

There is No God

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[0:00] Please turn now in your Bibles to Psalm 14. The book of Psalms and Psalm 14. The fool says in his heart, there is no God.

! They are corrupt. Their deeds are vile. There is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

All have turned aside. They have together become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one. Will evildoers never learn? Those who devour my people as men eat bread and who do not call on the Lord.

There they are, overwhelmed with dread, for God is present in the company of the righteous. You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor, but the Lord is their refuge.

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion when the Lord restores the fortunes of his people. Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad. The British scientist Richard Dawkins is a militant atheist, by which I mean that he not only does not believe in God, but he's out to convince the world as well that there is no God.

[1:22] Four years ago, he wrote the book, *The God Delusion*, saying that faith in a personal God qualifies as a delusion.

That is a persistent, false belief held in the face of strong, contradictory evidence. Now, he says, he holds to the idea that when one person suffers from a delusion, it's called insanity.

But when many people suffer from a delusion, it's called religion. He thinks God was invented by men to control people's behavior.

And he refers to faith as one of the world's great evils, saying it's like the smallpox virus, though more difficult to eradicate.

Now, it's this Professor Dawkins, who over a year ago in England, along with the British Humanist Association, working with the *Guardian* newspaper, launched an advertising campaign.

[2:34] They were out to raise \$7,000 to put this advertising slogan on the public buses around London. There's probably no God.

Now stop worrying and enjoy your life. And in the first four days of the campaign, they had more than 20 times the amount of money needed.

And so all over the country of England on their double-decker red buses, you can read in all caps, there's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life.

Clearly, the belief in God is causing a lot of people grief. They simply cannot enjoy living as they please as long as God exists.

So more and more are trying to will Him out of existence. When looking at surveys on the religions of the world, one of the fastest growing categories is that of atheist, agnostic, or non-religious.

[3:41] Something like 13% worldwide. In France and Great Britain, it's around 50% who don't believe in God. And in our own country, 20% of young adults, ages 18 through 25, consider themselves atheists, agnostics, or non-religious.

Now the creed of these people is there is no God. There is no God. And there's nothing new about this.

It's an old, old creed. In fact, 2,700 years ago, David tells us in Psalm 14, and again in Psalm 53, that the fool says in his heart, there is no God.

So already in his day, they were saying, there's no God. And God does not sit in his heaven oblivious to what they're saying about him.

Notice in Psalm 14, 1, what God says about those who deny his existence. He calls them fools. The fool says in his heart, there is no God.

[4:59] So this is the fool's creed, we might say. Now sin, all sin, is always foolish. But to attack the very existence of the Most High God is the greatest folly.

No God is what the fool says. Now the Hebrew word for the word fool here is Nabal. And right away, you who are familiar with your Bibles will remember that was Abigail's husband, wasn't it?

Nabal. And his own servant said of him, he's such a wicked man that no one can talk to him. He was a surly, rude, mean man in his dealings and so he treated David's men.

There's no one who can talk to him. He's willful. He's headstrong. He's close-minded. His mind's made up, whatever the facts may be. And Abigail, running out to David to try to protect her family and all that belong to them and interceding, says to David, may my Lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal.

He is just like his name. His name is fool and folly goes with him. So we need to understand something about this word fool.

[6:22] The fool says in his heart there is no God. When we hear that word fool, we may think about some idiot with a dunce cap, with a dumb stare on his face.

Someone, as we say, a couple screws loose upstairs that he's got some mental deficiency. He's a fool. But that's not the meaning of this word.

As the footnote in my Bible says, it refers to one who is morally deficient. It's not speaking of being mentally deficient. In fact, this person may have a PhD or two after their name.

They may be very eloquent, a high IQ, and highly educated. Indeed, many scientists are among this group who say there is no God.

So what the fool lacks is not mental equipment, but grace. He denies the very first principle of religion, which is, in the beginning, God.

[7:29] In the beginning, God. He wasn't created. He was there at creation. But the fool says there is no God and so denies the very first principle of religion.

