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ISN'T ATHEISM DEPRESSING?

A Question of Moral Atheism

from blog.iamanatheist.com



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Atheists understand that life ends, but this does not make atheists fatalists. Rather, it gives life that much more importance. Life is a thing to be treasured and used wisely.

Knowing that there is no protecting divinity or guardian angel watching over us does not make the atheist feel insecure or hopeless. Instead, it emphasizes how well we must care for what we have, carefully consider our actions, and master our own fate, so far as that is possible.

A lack of guaranteed justice impels atheists to create a just world instead of relaxing in the knowledge that punishment is supernaturally meted out to wrongdoers for eternity after they are gone.

That humanity was not created for some grand metaphysical purpose does not make life pointless, but rather shows us that we need to create meaning in our own lives.

Are atheists sometimes saddened by the thought that there are no guarantees and that life will one day come to an end? Yes. But atheists would rather face

SOME THEISTS FEEL that atheism is a depressing philosophy. Some even go so far as to ask questions like, "How can you believe in something that is so hopeless?"

There are two mistaken beliefs at work here. The first is the belief that whether a philosophy is depressing or uplifting is somehow an indicator of whether it is worth believing. This only makes sense if we are choosing a philosophy based on how it makes us feel instead of based on whether it is true or not.

Atheism might have components — like lack of an afterlife — that some people find depressing, but that does nothing to prove that atheism isn't true. At best, it proves that reality is depressing.

But is it depressing?

The second mistaken belief is that atheism is a negative world view. It is true that atheism does not incorporate a chance at eternal bliss, a divine power watching over us, a guarantee of ultimate justice, or a divine plan for humanity, but the lack of these things does not imply that life is depressing, pointless, or hopeless.

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QUESTIONS OF MORAL ATHEISM: INSTRUCTIONS

We appreciate your interest in helping us spread information about moral atheism! To make copies of this pamphlet for your own use or to share with friends, follow these simple steps:

1. Print pages one and two of this document, one on each side of the same piece of paper (if you don't have access to a duplex printer, print page one, put the page back in the paper tray upside down, and print page two — depending on the type of printer, you may have to experiment a bit).
2. Cut the printout in two, using the thin rules across the middle of the page as a guide.
3. Fold the two pieces of paper in half, making a pair of small pamphlets.
4. Keep one of the pamphlets to read, and give the other away to an interested friend or stranger.

That's it! If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, we invite you to share them by leaving a comment on blog.iamanatheist.org. Thanks!
