

**STRAW MEN**  
**An Exposition of Some of the Misleading**  
**Tactics of Atheist, Their Use of the**  
**Straw Man, and Some Methods by**  
**Which They May Be Countered**

**By**  
**Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. (Ret.)**



opportunities God presents to us.

Do something you enjoy which also is holy or at least which is not bad. It may be almost anything: Do you enjoy reading biographies? Read one and offer the enjoyment to God as a prayer. You may make the prayer intention shift throughout reading of the book to match the moral problems exposed in the book, or leave the intention open for God to apply, or for anything holy.

There is important aspect of the divine wonderfulness of which we should be aware. Often we do not seem to *“feel”* it. Often it seems to be so fleeting an experience that we wonder if it were merely wishful thinking. However, it most likely is that the spiritual aspect of our being is aware of the divine wonderfulness but experiences difficulty imparting the experience to the material aspect of our being.

It is important to remember that even a brief smile given in Christ’s love to a total stranger whose eyes meet yours in the grocery store and whom you probably will never see again, may easily be a form of giving alms, by which you participate in the supreme divinity.

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#### STRAW MEN

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Misleading Tactics of Atheist,  
Their Use of the Straw Man,  
and Some Methods by Which  
They May Be Countered

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Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. (Ret.)

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Will the cares of this world then go away? No . . . even Saint Paul, who constantly sought and often experienced divine wonderfulness, was also shipwrecked, hungry, ill clothed, and persecuted. But the divine wonderfulness mitigated his experience of the cares of this world and their negative effects upon him.

When we engage in thoughts and behavior which meet with God's approval, and so do in areas which are in holy opposition to the cares and evils which impose on our material life, we invoke the divine wonderfulness into our personal experience. When this is done in the form of prayer, fasting, or alms giving, for another person, if that person is open to the benefits of the prayer, fasting, or alms giving, the divine wonderfulness effects them in a positive manner.

The cares and evils we experience may not disappear or go away, but the positive effect of our holy behavior will temper their negative effect on us.

We may also realize we have missed or not exercised opportunities presented to us by God to do good. As we contemplate these missed opportunities we may easily establish both regret for not having been more holy at that time, and establish a resolve to be more holy should we be blessed with the presentation of similar opportunities in the future. This simple positive shift in openness will result in an instant divinely sourced comfort in us every time we act on those

**PARTICIPATE IN THE SUPREME  
DIVINITY THROUGH EVERY DAY  
ACTIVITIES**

**[8]**

In one of the prayers which change from Sunday to Sunday, we pray and state, "*O God, Who, through the august communication of this sacrifice, dost make us partakers of the one supreme divinity . . .*," and then the prayer asks God's assistance so that we follow His truth.

The wonderful reality expressed in this prayer is that we are made partakers of the one supreme divinity in the reception of Holy Communion.

The devil and evil people attempt - often successfully - to smother our experience of and participation in this wonderfulness by burying us with the cares of this world.

It is possible for us to sometimes diminish the effects of these negative and often evil influences, and occasionally overcome them. This is accomplished by participating in the divine wonderfulness as often as possible. Especially by participating in the divine wonderfulness in a manner directed against those same negative and often evil influences, against the cares of this world.

**THE MODERN DAY, STUDIED,  
SYSTEMATIC, ATTACK AGAINST  
THE TRUTH**

**[1]**

There has been a continuous and systematic attack against religion, especially against Christianity - true Christianity, and to a lesser degree against the numerous heretical forms of religion which name themselves as being Christian, since the end of the Sixteenth Century (the late 1500s). Designated the Age of Enlightenment, and also the Age of Reason, it is considered as having ended around the time of the French Revolution (1789) and the Napoleonic era (1799-1815).

To understand the attraction of the Age of Enlightenment, one must understand that prior to the development of what today is termed the Scientific Method, physical world observations often were interpreted or understood in a somewhat loose conformity with various religious beliefs, philosophical extrapolations, metaphysics, trial and error, occasionally blind faith, and various other standards each possessing varying levels or degrees of reliability, accuracy, and logic.

The Age of Enlightenment / Reason was conceived in conjunction with the beginning of and

development of the modern scientific methods of exploring and understanding the physical world. Generally, scientific methods observe an aspect of the physical world and the interactions therein, and seek relationships, causes, effects, and other information which can be verified by testing the hypotheses developed through those observations. This is usually combined with an attempt to tie all aspects of observable physical phenomena together, to develop a unifying theory. Logic is one of its major tools.

The Industrial Revolution took place during this time, with both eras being somewhat interdependent and mutually supportive.

While historians may consider the Age of Enlightenment / Reason, to have ended in the early 1800s, it could easily be considered as having continued to the present day. But the current period in history uses terms such as age of science, scientific process, electronics era, computer age, et cetera, to describe itself.

