

Pursuing Happiness At Any Cost

What is a Christian Atheist?

A person who believes in God but lives as if He doesn't exist.

"Sin is fun – at least for a while. But it never fails to come back to haunt you, usually when you least expect it. Like a sneeze, sin feels good at first, but it leaves a huge mess." - Craig Groeschel, *"The Christian Atheist"*

God doesn't want us to be happy...

1. ...when it causes us to do something wrong.

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." - Proverbs 14:12 (NIV 1984)

2. ...when our happiness is based on the things in this world.

"I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor. ¹¹ Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun."
- Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 (NIV 1984)

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ..."
- Philippians 3:20 (NIV 1984)

"That's why we should lower our expectations of this place. Earth is not heaven. It was never meant to be. That's why no amount of money, new house, new living-room furniture, new kitchen appliances, new clothes, new hair, new baby, new vacation, new job, new income, new husband, or new anything will ever satisfy us, because we were not made for the things of this world."
- Craig Groeschel, *"The Christian Atheist"*

3. ...because God wants us to be blessed.

CULTURE TEACHES...

better possessions +
peaceful circumstances +
thrilling experiences +
the right relationships +
the perfect appearance
= happiness

JESUS TEACHES...

Blessed are the poor in spirit
Blessed are those who mourn
Blessed are the meek
Blessed are those who hunger
and thirst for righteousness
Blessed are the merciful
Blessed are the pure in heart
Blessed are the peacemakers
Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness

Small Group Questions

1. In what areas of your life would you define yourself as a Christian Atheist? (see front for definition)
2. Do you agree that you believe in God but pursue happiness at any cost? Explain how.
3. Read through Matthew 5:3-11. Which list do you find yourself on... what Jesus teaches or what Culture teaches?
4. What are some steps you can take to live less like a Christian Atheist in this area of pursuing happiness at any cost?
5. What is the difference between being happy or being blessed? Which one would you rather be and why?