13-16]

- Ecclesiastes 4:13-16 GW

**A young man who is poor and wise is better than an old, foolish king who won't take advice any longer.**

- **(14) A young man** came out of prison to rule as king, even though he had been born in poverty in that same kingdom. **(15) I saw all living people moving about under the sun. They sided with the second young man, the king's successor.** **(16) There was no end to all those people, everyone whom he led.**
- **But those who will come later will not be happy with the successor.** Even this is pointless. It's like trying to catch the wind.

- Money and power are handy, but millions of ambitious people are after something other than the corner office or the beach house on St. Bart's. They want to swivel necks, to light a flare in others' eyes, to walk into a crowded room and feel the conversation stop... **"To be noticed, to be wanted, to be loved, to walk into a place and have others care about what you're doing, even what you had for lunch that day: that's what people want, in my opinion,"** said Kaysar Ridha, 26, of Irvine, Calif., a recent favorite of fans of the popular CBS reality series "Big Brother."
- Surveys in **Chinese and German cities** have found that about 30 percent of adults report regularly daydreaming about being famous, and more than 40 percent expect to enjoy some passing dose of fame — their "15 minutes," in Andy Warhol's famous phrase — at some point in life, according to data analyzed by Dr. Brim. The rates are roughly equivalent to those found in **American adults**. For teenagers, the rates are higher.



Instagram



Snapchat



TikTok



“Fame is like a river, that beareth up things light and swollen, and drowns things weighty and solid.

-FRANCIS BACON

**READ THIS  
IF YOU  
WANT TO BE  
INSTAGRAM  
FAMOUS.**

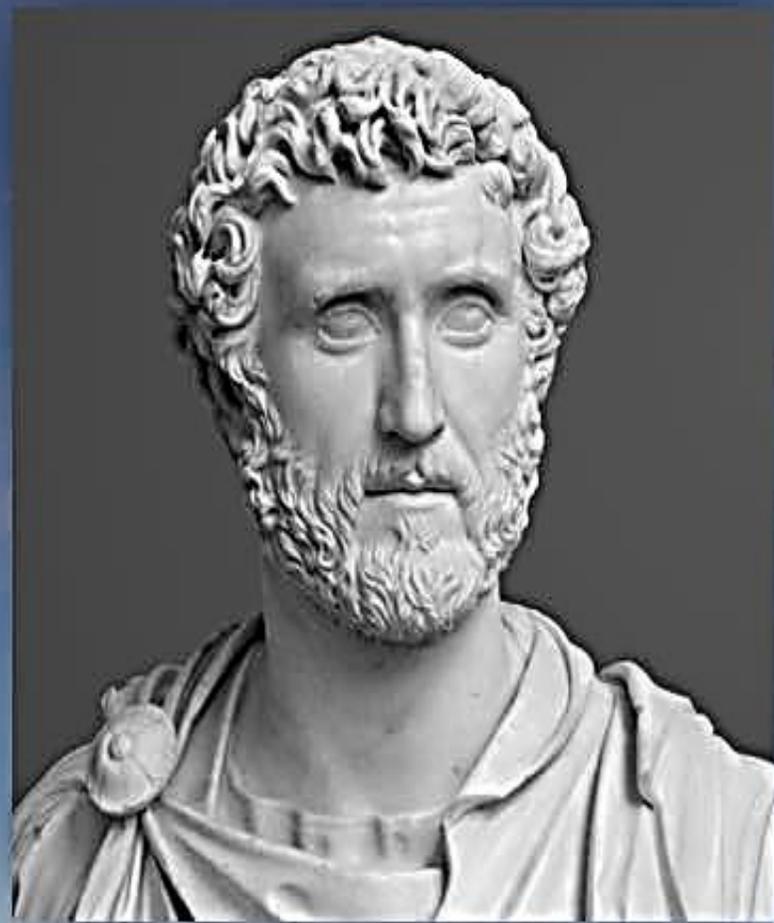


**MY NAME SHALL  
NEVER BE FORGOTTEN**

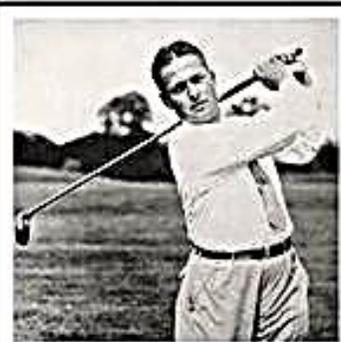
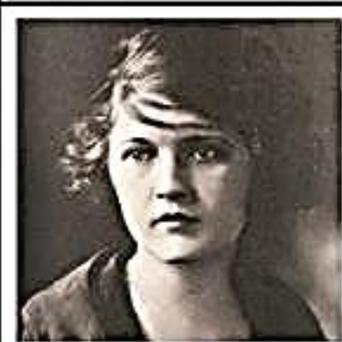
*--Ole Whatshisname*



**All is ephemeral-fame  
and the famous as well.**



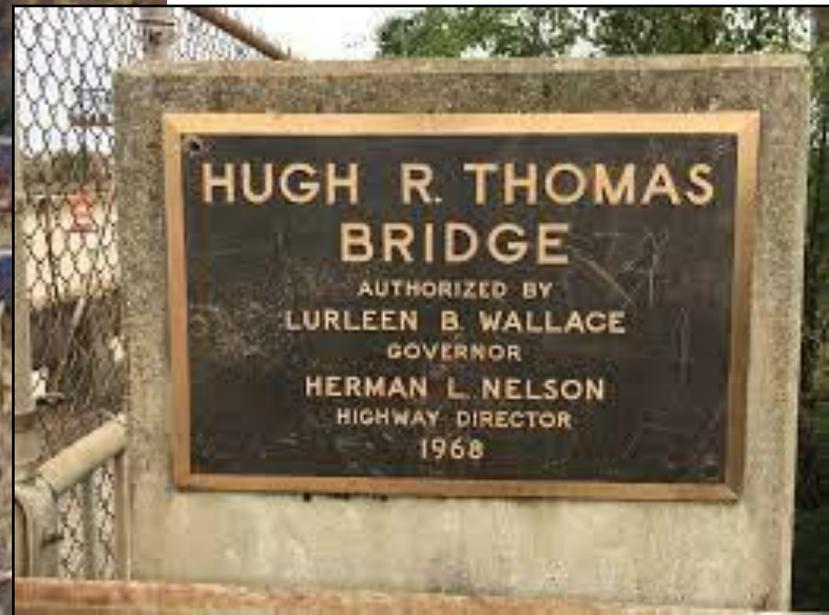
**Marcus Aurelius**





**HUGH R. THOMAS  
BRIDGE**

AUTHORIZED BY  
LURLEEN B. WALLACE  
GOVERNOR  
HERMAN L. NELSON  
HIGHWAY DIRECTOR  
1968



**HUGH R. THOMAS  
BRIDGE**

AUTHORIZED BY  
LURLEEN B. WALLACE  
GOVERNOR  
HERMAN L. NELSON  
HIGHWAY DIRECTOR  
1968

**Not only is FAME and the ACCLAIM of the crowd impossible to RETAIN, it is EMPTY and not worth having to begin with!**

**“So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.**

**— Matthew 6:2 (NASB®)**

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

- FAME/ACCLAIM OF MEN [4:13-16]
- **SOCIAL JUSTICE [4:1-3]**

- Ecclesiastes 4:1-3 ISV

Next I turned to consider **all kinds of oppression that exists on earth**. Look at the **tears of the oppressed**—there is no one to **comfort them**. **Power is on the side of their oppressors; so they have no comforters**.

- (2) So I commended the dead who had already died as being happier than the living who are still alive.
- (3) Better than both of them is someone who has not yet been born, because he hasn't experienced evil on earth.

- **“OPPRESSION” is always an evil! (Poverty, Racism, Tyranny, Violence)**
- **Is this the voice of GODLY or UNGODLY?**
- **Sees REAL problems, but instead of blessing, left with bitterness!**

- **ARE GOD'S PEOPLE NOT CALLED TO HAVE MERCY ON SUFFERERS?**

- Christians are called to be a blessing! [Luke 10:25-28].
- See Luke 10:29ff. Aid to the STRANGER.
- See Matthew 5:43ff. Love our ENEMIES.
- Plead for the PENITENT [Philemon :10ff.].
- To KING LEMUEL, his mother counselled: Proverbs 31:8-9 GW ***"Speak out for the one who cannot speak, for the rights of those who are doomed. (9) Speak out, judge fairly, and defend the rights of oppressed and needy people."***
- RIGHT demands that we use our opportunities to help people as we can.
- But King Solomon would add: There are problems EVEN THE KING cannot remedy! [Ecclesiastes 4:1-3].

- **Dangerous transition from IDEALISM to ARROGANCE to DESPAIR!**

- **IDEALISM**—

We will right the wrongs left by past generations.