Opposition to religion was not an intrinsic aspect of the Age of Enlightenment, until opposition to the Roman Catholic Church was made an aspect of the French Revolution. From this developed, in the West, a collateral opposition to the Orthodox Church. However, the early Twentieth Century scientific geniuses generally were not antireligious. Albert Einstein, for example, expressed a belief in some form of God which he

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.

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Perpetual Succor) is a good Icon for this. Place a crucifix on the wall next to your bedroom door and occasionally kiss the feet when you leave the bedroom.

If you are poor and can not afford to purchase these, hopefully you will be able to obtain small Icon cards, or holy pictures, free from a nearby Orthodox or Roman Catholic Church. Just ask the Priest and tell him you have no money with which to purchase such items.

Hopefully you will be able to thumbtack or Scotch tape (probably trade mark registered) them to the wall. (It is strongly suggested that if they are to be fastened to a window or mirror, that tape, not a tack, be used).

You *are* able to do at least some of these things. Even if you are infirm, or are homeless, you probably are able to place an Icon card in your pocket.

Since we are unable to anything without God, those of these things, and other things for which we receive inspiration, which we are able to do, when we do them, will be done in, with, and through, God. If you think about it, that is pretty good, isn't it!

And God wishes us so to do and will assist us in the doing. Remember what Jesus said: (*Mat. 28:19-20*) . . . therefore, teach ye all nations:

indicated as being beyond human ability to comprehend. As a result, he did not explore God.

However, those who have followed them often share an overt antagonism towards God, and any concept of God, and of there being God.

Their attacks against there being a God generally do not begin with a denial there is a God, or attacking the concept that there is a God. The formula generally begins with an interesting and logical presentation of some scientific theory or principle. Somewhere within the presentation there usually is obliquely implied, the concept that what ever is being presented is a purely natural process or situation which humans are capable of comprehending and which is not in any manner dependant on there being a Creator or God. But it is an obliquely implied concept, an indirect and implied attack on the concept that there is a God.

The attackers rely on their becoming accepted as experts in their various field, and on those whom they teach, whether directly as students, or as colleagues, or who hear of their concepts third or fourth hand, accepting the core of their scientific pronouncements, thereby gaining credibility for their anti God sentiments and insinuations.

They also use the "straw man" type or style of presentation to simulate a discussion which they totally control, as a means of presenting a scientific concept or theory which appears to be

and may actually be plausible, or even likely.

Note, it is the “straw man” style which is used, and therefore may actually be factual or accurate. The “straw man” style may incorporate, an intentional misrepresentation of a position that is presented because it is easier to refute or defeat than is the actual position. It also may support a position through intentional misrepresentation or incomplete disclosure of information. It also may be a form of argument, often an informal fallacy, based on giving the impression of refuting an opponent's argument, while actually refuting an argument that was not presented by that opponent.

Once the “straw man” process has been accepted by the target audience, that audience is primed to accept presentations which are designed to, and may successfully, weaken that audience’s belief in God.

This form of presentation (which some term a form of argument) has been used by Carl Sagan, Stephen Hawking, Neil deGrasse Tyson, who is the Sagan replacement, and a myriad of others.

A studied examination of the bulk and body of their pronouncements reveals, that one of the focuses of their presentations is an attack on the spiritual teachings of Jesus Christ, usually without even mentioning His name.

Other elements of their anti-God pronouncements

Christmas cards, not ones which state Season’s Greetings. The season is winter, what kind of greeting is that when many people incur high utility bills just attempting to stay warm, or cool, depending on the hemisphere?

Daily, perhaps evening, prayer, especially prayer in which the entire family or household participates, is a powerful spiritual activity. Perhaps praying the Rule of the Mother of God, or in the West, the Rosary - which many Orthodox embrace as well as Roman Catholics. If someone objects, inquire of them as to what or which TV show is more important than praying? And also ask why it is more important.

The first of the Sorrowful Mysteries, The Agony in the Garden, reminds us that Jesus, Who is God, thought prayer to be very important, and engaged in it . . . So who is it that thinks they are smarter than God? No one, not even the Devil though the Devil acts as though he is smarter, and tries to make you feel foolish for believing in and following God’s example and recommendations.

Make greeting God the first and the last activities of your day. You are able to do this in a very simple manner. Place an Icon of Mary and the child Jesus on the wall near your bed and kiss the images upon arising, and immediately before retiring. It is difficult to not at least think the thought, “I love you”, when so doing. The Hodegetria Icon (Our Lady of Perpetual Help,

Sometimes a person is so overwhelmed by the problems of immorality, the prevalence of immorality, and how prevalent is the lack of Faith, that they are unable to perceive what they have the ability to do that which will make a difference. Especially is this true if they are of a personality which is accustomed to actually doing something which has at least the potential of assisting in resolution of the problem in a manner which they are able to perceive. Gluing something back into place is a good example of this mindset.

Therefore, here are some suggestions.

Place a statue of The Blessed Virgin Mary on your front lawn; an Icon of Our Lady of Prompt Succor (The Theotokos of the Passion) in your window; an inexpensive, small Gaelic Cross on your lawn instead of a Garden Gnome. Each will proclaim Faith in Jesus, in the Blessed Trinity.