He also denies the starting point of true wisdom for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But he says there's no God.

So without God, he has no wisdom. He's left with folly. The fool says in his heart, there is no God.

So at bottom, the problem with a fool is spiritual, not mental.

Don't think of the fool as being mentally deficient. Think of him as being spiritually, morally deficient. That's the meaning of our word.

He has a nature that is at enmity against God. In other words, he's against what God is for and he's for what God's against.

[8:36] He loves what God hates and he pursues what God punishes. He doesn't like God's commands. He doesn't want to be told how to live.

He doesn't want to be punished for his choices. And so his very nature does not want there to be a God. He doesn't want him to exist.

Oh, that there was no God. Oh, that there was no God to command, no God to judge, no God to punish. And so in his mind, he kills him. He just says, there is no God.

Mental murder, intellectual slaughter, murder in the heart. Now that's this man who says there's no God.

And when we come up close and look at him, what we find is that that all men are a lot like him.

Indeed, Charles Spurgeon, the great preacher of the 1800s in London, said about this passage, let us never forget that all unregenerate men are more or less such fools.

[9:47] Believers, this is what we were. We too were like these who say no God. We had a heart that wanted to be rid of God who is the great lawgiver and the judge and the punisher of all lawbreakers.

Indeed, the Bible says we had God-hating hearts, Romans 8, 7. But the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God, to God's laws, nor can it do so.

Now, you see, some men are very in your face to God about their hatred of God. And so, they stand out on the street corner and say, if there is a God, let him strike me with lightning in the next 15 seconds.

But others are very genteel and proper and religious even in their hatred of God. But they both have this way of expressing their hatred of God.

They will not submit to God's law. And so, they have a mind and a heart that would rather that God did not exist. We don't like his authority over us, so we dismiss him.

[11:05] We deny him. We eliminate him. We refuse to recognize his authority over us. We say, there is no such God.

So, this is also the way of a lot of religious hearts that are unconverted. You know, there are lots of religious people today who don't like the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is too holy.

He punishes every sin. He's so righteous, that he's determined to punish every sin that's ever been committed. He's so judgmental.

He's too narrow, too strict, too demanding. And by the way, the God of the Bible is the only God that there is.

So, they recreate God according to their own liking, a God who is more tolerant of sin, a God who is undemanding and affirming, who's too loving to ever send someone to hell forever.

[12:14] He just wants us to try our best and get along with each other without judging each other. And he helps those who help themselves. This is God as I think of him.

Now, what is this but doing away with God? The only God there is. Of him, they say, there is no God. And then they create this imaginary God of their liking.

They're saying he does not exist. They're saying there is no God. God. God. When the apostle Paul in the book of Romans sets out to make the charge that the whole human race is sinful, that it's in rebellion against God and it's something that's true of Jews and Gentiles alike, he's building his case and in chapter 3 he quotes from Psalm 14.

He quotes from this very passage that we're looking at this morning. There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away.

They have together become worthless. There is no one who does good, not even one. Now these statements in Psalm 14 are true of all men as we are by nature, all people without Christ, the whole rebellious race of humanity.

[13:44] And Paul sums it all up using such words as these from Psalm 14. In his writing he sums it all up by saying at the end there is no fear of God before their eyes.

That's the reason they're so wicked. That's the reason they use their tongues to kill people. That's the reason that they plan evil and do evil because there's no fear of God before their eyes.

That's the bottom line cause for evil. And all of man's corruption and vile deeds are just the fruit of a heart that does not fear God that has no regard for the true living God.

But here in Psalm 14, David starts out with the cause. Why is there this evil that follows? And he says it's because at the bottom man has this heart of denying the God that is.

All these evil things proceed from a heart that says there's no God. These things are true of more than 20% or 50%. It's the universal problem.

[14:49] And so Paul and David are saying by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that denying God's existence is at the root of what's wrong in the world today. This problem is much broader than a few militant atheists.