- **ARROGANCE**—

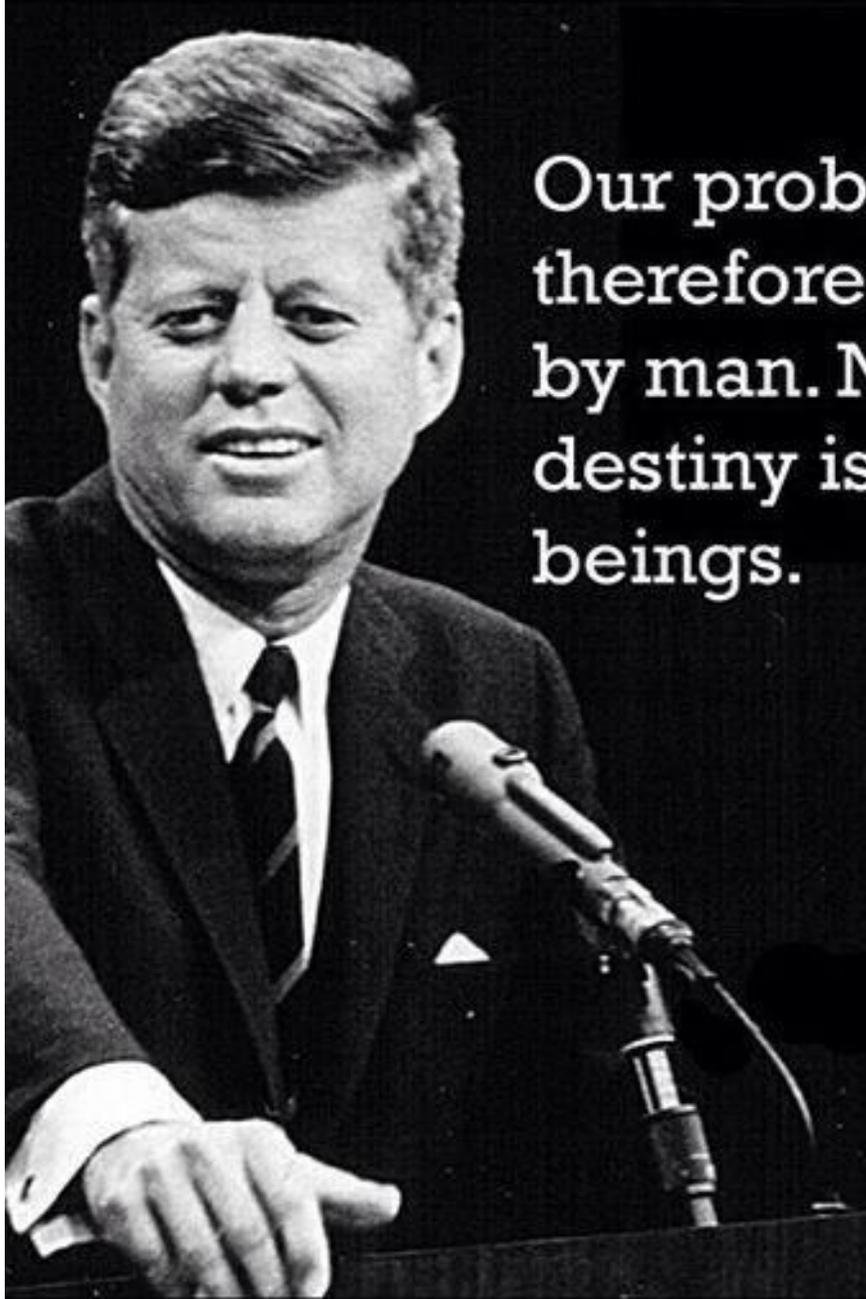
We will succeed because we care more and are smarter than those before us!

- **DESPAIR**—

It did not work!



- **“DEAD END” OF UTOPIAN IDEALISM & UNGODLY ARROGANCE.**
  - Men try to “fix the world” without acknowledging THE problem of the world: SIN.
  - God did not promise we could EVER rid the world of injustice, disease or poverty. [John 12:8].
  - Meanwhile, these “reformers” IGNORE God’s wisdom in HOW to deal with problems [e.g. 2 Thess. 3:10-11].
  - End result of trying to make earth into “Heaven” is disillusionment & despair-- *“We are better off never born!?”*
  - *“No New Thing...”* (Same seen in my lifetime...)



Our problems are man-made,  
therefore they may be solved  
by man. No problem of human  
destiny is beyond human  
beings.

*- June 10, 1963*



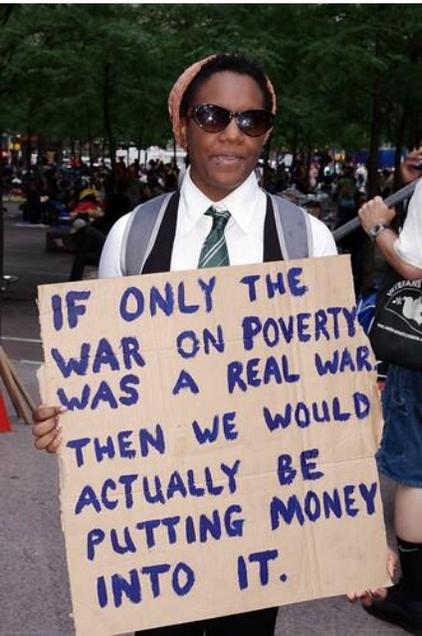
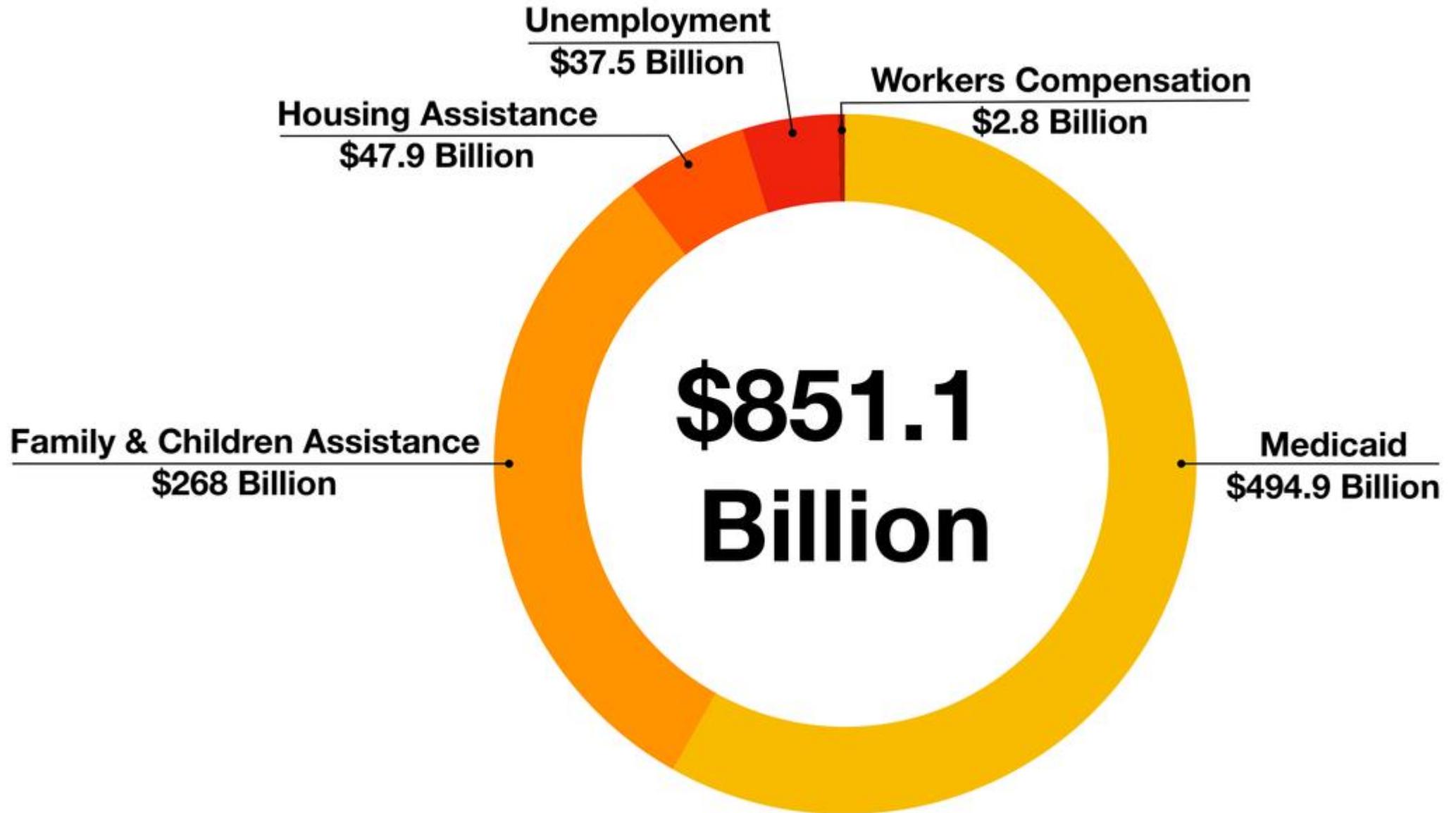
This administration here and now declares  
unconditional war on poverty.

