



IS GOD GREAT? A DEBATE

The existence of God was debated between one of the world's most prominent atheists, "Christopher Hitchens" and Oxford University professor and mathematician, "John Lennox". The two squared off in an **enthralling discussion** of a question that has divided believers and non-believers for centuries, **"Is God Great?"**



CREATION STUDIES INSTITUTE

Reaching the World with the Truths of Creation

Dear Fellow Creationist,

February 2010

A Crumpled Decade

Reflecting on the last decade, one can't help but be concerned about the future. With the caption, "The Decade from Hell," a picture of a crying baby with a party hat perched on its head on the cover of *Time* magazine, December 7, 2009, certainly reinforced this feeling.

Thus, what I'm calling the God Equation, which is really the remedy for all of our national ills, is this:

$$\text{GOD} + \text{MAN} = \text{LIFE} + \text{LIGHT}$$

As those who understand the truth of Christ, we have to be ready to counter the attacks on faith in God, including those by the New Atheists. After the last decade, it is more important than ever for us to spread the Gospel through Creation Evangelism, boldly proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Creator, Sustainer, Savior and Judge of the world, all wrapped into One! Putting God back into the equation is the hope-giving answer not only to the problems America has suffered over the last ten years, but for a secularized Europe and lost world. And now is not the time to be quiet!

We have to be willing to fight harder than ever to keep our nation grounded and true to its Christian roots. Please keep the ministry of CSI in your prayers and kindly support us as generously as possible, as we continue to vigorously engage in this battle for the souls of men—and the very soul of our nation.

This month we are offering for **your most generous gift of \$35 or more the DVD debate, *Is God Great?*** Christopher Hitchens, a British-American bestselling author, journalist, and literary critic, as well as one of the world's most influential and outspoken atheists, and Professor John Lennox, a convinced Christian, scientist, and Professor in Mathematics at the University of Oxford, argue the question—Is God great? Christopher Hitchens reiterates the point he makes in his book, *God is not Great*, that not only is God not great, but He does not exist at all. Professor Lennox retaliates, "God is not only great. He is immeasurably great." This debate was filmed at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, by the Fixed Point Foundation and offers not only the debate, but a special feature: *Afternoon Tea with Professor Lennox and Christopher Hitchens*.

This DVD will allow you to examine both sides of the debate, Is God Great, and provide information to defend your faith. Share this insightful DVD with your family, friends, and Bible study group. **Your gift of \$35 or more will allow Creation Studies Institute to continue to offer premium creation resources and reach the world with the truths of creation and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** For your convenience you may also order online at www.creationstudies.org.

In His service,

Tom DeRosa

Executive Director and Founder
Creation Studies Institute
800.882.0278 | www.creationstudies.org

According to *Time*, it was a "decade of broken dreams" or a "lost decade." Whether you agree with that assessment or not, we Americans have certainly experienced some unbelievable challenges over the past 10 years that took most of us by complete surprise.

At the beginning of the decade, our eyes were open to a new kind of war with no rules, no declarations, no uniforms and no safety zones, creating fear and a paranoid Western world. On 9/11, for the first time in modern history, we were attacked on our own soil, bringing instant death to nearly 3,000 innocent civilians. Nineteen Islamic terrorists hijacked four American commercial jets and brought down structures that symbolized American wealth and power, violating our security systems, and shocking our nation. Just one month before the attack, I stood on the top floor of one of the Twin Towers with my daughter and wife, taking pictures and enjoying the scenery. Who could have known that we had enemies who hated us so much that they would devise and carry out such a demonic plan? This event affected all of our lives and turned the world upside down.

The past decade was also marked by gross mismanagement of funds and greed that threw our whole economy into a tailspin. Misguided government programs and schemes devised by unscrupulous financiers and mortgage brokers produced an economic "bubble" that suddenly exploded, taking no hostages and leading to a series of rapid-fire reactions that again took everyone by surprise. The Stock Market's bottom fell out and, compared to 2000, lost 26% of its value, "making it the worst decade for stocks," according to *Time*. Corporate America quickly followed, filing a record number of bankruptcies, including giant auto-makers, GM, and Chrysler. Jobs were lost in unprecedented numbers, banks of seemingly great wealth and stature closed, personal and small business bankruptcy and foreclosure rates spread like a wild fire, and the dollar's value decreased. All of sudden we found ourselves in a freefall, wondering when we were finally going to hit bottom. Some believe our economy is now improving, but others are skeptical. Whatever the case, many Americans are asking themselves, "How did it get this way?"

Attacks on the institution of marriage also increased over the last 10 years. In an article entitled, "Marriage on the Ropes," James Dobson of Focus on the Family wrote of the shaky ground the decade began with, writing:

The most prominent among them, sociologists David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead at Rutgers University conducted a longitudinal study of the family between 1960 and 1999, and concluded that the institution of marriage appeared to be dying. There is accumulating evidence now that they were right. A handful of power-obsessed judges are determined to impose the homosexual agenda on the nation and thereby change forever the legal definition of marriage.



At the same time, the gay agenda made significant progress in America, with homosexuality depicted as “normal” in TV sitcoms, movies, educational institutions, and promoted as an accepted lifestyle—even in some churches. Five states legalized “same-sex marriage,” a number that could grow as pro-gay propaganda continues to saturate our culture, despite the fact that as a constitutional republic founded on biblical principles, the United States has always defined marriage as between a man and a woman.