No doubt some people when they read Psalm 14 verse 1, the fool has said in his heart there is no God. They immediately think of these loud mouth atheists. And if you only think of Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens and Madeline Murray O'Hare and people of their ilk you'll miss what the scriptures are saying to us.

We'll think of those who shouted this phrase and are shouting this phrase from the rooftops.

But for every one of those who shouts out there is no God there are thousands of people who whisper it in their hearts. There is no God. There is no God. So look at this text again and notice verse 1 says the fool says in his heart there is no God.

Now some may go on and say it in their mouth with their lips in their writings in their books in their debates but most just keep it inside and say it in their hearts.

[16:14] There is no God but it's the same inward denial of God that is controlling the behavior of both. In his heart he says no God.

Now the heart takes us right into the control room of the person. This is where the decisions are made even as the White House has its decision room and that's where they go to make decisions.

So you have a decision room. It's called your heart. The Bible speaks of it as the heart. And the decision room of life is the place where God is meant to sit enthroned without any rivals.

He's to be the number one consideration in all the decisions that you make in life. There in your heart he's to be exalted as king and in control.

But his will is not being considered because there's no fear of God in their hearts. And the creed in the control center, the decision room of their hearts is no God, no God.

[17:22] For there in their hearts, God is dismissed, God is denied, and has no controlling effect on life. What I'm saying is that there is a practical atheism as well as a theoretical atheism.

And for everyone that's a theoretical atheist, there are hundreds of practical atheists. A practical atheist is one who lives as if there is no God.

For in his heart, there in the control center, God is not. I was driving 70 miles per hour going to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the great freeway, four-laner, car comes up from behind and passes me like I'm standing still.

That man was driving as if policemen don't exist. Now, I don't know that he's ever written a book saying policemen don't exist.

I don't know that he's ever stood on a street corner and preached, there are no policemen. But I know this, he was driving as if policemen don't exist.

[18:44] And so there are many people who have never said aloud, there is no God, but they are living as if he does not exist.

They have said it to themselves in their hearts. That's the creed that rules in their minds and wills and affections in all his thoughts. There is no room for God.

God simply doesn't fit in with his choices and ideas and values of life. And so he doesn't figure in to his decisions and he wakes up in the morning and he does not think about thanking God for a peaceful night of sleep and asking God for his blessing upon the new day's activities.

And he goes off to work or to school without thinking of how to please God in his school work or in his workplace and he comes home with no thought of God and what he wants him to do with the rest of his hours before bedtime and he sits and watches television without any thought of God.

There's no regard to God in all of his projects. He goes to bed without thanking God for the blessings of the day and without confessing his sins committed that day. In all he does, there's no room for God and so he spends his time his money and his life without living unto God.

[20:07] Now he's not a card carrying atheist but this is practical atheism living as if God did not exist. That's what rules his life.

He may even say he believes in God but his heart says otherwise. Titus 1:16 a man may claim to believe in God and yet in his heart not believe in God.

Some profess to know God Paul says in Titus 1:16 but in works they deny him. In works they say no God. They live as if there's no God and that is practical atheism and it's just as damning as a theoretical atheism.

In fact it's even more dangerous because it can hide respectability. And when you think about it every sin has at the bottom something of this spirit of atheism.

Every sin involves living as if there's no God acting as if God did not exist closing our eyes at least for the moment to his presence and his authority his commands his judgment.

[21:23] And this is the folly that's bound up in the heart of every person as we come into this world until God in grace drives it from us. There is no God is the language of every sin.