(Lyndon B. Johnson)



**End Poverty  
in All its  
Forms  
Everywhere**

# 2018 Welfare Spending in America

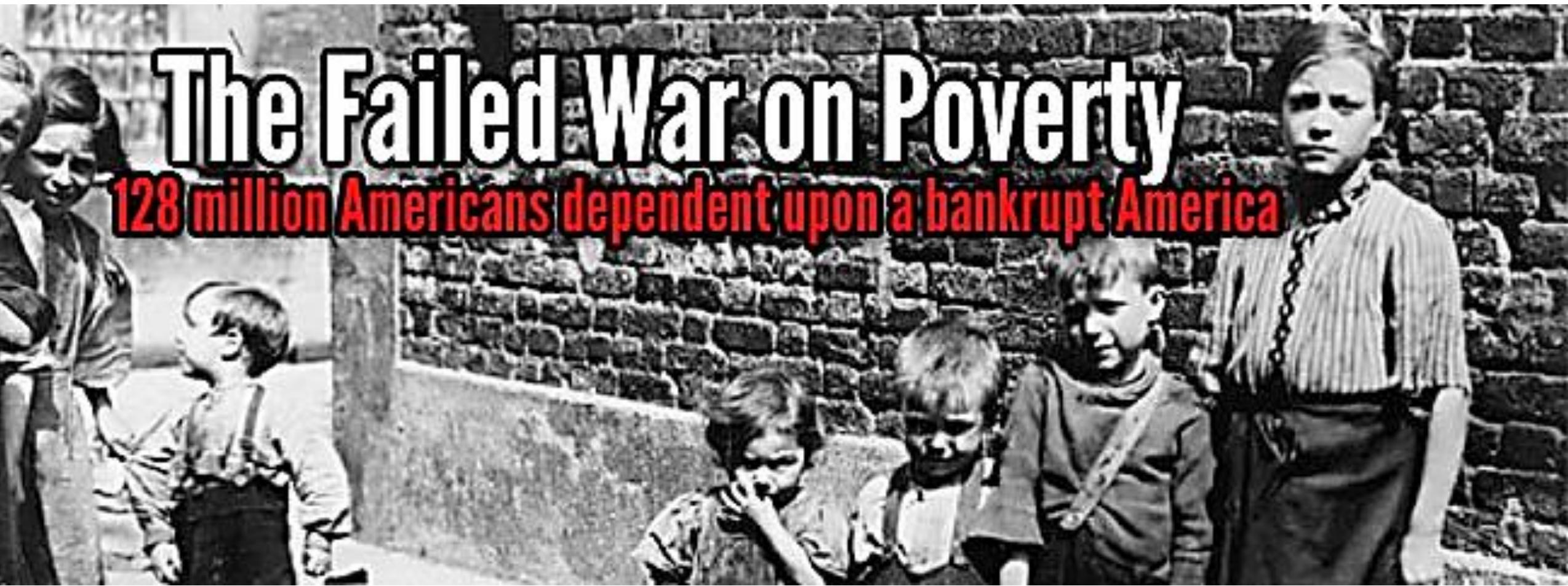


- “In his January 1964 State of the Union address, President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed, *“This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America.”*”
- In the 50 years since that time, U.S. taxpayers have spent over \$22 trillion on anti-poverty programs. Adjusted for inflation, this spending (which does not include Social Security or Medicare) is three times the cost of all U.S. military wars since the American Revolution.”

-- *“The War on Poverty After 50 Years,”* Rachel Sheffield and Robert Rector, The Heritage Foundation, 9-15-14

# The Failed War on Poverty

128 million Americans dependent upon a bankrupt America



- “The black family, which had survived centuries of slavery and discrimination, began rapidly disintegrating in the liberal welfare state that subsidized unwed pregnancy and changed welfare from an emergency rescue to a way of life.” --Thomas Sowell

**HOW**

**TO**

Courageous Christianity  
and the Journey  
Toward Racial Justice

**FIGHT**

**RACISM**

**Galatians 3:26-28 KJV**

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

# The UNGODLY Search For Fulfillment In The *WRONG* Places...

LOOK RIGHT →

- FAME/ACCLAIM OF MEN [4:13-16]
  - EARTHLY JUSTICE [4:1-3]
  - **SHALLOW RELIGION [5:1-7]**

- Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 KJV

Keep thy foot when thou goest to **the house of God**, and be more ready to hear, than to give **the sacrifice of fools**: for they consider not that they do evil. (2) Be not **rash with thy mouth**, and let not thine heart be **hasty to utter** any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. (3) **For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words...**

- *“The more you worry, the more likely you are to have bad dreams, and the more you talk, the more likely you are to say something foolish”* [v.3, GN].

- Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 KJV

- (4) When thou vowest a vow unto God, **defer not to pay it**; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. (5) Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.
- (6) Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands? (7) **For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.**

- [v.7, BBE] *Because much talk comes from dreams and things of no purpose. But let the fear of God be in you.*

- Matthew 23:3 KJV All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for **they say, and do not.**
- James 2:18-24 KJV Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and **I will shew thee my faith by my works.** (19) Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (20) But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead?** (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? (22) Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? (23) And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (24) Ye see then how that **by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**

- James 1:21-27 KJV

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and **receive with meekness the engrafted word**, which is able to save your souls. (22) But be ye **doers of the word, and not hearers only**, deceiving your own selves. (23) For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: (24) For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. (25) But whoso **looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein**, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

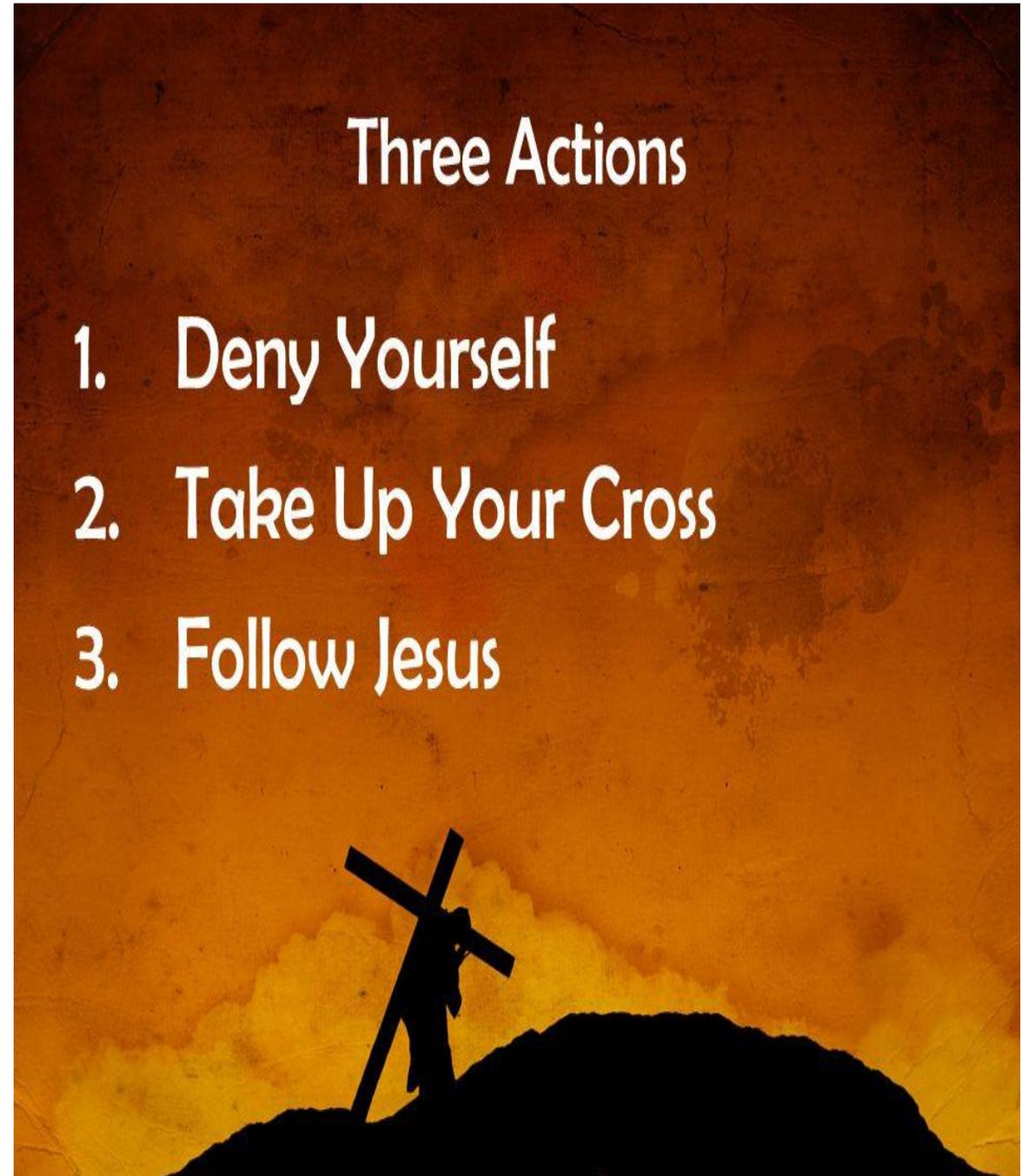
- (26) If any man among you seem to be religious, and **bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.** (27) Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, **To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.**

## **Matthew 16:24-26 KJV**

**Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (26) For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**

## Three Actions

1. Deny Yourself
2. Take Up Your Cross
3. Follow Jesus



- Luke 14:25-33 KJV

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, (26) If any man come to me, and **hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also**, he cannot be my disciple. (27) And whosoever doth not **bear his cross**, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

- (28) For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and **counteth the cost**, whether he have sufficient to finish it? (29) Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, **all that behold it begin to mock him**, (30) Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish...

