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# Atheism

It's the world's fastest growing religion, and it's at the center of most conflicts around the world. What do we really know about it's teachings, or those who practice it?

## History

- Christians were charged with atheism in ancient Rome
- Justin Martyr argued that it was the pantheists who were actually Atheists
- The Enlightenment in the 1600s started the ball rolling
  - People started asking difficult questions
  - Questions weren't very forthcoming from the Catholic Church
- Friedrich Nietzsche gave much intellectual heft to what is now known as modern Atheism
  - God is dead!
  - Carl Marx used Nietzsche's work as a philosophical foundation for his economic system

## Beliefs

- Physicalism
  - The only things that really exist are those things that can be physically measured, counted, and quantified.
  - "I'll only believe it when I see it with my own eyes."
- Naturalism
  - Every effect has a natural and explainable cause
  - Nothing exists outside of our physical universe
- Humanism

- Humans are the center of the universe
- Specieism, prejudice against species
- “For the good of all peoples”
- Post Modernism
  - There may or may not be an objective truth out there, but we can’t know it.
  - My opinion is just as valid as your opinion since we can’t objectively know truth.
- Existentialism
  - The meaning of life is derived from outside of our bodies
  - What you do defines who you are and what you’re worth
  - Luke 12:19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '
- Nihilism
  - Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.
  - 1 Corinthians 15:32 What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."
  - If there is nothing after death, why bother with anything?

## **Tactics**

- Infinite regression
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics
  - Actual infinite vs. possible infinite
- Good and evil
  - The “curious notion of right and wrong” is evidence of a lawgiver
  - Evil far from disproves the existence of a loving God
- Meaning and purpose
- Objections are important
  - Don’t let contradictions fluster you

- Embrace objections as cries from the heart
- Two types of objections
  - Heartfelt search for truth
  - Smokescreens designed to obscure the real issue