David Clarkson the Puritan writes oh how heinous is the least sin which is so injurious to the very being of God because sin strikes at his person his very existence and wishes he were no more no wonder sin is so offensive to God and it comes under such punishment and wrath Dawkins bus campaign clearly hit a nerve with people there's probably no God stop worrying and enjoy your life it says in no uncertain terms that the God of the Bible is not a comfortable reality to sinners indeed that if they're going to find joy in this life they're going to have to do it by at the expense of the existence of God they're going to have to deny him because the

God of the Bible is holy and punishes those who break his law even their conscience bears witness to this Paul says in Romans 2 so one way of dealing with him is just to say he doesn't exist and that's the way to get rid of our worries about a day of judgment and to get on with enjoying our life now turn to Romans chapter one because here the apostle Paul says that this very reasoning of the sinful heart is found in mankind in general again the apostle Paul is not just talking about a small percentage of the population who curse God outwardly he's rather rounding up the whole human race to show that we're all under the charge of sin and rebels against God and notice how he tracks this out in Romans 1 verses 18 and following notice what man is doing with

God whom he knows exists Romans 1 18 the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness since what may be known about God is plain to them because God has made it plain to them for since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen being understood from what has been made so that men are without excuse for although they knew God they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened although they although they claimed to be wise they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal!

God for images made to look like mortal men and birds and animals and reptiles now we'll just pause there and stop there notice in verse 18 that sinful men suppress the truth they suppress the truth kids you've been to the doctor and the doctor sticks that dilly bar stick on your tongue and pushes it down that's called a tongue suppressor because it's pushing your tongue down it's that's to suppress it's what you do with a beach ball when you try to put it under the water you've got to push it down because it's ever pushing back at you and so coming to the surface if you're going to keep it down you've got to push it down you've got to suppress it and that's what sinners do with the truth they're always pushing it down Paul says now precisely what truth is it that sinners are suppressing well he tells us in verse 19 it's the knowledge of

[25 : 40] God's existence they know he exists even if they've never read Genesis 1 1 that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth they know it because God has made it plain to them that's what verse 19 says they know God exists because God has made it plain to them and the question comes well how how has God made it plain to all men that he exists and verse 20 tells us by the creation by the things that are made that God's invisible qualities are clearly seen being understood from what has been made so what we can see with our eyes creation teaches us about what we can't see with our physical eyes that there is a creator that's how we know that God exists Psalm 19 says creation has a voice that goes out into all the world and day after day night after night knowledge is pouring forth from creation to those of every language and it's saying there is a

God he's awesome and glorious eternal and powerful and this knowledge of God is so clearly seen that Paul says men are without excuse right there at the end of verse 20 so that men are without excuse no one living on God's earth can claim innocence for living as if God did not exist there without excuse because his existence is so clear in the creation now if the existence of God is so clear in creation what did man do with that knowledge what did they do with the knowledge of God that they had well verse 28 tells us they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God some of you when playing cards you you've got a discard and so you figure out which cards aren't worth hanging on to and you discard them that's what man did with the knowledge of God what what's worth hanging on to well not

God they did not think it worth hanging on to and so they discarded they threw it away they did in what verse 18 said they suppressed it they pushed it out of their mind they pushed it down out of consciousness they denied it they said there is no God and though they knew God they refused to acknowledge him as God verse 21 says they would not give him the glory he deserved they would not thank him as God deserves for being God and so their minds and hearts were darkened verse 22 says claiming to be wise they became fools that's the last word on atheism it's foolish it's foolish however wise the world considers these men and women it's always a fool who says in his heart there is no God it's like the Mona Lisa saying there is no

Leonardo da vinci it's like the statue David saying there is no Michelangelo shall the thing formed say to him who formed it you do not exist it's both folly and wicked to deny the one in whom we live and move and have our being it's folly in the first place it's always folly to live out of touch with reality and it's the greatest folly to live out of touch with the greatest reality to deny that God exists why is it foolish well for one reason just saying that there is no God does not make it so does it just believing there is no God does not make him cease to exist there is a small child in the middle of the living room and he's touching something that he knows he shouldn't and dad walks into the room and he makes eye contact and he immediately closes his eyes tightly he has no object permanence yet as he's growing up so he thinks that if he can't see him he doesn't exist there is no daddy is the is the creed of this little two year old there is no daddy but his saying it and his closing his eyes tightly does not change the reality of daddy in the living room and he'll soon find out that that is the case no amount of man's denials will remove the reality of