- (33) So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath **he cannot be my disciple**

- Matthew 10:34-39 KJV

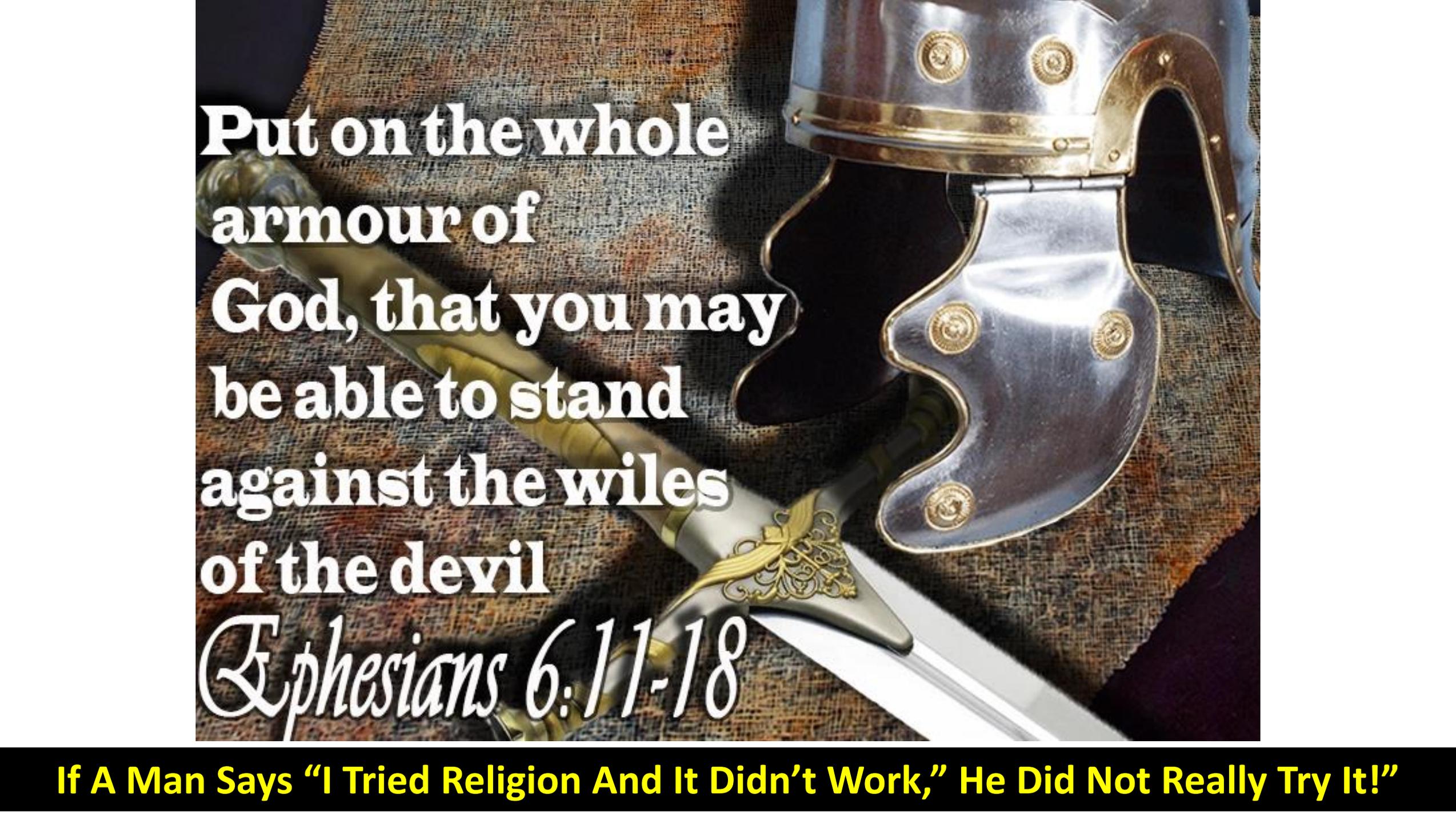
**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth:** I came not to send peace, but a sword. (35) For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. (36) And **a man's foes shall be they of his own household.**

- (37) He that loveth father or mother more than me **is not worthy of me:** and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is **not worthy of me.** (38) And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is **not worthy of me.**
- (39) He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.



**Half-hearted Measures  
Yield  
Half-hearted Results!**





**Put on the whole  
armour of  
God, that you may  
be able to stand  
against the wiles  
of the devil**

*Ephesians 6:11-18*

**If A Man Says "I Tried Religion And It Didn't Work," He Did Not Really Try It!"**

# Ecclesiastes: *A LIFE WELL LIVED...*

- **GIVES GOD HIS PROPER PLACE** [12:13-14]



• Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 KJV

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:**

**Fear God, and keep his commandments:**  
for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. (14) For  
God shall bring every work into **judgment**,  
with every secret thing, whether *it be*  
good, or whether *it be* evil.

# Religion

Christian

Muslim

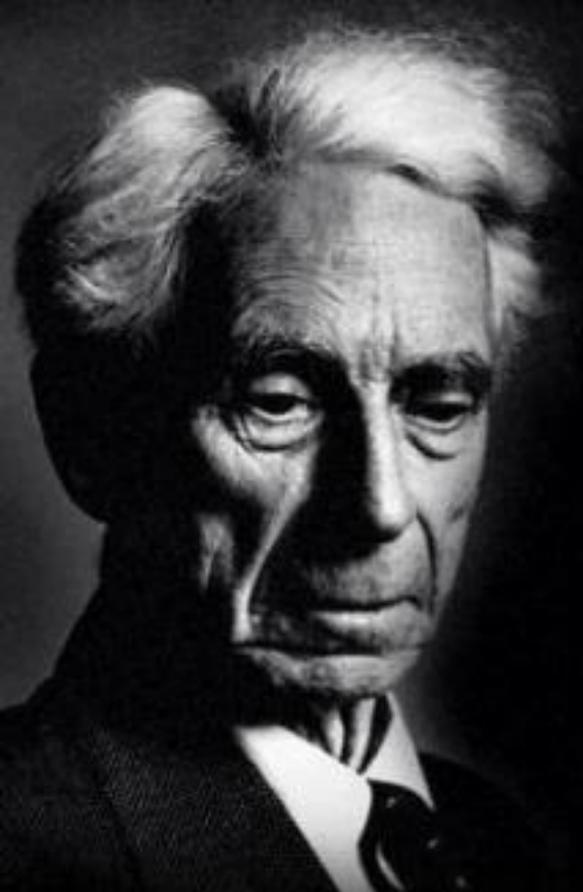
Jewish

Hindu

Other

Atheist





# FAITH

Where there is evidence, no one speaks of faith. We do not speak of faith that two and two are four or that the earth is round. We only speak of faith when we wish to substitute emotion for evidence.