A surge of other immoral forces further eroded the walls of the sacred institution of marriage. As the Pew Research Center reported in a July 1, 2007, study entitled, “As Marriage and Parenthood Drift Apart, Public Is Concerned about Social Impact,” many young adults have lost the perspective that traditional marriage is the most important social institution for the well-being of a society. The study revealed a wide generation gap in behaviors and values, stating:

Younger adults attach far less moral stigma than do their elders to out-of-wedlock births and cohabitation without marriage. They engage in these behaviors at rates unprecedented in U.S. history. Nearly four-in-ten (36.8%) births in this country are to an unmarried woman. Nearly half (47%) of adults in their 30s and 40s have spent a portion of their lives in a cohabiting relationship.

It also showed that the link between parenthood and marriage suffered significant weakening: “In perhaps the single most striking finding from the survey, just 41% of Americans now say that children are ‘very important’ to a successful marriage, down sharply from the 65% who said this in a 1990 survey.” The younger generation was said to be more self-indulgent, throwing away the moral values of their elders about “sex, marriage, and parenthood.” The study concluded by stating, “In the United States today, marriage exerts less influence over how adults organize their lives and how children are born and raised than at any time in the nation’s history.”

The New Atheism

A significant increase in agnosticism and atheism also marked the last decade. In fact, there is an aggressive effort in Western culture to discourage belief in God and to paint it as dangerous. In Europe, once the custodian of the Gospel and home to many impressive churches and Christian symbols, faith in God has become almost irrelevant. In France only 5% attend church and only 10% think religion has any importance. A Financial Times/Harris Poll of five countries taken in December 20, 2006, asking about belief in any form of God or Supreme Being produced these results: France 27%, England 35%, Germany 41%, Spain 48%, Italy 62%, and the US 73%. In response, the *British Economist* stated, “To Europeans, religion is the strangest and most disturbing feature about [America].”

Clearly, the vast majority of Americans believe in God—over 40% think that man was created in less than 10,000 years! In spite of this, a major disconnect exists between our national views on religion and what is represented in our schools and popular media, who impose an anti-God agenda to secularize our country.

Christianity in Europe has already been largely replaced by godless secularism. According to Baylor sociologist Rodney Stark, it has actually become “Christophobic,” stating that one reason for this is unbelief *within* Europe’s churches. Stark refers to a study done in Britain entitled, “Fragmented Faith,” that revealed that even priests and religious leaders in the Anglican Church have problems accepting the major doctrines of the Faith. Reportedly, “80% do not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and 60% do not believe in the virgin birth.” Stark maintains that the Church of England is disappearing because its leaders are apathetic about such basic doctrines and do not really care if their parishioners even attend church.

The absence of a vibrant Church in Europe has also led to the rise of Islam, with many of its vacant churches now used for Islamic worship. Another factor for the declining influence of Christianity in Europe—and throughout the world—is atheistic evolution. The last decade witnessed the emergence of a new vanguard of bold, aggressive “evangelists” dedicated to converting the world to atheism. Dubbed the “New Atheism,” it has been largely embraced in Europe and is knocking on America’s door, particularly through our universities and colleges. Its proponents include Christopher Hitchens, a brilliant English journalist who has joined forces with infamous evolutionist Richard Dawkins, author of *The God Delusion*, and others. These “Brights,” as they call themselves, state there is no such thing as God and that to make such a claim is pure ignorance. Hitchens’ book, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, published one year after *The God Delusion* in 2007, like Dawkins’ volume, was a best seller. His arguments were basically the same as Dawkins’ with a more journalistic and philosophical approach. These New Atheists are extremely zealous about spreading their foolhardy “gospel,” particularly among young minds, with the goal of stamping out religious faith and secularizing America—just like in Europe.

Of course, in order to eliminate a Creator, secular evolutionists have to provide an alternate explanation for the origin of everything. To justify how the universe and life came to be solely through naturalistic processes, they make preposterous and terribly flawed claims that cannot be proven, disregard good science, and stretch reason to irrationality. Knowing that the odds of life evolving out of dead matter defies all probability, they devise imaginative schemes like “multi-verses” (multiple universes) to give themselves infinite time or, as Richard Dawkins stated in the film, *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*, they postulate that a race of superior space aliens may have “seeded” life on earth. As it says in Romans 1:22, “*Professing to be wise, they became fools.*”

The God Equation

In its analysis of the last decade titled, “What Went Wrong,” *Time* concluded, “In large part, we have ourselves to blame,” using terms like neglect, greed, self-interest and deferral of responsibility to explain weaknesses in the America character. All of that may be true. **But by deliberately leaving God out of the equation, they completely missed it!** Our nation’s Framers plainly understood the importance of the Creator and His Word as binding forces upon which to build this nation.

Our Declaration of Independence makes it very clear, stating: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” When we disobey (or ignore) our Maker, we pay the consequences through moral chaos and loss of freedoms. In failing to acknowledge God, we sow the seeds of our own destruction. As the Apostle Paul warns in 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.*” Who can doubt that the truth about God, creation, sin, and redemption are not being suppressed in America today?

As believers, we understand that God made a perfect creation for man to enjoy forever, but that Adam defied the Lawgiver, bringing death and darkness to the whole creation. Put simply, the equation for sin looks like this:

NO GOD + MAN = DEATH + DARKNESS

We also know that the Creator of all life, both physical and spiritual, is Jesus Christ, as John 1:3 says, “*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*” John 1:4 goes on to say of Jesus, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”