God from his universe it's like a man screaming there's no such thing as gravity as he jumps off a skyscraper he'll find out there is such a thing as gravity and those who say in their hearts there is no God will one day meet him and when they do their knee will bow and their tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father and they will confess it to their own shame it will be too late for that confession God the very same mouth that denied him in life will acknowledge him to their eternal shame so I say it's foolish to say there's no God it's foolish to gamble your eternity on the hope of there being no God when the creation is shouting all around you he exists it's foolish to gamble that there's no

[31 : 38] God to judge and punish sin when your own conscience! tells you otherwise when you do something wrong you feel bad for it it's foolish to gamble that your sin will not find you out when the resurrection of Christ from the dead is proof of a final day of reckoning Acts chapter 17 30 and 31 God commands all people everywhere to repent for he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he is appointed!

to all men by raising him from the dead have you thought of the resurrection we've just come through Easter season have you thought of the resurrection in that light that when God raised his son from the dead he was putting all men on notice that there's coming a day of judgment the judge is very alive and well and he's coming back and on a certain day he will judge all so it's foolish to try to convince yourself that you can get away with one sin when creation conscience and the resurrection and scripture is screaming otherwise that's what makes death so dreadful because it's appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment the judgment outspoken atheists and practical atheists will rise from the dead to meet

God in judgment someone has said on earth are atheists many in hell there are not any even the devils believe and tremble but living as if God does not exist is not only a very foolish thing it's also a very wicked thing and we notice that in Romans 1 18 that the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven because of this God does not sit by saying well poor man they're they're they're just a bit deluded here no he takes it very seriously and his wrath is upon men because!

They're wickedness verse 18 says when men suppress the truth of God to go on living in their way of sin it shows a very anti-God heart and that's why the wrath of God is revealed against it no wonder men are trying so hard to convince themselves that there is no God there is a wrath in God there is a hell to pay for sin so remember the bus campaign there's probably no God now stop worrying and enjoy life what a sad way to live to have to deny reality to have to suppress the truth in order to get enjoyment in life to be willing to live in a fantasy world a dream world that does not exist in order to not worry about some coming judgment but you can only live with your head in the sand for so long death is coming and reality catches up with everyone eventually some of you kids like to play computer games and it's not reality it's it's fantasy cars don't do that in the real world people can't do that in the real world and while you play you live in a fantasy world and a lot of people are living in a fantasy world in which

God does not exist they look at the flowering red buds and dog woods they just say wow that's nice they don't say thank you Lord for what you've made God is not in all their thoughts they live in this fantasy world from day to day but a day is coming when the game will be over game over and reality will begin for all eternity it's a sad way to live and I'm here to tell you that no one needs to live that way no one needs to deny that God exists because there is a way to face the facts that God exists and yet to stop worrying and to enjoy your life it's not by denying his existence but it's by coming to peace with this God through our

[36 : 42] Lord Jesus Christ you see this unseen God visited our world he came where he could be seen and touched and handled and heard for the second person of the God head who is from everlasting took on himself man's nature and he came and became one of us he remained what he always was from eternity God and he became what he had never been before man and so in one person we have two natures he is the perfect God man indeed great is the mystery of godliness God appeared in a body the word became flesh and dwelt among us and so the son of God came into this world of God rejecting fools all of us and he didn't come here to condemn us because we were already condemned we were already under

God's wrath for suppressing! His truth for turning our back on him and going our own ways we were already condemned he didn't come to condemn us but he came to seek and to save that which was lost those who were living under God's wrath who were just waiting for that final sentence at the end of our lives how does he do that how does God save sinners he does it through his son Jesus

Christ he is God and he does it first of all by living the perfect life that we could never live ourselves so he came and as a man he submitted himself to every commandment of God the same ones that you and I break and he did not break any of them he was perfectly!