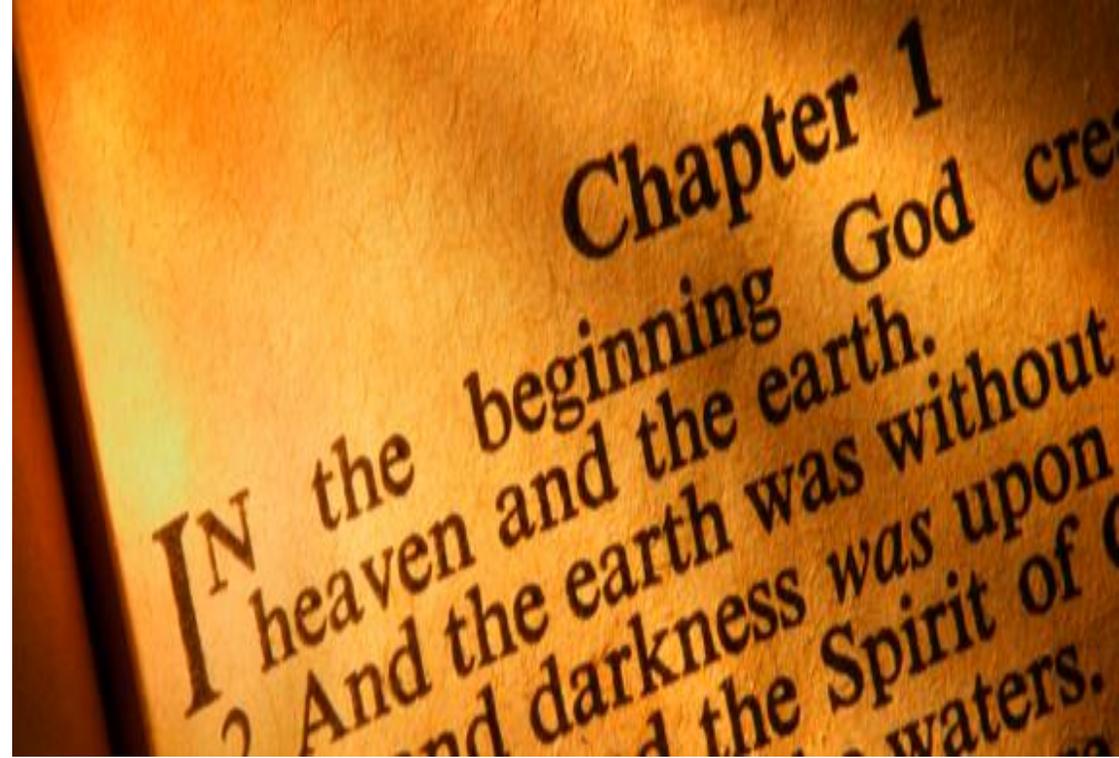
~ Bertrand Russell

# Atheism

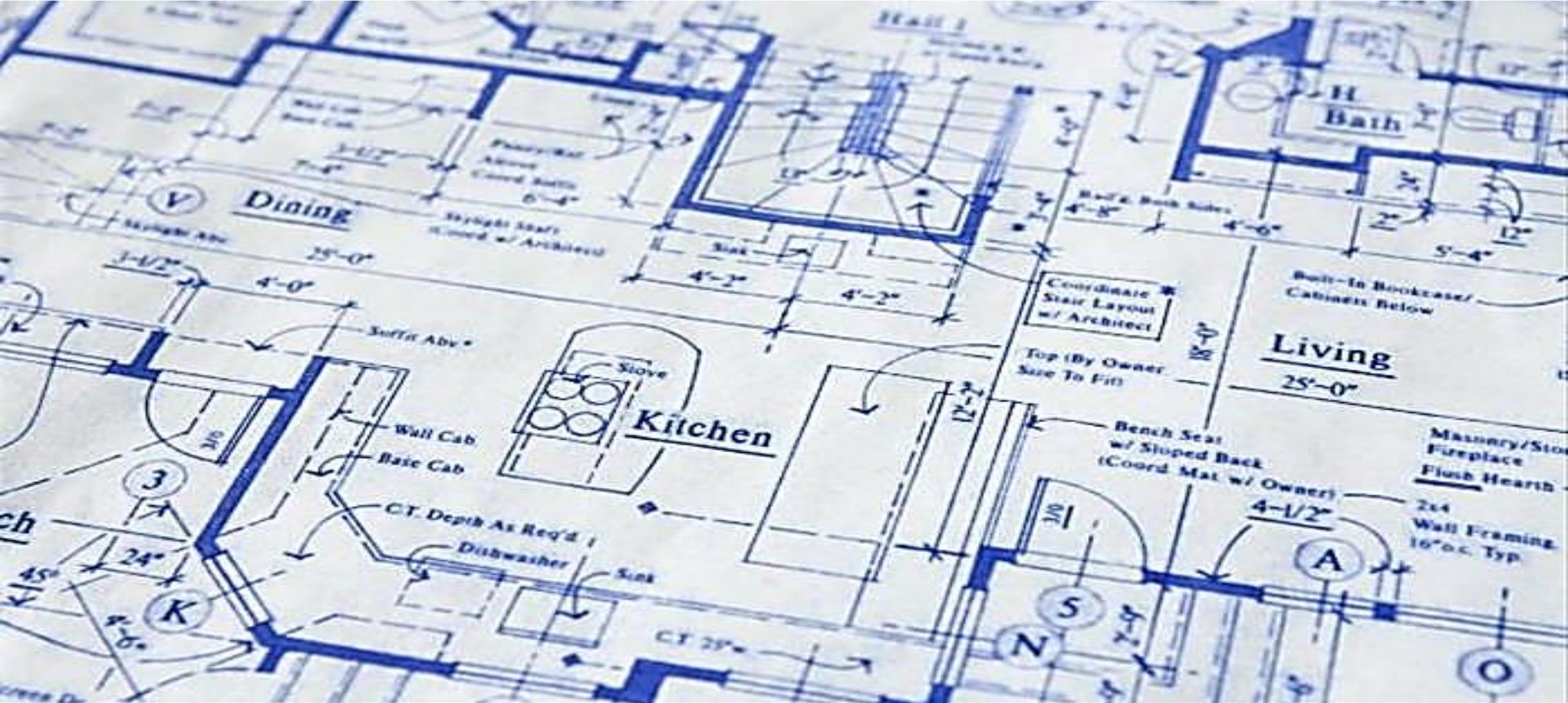
The belief that there was nothing and nothing happened to nothing and then nothing magically exploded for no reason, creating everything and then a bunch of everything magically rearranged itself for no reason what so ever into self-replicating bits which then turned into dinosaurs.

Makes perfect sense.

**IF THERE IS NO GOD—  
WHY IS THERE  
“SOMETHING”  
RATHER THAN  
NOTHING?**



- Either **NO ONE** created something out of nothing.
- Or else **SOMEONE** created something out of nothing.
- Which view is more **REASONABLE??**
- **BOTH** are “miracles,” **ONE** has a **MIRACLE WORKER!**



Hebrews 3:4 ESV ***For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.***



**THE EXISTENCE OF THE WATCH SPEAKS TO THE REALITY OF ITS MAKER**

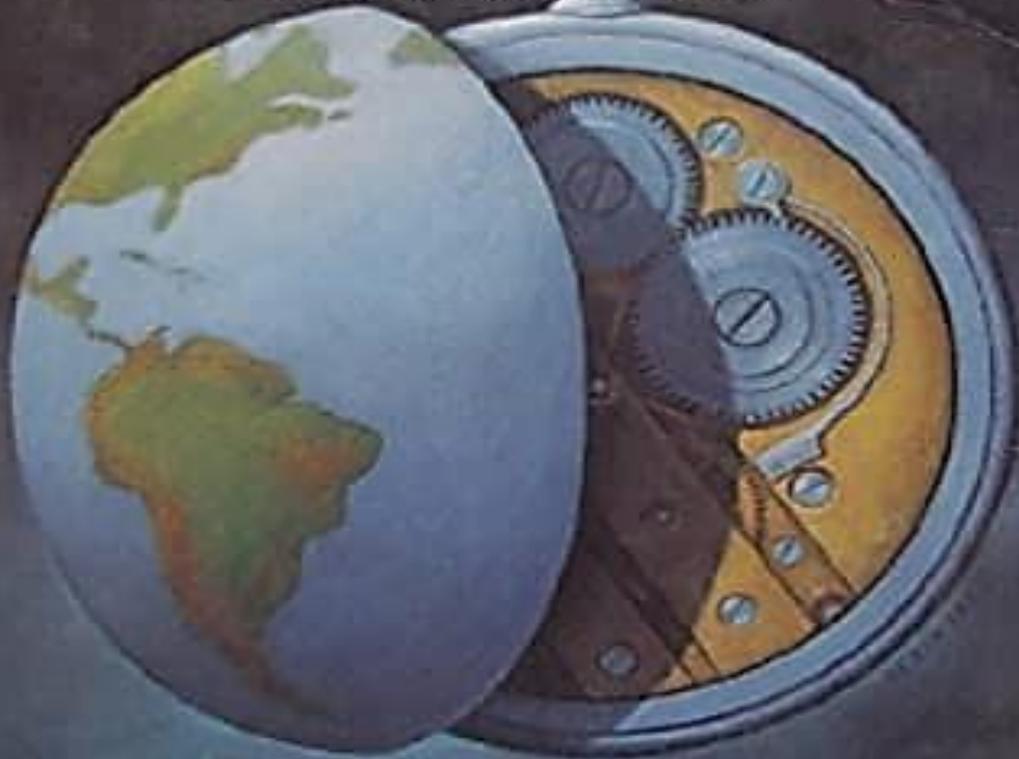
• NATIONAL BESTSELLER •

As readable and vigorous a defense of Darwinism as  
has been published since 1879. *The Economist*

RICHARD DAWKINS

# The Blind Watchmaker

Why the evidence of evolution reveals  
a universe without design



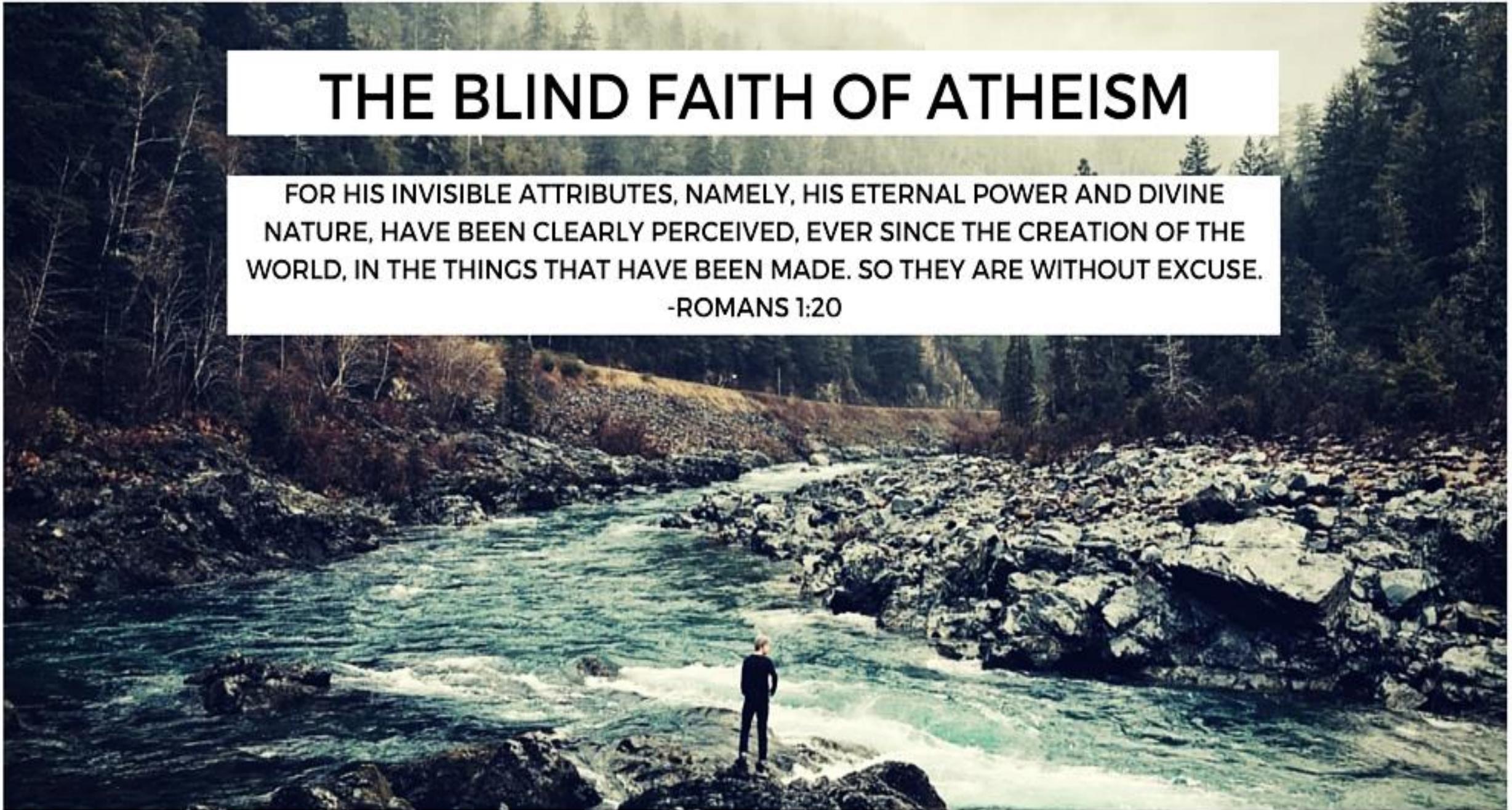
BY THE AUTHOR OF *THE SELFISH GENE*

**Despite all appearances to the contrary**, there is no watchmaker in nature beyond the blind forces of physics... Natural selection, the unconscious, automatic, blind yet essentially nonrandom process that Darwin discovered, and that we now understand to be the explanation for the existence and form of all life, has no purpose in mind... **If it can be said to play the role of watchmaker in nature, it is the blind watchmaker .**

# THE BLIND FAITH OF ATHEISM

FOR HIS INVISIBLE ATTRIBUTES, NAMELY, HIS ETERNAL POWER AND DIVINE NATURE, HAVE BEEN CLEARLY PERCEIVED, EVER SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, IN THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE. SO THEY ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE.

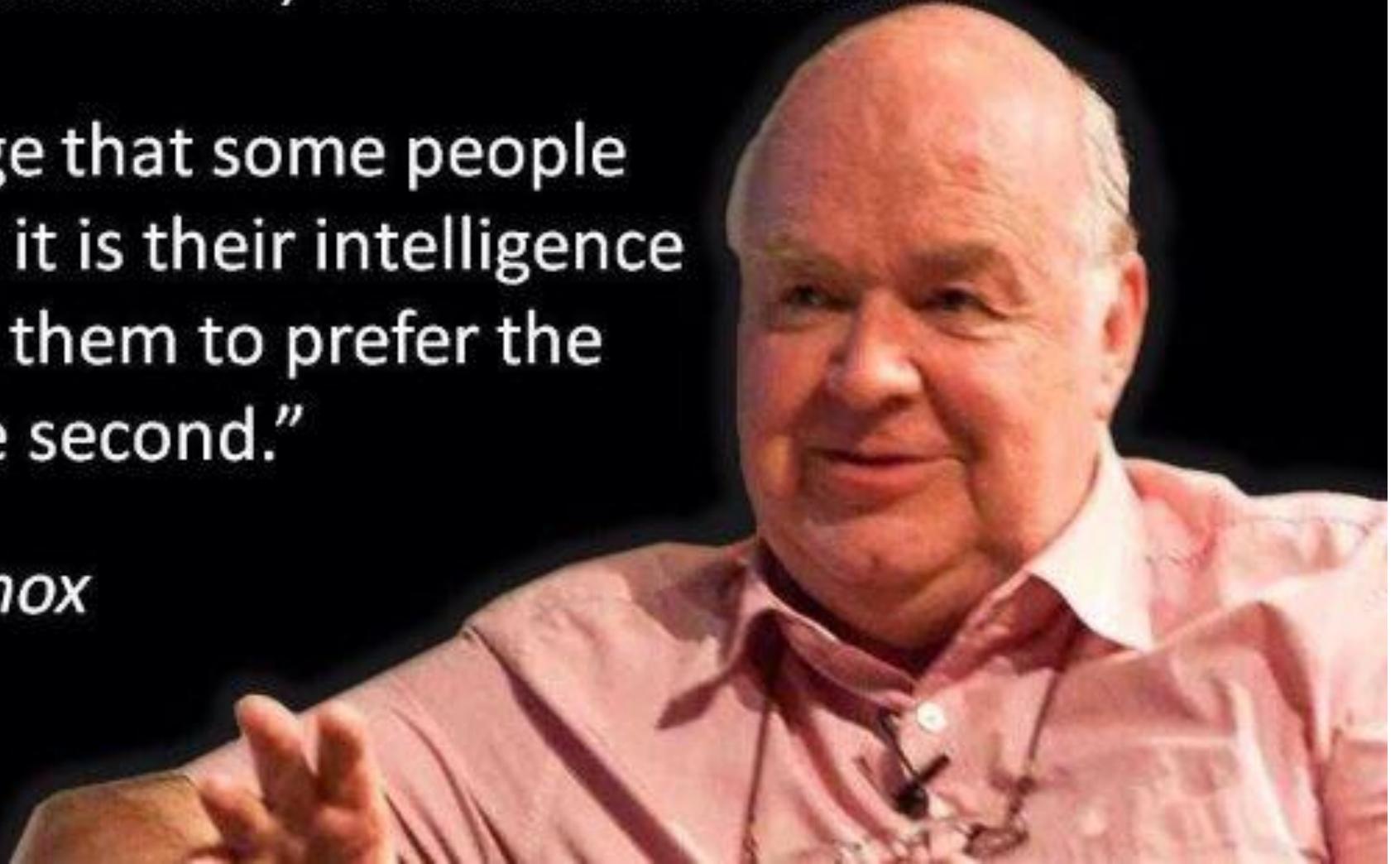
-ROMANS 1:20



“There are not many options, -essentially just two. Either human intelligence ultimately owes its origin to mindless matter; or there is a Creator.

It is strange that some people claim that it is their intelligence that leads them to prefer the first to the second.”

*-John Lennox*



"If there were no  
God, there would be  
no atheists."

-G.K. Chesterton



**WHY Are These  
Smart People  
So DETERMINED  
To Reject The  
Existence of  
God??**

# Richard Lewontin (Evolutionary Biologist—Harvard)

- *“The real struggle (is) between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science **in spite of the patent absurdity** of some of its constructs, **in spite of its failures** to fulfill many of its extravagant promises... in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for **unsubstantiated ‘just-so’ stories**, because we have a **prior commitment** to materialism. It is **not** that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our **a priori** adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, **no matter how counterintuitive**, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover that materialism is **absolute for we cannot allow a divine foot in the door.**”*

[“Billions and Billions of Demons,” *The New York Review of Books*, January 9, 1997]

• Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 KJV

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:**

**Fear God, and keep his commandments:  
for this *is* the whole *duty* of  
man. (14) For God shall bring every  
work into judgment, with every secret  
thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it  
be* evil.**

- *“The reason we accepted Darwinism, even without proof, is because we didn’t want God to interfere with our sexual mores.”* (Julian Huxley, T.V. interview from early 70’s).
- *“I was more than happy to latch onto Darwinism as an excuse to jettison the idea of God so I could unabashedly pursue my own agenda in life without moral constraints.”*  
(Former atheist Lee Strobel)
- *“If Darwinism is true—if there is no God and we all evolved from slimy green algae—then I can sleep with whomever I want... In Darwinism there is no moral accountability.”*

- Acts 17:24-31 KJV

- God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth**, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (25) Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; (26) And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;
- (27) **That they should seek the Lord**, if haply they might **feel after him, and find him**, though he be not far from every one of us: (28) For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (29) Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (30) And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now **commandeth all men every where to repent**:
  - (31) Because he hath appointed a day, in the which **he will judge the world** in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

# **Ecclesiastes: *A LIFE WELL LIVED...***

- **GIVES GOD HIS PROPER PLACE [12:13-14]**
- **TRUSTS IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD [3:1-9, 16-17]**



- Ecclesiastes 3:16-17 KJV

**And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. (17) I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.**

- Ecclesiastes 5:8 KJV

**If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.**

- 2 Peter 2:9 KJV

**The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished**

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- **TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF** [9:11-12]