in tune with God's presence he didn't deny God's presence he didn't live as if God did not exist he rather set the Lord before him all the day he always saw him there at his right hand and he lived in communion with his father and did everything unto him so he has a perfect righteousness to give to every believing sinner do you know that you can't!

into heaven perfection perfect righteousness he's too holy to countenance and look on sin nothing unclean will enter in there revelation says you've got to have perfect righteousness you see this is what this is what chops down religious people at the knees because no matter how many good deeds we have they do not equal perfect righteousness there's no way to get into heaven on your religious deeds it's a dead end road so Jesus comes and he lives the perfect life and he gets the report card this is my son in whom I'm well pleased straight A's and he now has a perfect righteousness that allows him entrance into heaven nothing unclean in him so he can enter but he takes that perfect righteousness and he gives it to believing sinners who had none of their own but who came to him and said Lord Jesus have mercy on me these sins of mine are real these are F's these are my failures come and have mercy on me and so Jesus takes all of our sins and he gives us all of his righteousness he takes all of our F's and he gives us all of his A's and so a sinner can now come into the presence of God forever because he's covered in the righteousness of Jesus Christ that's what God did for fools who lived as if he didn't exist but after living a perfect life the son of God died!

[40 : 47] an atoning death he died a death that satisfied God's wrath for sin we've read about the wrath of God that that's what we deserve for living as if he doesn't exist we deserve wrath infinite wrath forever and ever that's how offensive it is to live as if God does not exist but God so loved the world of sinful fools that he gave his one and only son to die in the place of sinners and so the sinless Jesus took upon himself the sins of all of his people they were put upon him and he goes to the cross the place of punishment and he suffers the wrath of God for those sins he endures the wrath that would have been mine for all eternity he suffered that wrath that I might never have to myself this is how he saves sinful fools like me and then he rose from the dead victorious over sin and death and hell and he ever lives to save to the uttermost all who come to

God through him that's the only way anyone gets into heaven that's the only way we get perfect righteousness it's the only way we can come into heaven and know that our sins have already been punished there's no more punishment to bear because Jesus died in my place so here's the Bible's campaign here's the Bible's gospel slogan that deserves to be on every bus and in every heart there is a God but in Jesus Christ alone you can stop worrying and enjoy life therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ he's no longer angry his wrath has been turned away from us by having it hit full square upon his own son there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in

Christ Jesus for God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God so there's no reason at all to suppress the truth of God's existence that the God of the Bible exists embrace it it's reality you're going to come to that reality someday embrace it this morning embrace it tomorrow morning every day of your life embrace the reality that God is real and when by grace in Christ our trust is justice smiles and ask no more because the sinless savior died my sinful soul is counted free for God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me so stop living stop living as if God does not exist whether you're saying it out loud or just in your heart day by day living as if he's not real face the fact

God is real your sins are real judgment is real God's wrath is real but so is Jesus Christ so is his perfect life so! is his atoning death so is his glorious!

his present life for us and his glorious return for our salvation he suffered enough for all your sins so doubt no more turn from your own selfish way bring your sins to Jesus to have him forgive them and to save you from them and go and enjoy God and go and enjoy life as it was meant to be lived you and Christ together forever you can do that right there in your seat you can run up the surrender flag and say God I've been the fool I've played the fool long enough I've lived as if you don't exist my decisions you're not in them my goals you're not in them I'm just stuck on myself and I can't save myself come and save sweet savior what a

[45:47] God you are teach us to treasure you more and more open the eyes of some here this morning you've been going on with life as if you do not exist even those who've been brought up in the church and have heard otherwise and yet still live their lives as if you were not come this day and call them out of the darkness out of the deceived state of sin wake them up to reality before it is too late do it and we'll thank you Lord we thank you for the eyes that see these things that we see of you and your glory are not given to us by flesh and blood but by the Holy Spirit and we thank you for what we see of glory in Christ and pray that others would see the same as we pray in his name amen