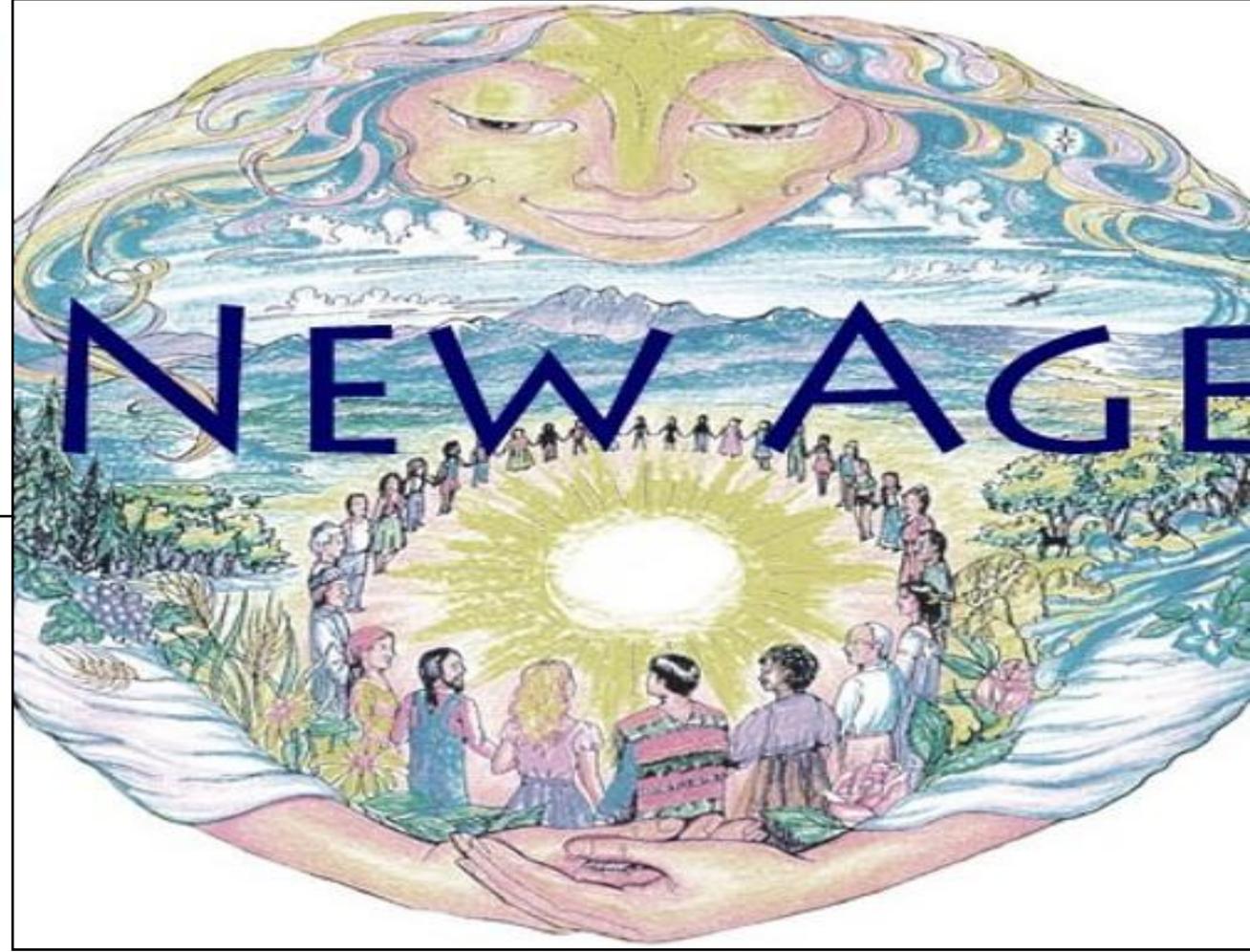


- Ecclesiastes 9:11-12 KJV

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but **time and chance happeneth to them all.**

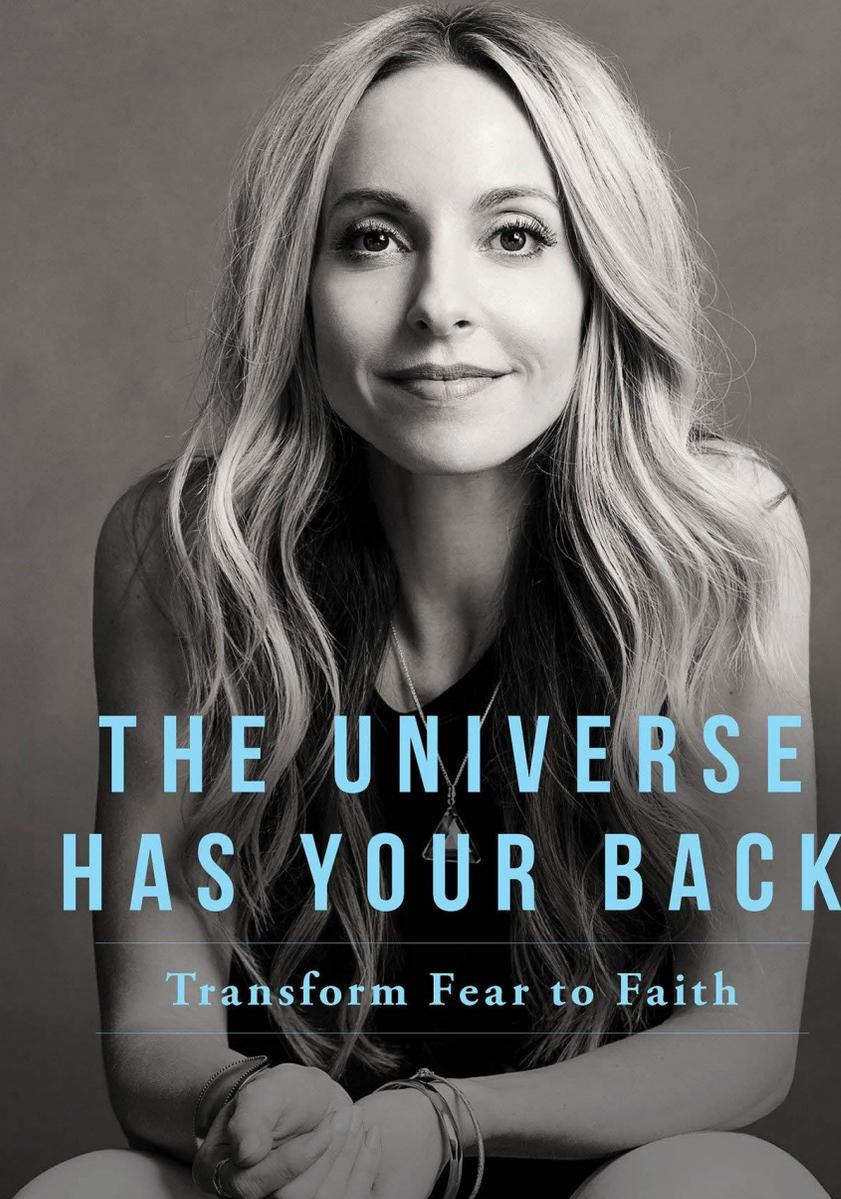
- (12) For man also knoweth not his time: **as the fishes that are taken in an evil net**, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

I'm so  
unlucky



#1 *New York Times* Bestseller

GABRIELLE BERNSTEIN



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*Transform Fear to Faith*

**“Write your own faith statement that the universe is an ever-present energy of love that is within you and around you guiding you and supporting you, and in that presence of that love anything is possible. In the presence of that love you can move mountains. In the presence of that light you can heal your trauma.”**

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# Ecclesiastes: *A LIFE WELL LIVED...*

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[3:1-9, 16-17]
- **TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF** [9:13—10:18]



**Make GOOD CHOICES...**



**Not EXCUSES!**

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- **TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF** [9:11—10:18]
- **GENEROUS WITH OTHERS**  
[11:1-6]



- Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 KJV

**Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.**

- **(2) Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.**
- **(3) If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.**
- **(4) He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. (5) As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. (6) In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.**

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# ***“It Is More Blessed To Give!”***

- Acts 20:34-35 KJV *Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, **and to them that were with me.** (35) I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive.***
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 ESV *We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, (2) for in a severe test of affliction, their **abundance of joy** and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. (3) For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, **and beyond their means**, of their own accord, (4) **begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints**— (5) and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.*

# ***“It Is More Blessed To Give!”***

- Luke 12:33-34 NIV

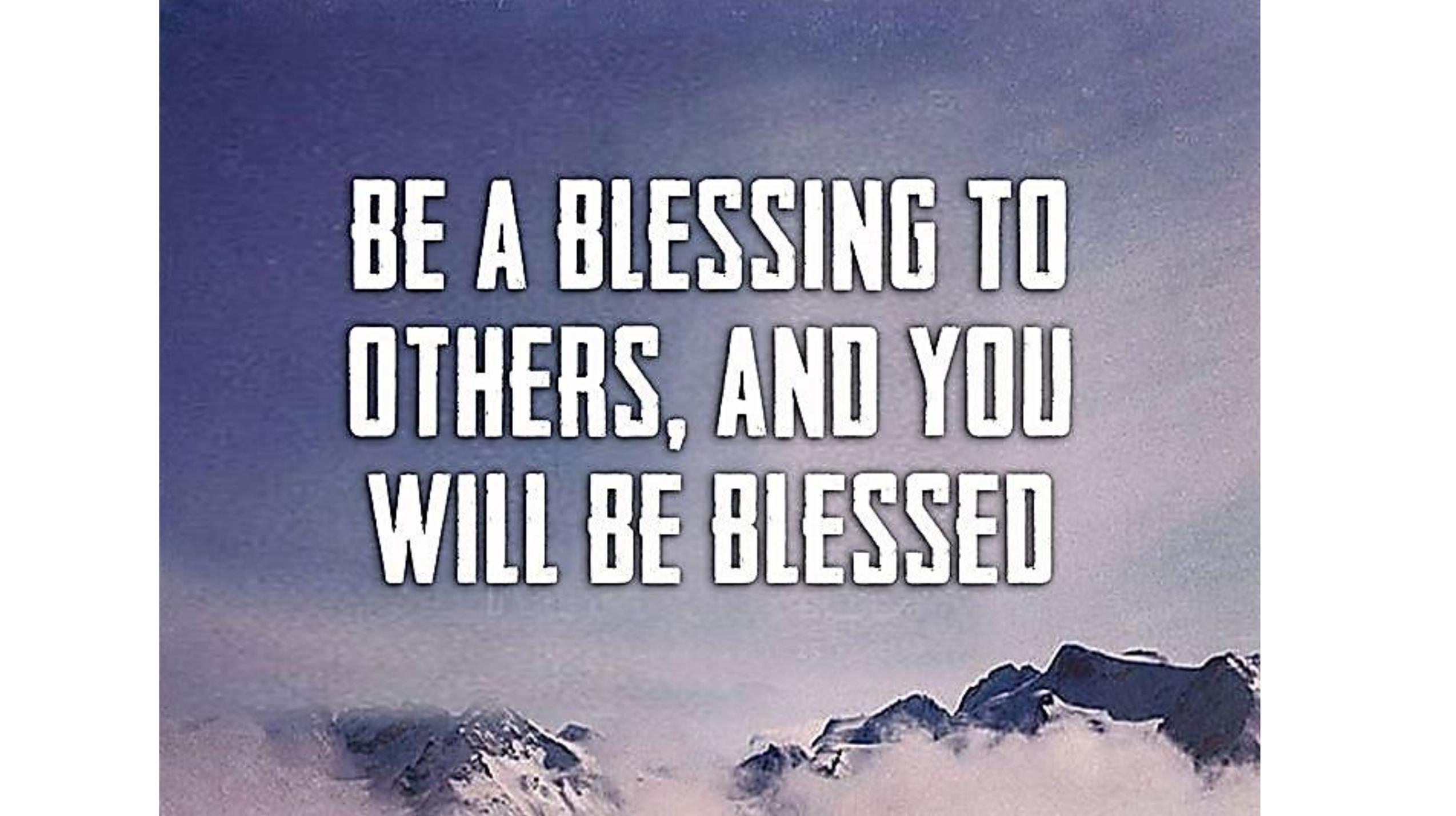
**Sell** your possessions and **give** to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a **treasure in heaven** that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For **where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

- Luke 14:12-14 ESV

He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. (13) But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, (14) and you will be blessed, because **they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.**”

- Proverbs 19:17 GW

Whoever has **pity on the poor lends to the LORD**, and he will repay him for his good deed. [Cp. Matthew 25:40].

A landscape photograph showing a range of mountains under a cloudy sky. The mountains are dark and rugged, with some snow or light-colored patches. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall tone is somewhat muted and atmospheric.

**BE A BLESSING TO  
OTHERS, AND YOU  
WILL BE BLESSED**

• Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 KJV

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- **“Help Seven... Eight!”**

- Superlative!

- *“Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the souls you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal you can, as long as ever you can.”*

- Cf. [James 5:1-3].

- **Help BECAUSE you do NOT know what tomorrow brings!**

- Very reason many give for NOT serving, sacrificing!

- Here, a word against “an excess of caution.”

- Also reminder of LIMITED opportunity to serve!

- [James 4:17].

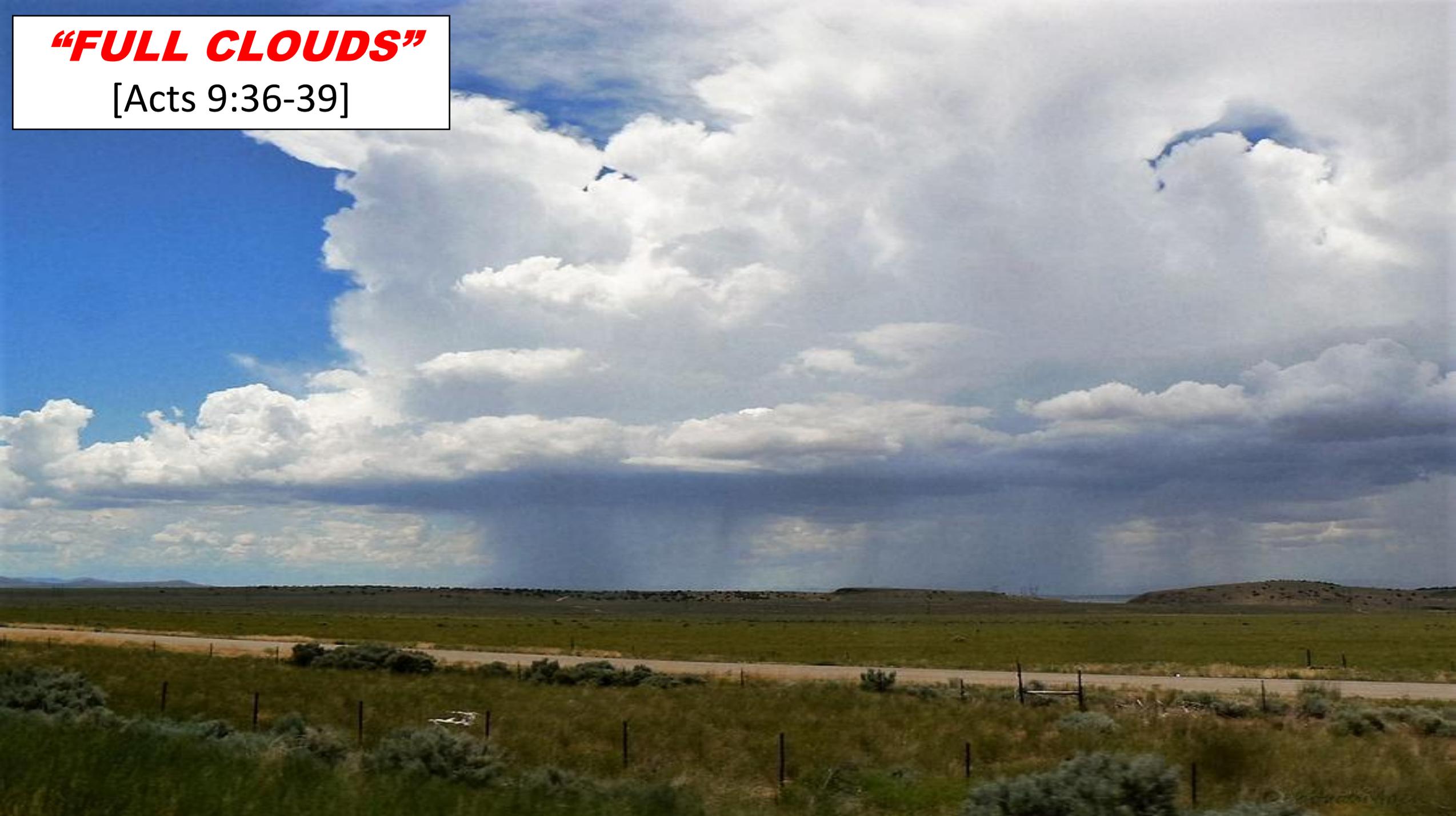
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***“FULL CLOUDS”***

[Acts 9:36-39]



***FALLEN TREES***

[Revelation  
22:11-17]



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- **GENEROUS WITH OTHERS**  
[11:1-6]
- **ENJOYS LIFE AS GOD'S GIFT** [5:18-20]



- Ecclesiastes 2:24-26 ESV **There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, (25) for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? (26) For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.**
- Ecclesiastes 3:12-13 ESV **I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; (13) also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.**
- Ecclesiastes 8:15 ESV **And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.**

- Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 ESV **Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.** (8) Let your garments be always **white**. Let not **oil** be lacking on your head. (9) **Enjoy life with the wife whom you love**, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. (10) Whatever your hand finds to do, **do it with your might**, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.
- Ecclesiastes 11:7-10 TLV Light is sweet, and it is **pleasant for the eyes to see the sun**. (8) For if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all. But let him remember the days of darkness—for there will be many. Everything to come is obscure. (9) **Rejoice, young man, in your childhood, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth**. Walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment. (10) So **banish anxiety from your heart and cast off distress from your body**, for youth and prime of life are fleeting. [Cf. 12:1/ “Three R’s”]

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright white-yellow orb positioned slightly to the left of the center, just above the horizon. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, fading into a pale blue at the top. The ocean below is dark blue with gentle waves, and the sun's light creates a shimmering path of reflection on the water's surface. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

**Thankful for the Gift of Life**

- **Philippians 4:10-13 TLV**

I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me (though you were concerned before but lacked opportunity to show it). (11) I am not saying this because I am in need—for whatever circumstance I am in, I have learned to be content.

- (12) I know what it is to live with humble means, and I know what it is to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment—both to be filled and to go hungry, to have abundance and to suffer need. (13) I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me.

- **Paul, as a GODLY man, could...**

- Take DEPRIVATION as a temporary thing. As an opportunity to exercise patience. To learn sympathy.
- Take ABUNDANCE as a gift of God and enjoy it as a blessing. It is also temporary. Not the measure of life or worth. **[Luke 12:15].**

**THERE'S PROBABLY NO GOD.  
NOW STOP WORRYING AND ENJOY YOUR LIFE.**