If people say you are crazy, tell them you are seeking to become a Fool for Christ - and if the opportunity presents itself, explain to them what that means. And even if the opportunity does not present itself, you have made a statement of Faith to them, which may be the best you are able to do with and for them.

Send people "God Bless you on your birthday" emails on their birthdays, and religious birthday cards if you are able to find any. Send religious

are the use of ridicule, and of seemingly truthful, universal one liner sayings - e.g.: no obedient woman ever made history, or well-behaved women seldom make history. There is even a bumper sticker which states: Obedient Women Are Never Remembered in History.

It is very important for people to realize this attack against belief in God, and especially against belief in Jesus Christ, God, has been going on at least since the early 1800s. That it has grown into an ever increasing major movement since the early 1900s, and has rapidly increased in adherents since the last quarter of the Twentieth Century.

Its proponents usually are not strident, and most often present themselves and their positions in a calm, reasonable, and rational manner. But they twist and contort their presentations in a manner designed to make anyone who disagrees with them to appear to be an idiot. If they are able to elicit even the slightest indication of anger in their opponents, they calmly attack such persons as being irrational.

The intention here is to make people aware of this movement, its severity, its rapid gaining of adherents, its great evil, the monstrous harm and destruction it has and is causing, and the like.

It would be unkind to not also, at the very least, provide the basis for a defense to such attacks, a course of action to counter this evil movement.

That basis, the heart, of both the counter to this evil movement, and to the reestablishment of belief in and respect for God, is the truth; to promulgate and to proclaim, truth.

Consider these two simple truths.

First: regarding the statement that no obedient woman ever made history. The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary made history. She is remembered two thousand years after she made her statement of obedience, and lived a life of obedience. Her statement of obedience is: be it done unto me according to thy word.

Thus the truth has trashed the lie, that no obedient woman ever made history.

Second: regarding the real focus of these attacks, Jesus Christ who is God incarnate.

Belief in Jesus Christ, and the rapid and the great geographic extent of the spread of Faith in Jesus Christ, God, would have been impossible were it not true. For it required Divine intervention for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to spread so rapidly and to such remote parts of the world, all in a peaceful movement and manner. Other seemingly spiritual movements, such as Islam, were spread through might of arms, intimidation, use of force, deceit, and their stable mates.

which is evil realizes that love has the ability to destroy evil; therefore evil fears love.

Even in the misery of a sinner's sin, every living sinner is able to rise above the sin, and pray, if the sinner loves.

When there is the desire to bring people to Jesus, is there another way or means of "saying" this, of expressing this? Yes, for it is the desire that people will have Faith. It is the desire there will be an increase in Faith: that individuals will experience an increase and strengthening of their Faith; that Faith will spread geographically and throughout social strata and structure.

How is an individual able to assist in making this happen? The prime answer is, by prayer.

What often is forgotten, or not realized, is that prayer is not limited to words, or thoughts. Holy activities may also be prayers, prayer by action. And many, seemingly normal activities, may be acts of love. A force which stuns evil is created when love is united with good acts or deeds, thoughts, words, thanksgiving, formal and informal prayer, gratitude, works of the intellect, emotions.

At least some of these are at least occasionally within the abilities of each of us. So each of us *can* do something, at least occasionally, to bring people to God.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

[7]

We are constantly influenced to think and even believe there is nothing we are able to do to bring people to Jesus, to change the evil inclinations and activities of people, the organized pursuit to become evil, and of the institutionalization of evil laws, practices, and policies.

One need not guess whence these influences to believe there is nothing we can do originate. They assuredly originate from the Devil and his associates.

Yet just one simple prayer from one ordinary person throws all of evil into a state of fear. For the prayer of a just person is very powerful, and the prayer of a miserable sinner, because it is from a miserable sinner, is not only very powerful, but also very dangerous to evil and its proponents. For prayer from a miserable sinner is proof that the miserable sinner desires God.

There is nothing more dangerous to evil and the forces of evil than a sinner who desires to renounce evil, and to love God. For those who are evil know that for a person to desire God, and that which is of God, that person must first love, for one who does not love can not know God. That

The early, rapid, and extensive spread of Christianity was accomplished in a peaceful manner by its proponents. It maintained its significance also in a peaceful manner.

But where force was attempted to be used to introduce or maintain Christianity, it failed, for force used in such a manner is contrary to the principles Christ established.

Other seemingly spiritual movements which were successfully spread by force, result in the enslavement of their adherents. Even their leaders are enslaved, by the restrictions placed upon them by the very systems which they lead.

But true Christianity frees its adherents. It enables them to be happy, through partaking in God Who is the source of all happiness.

And that is the truth.

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## STRAW MEN Versus TRUTH

### [2]

The Straw Man formula of misdirecting a discussion or making a statement of one's own position or that of an opposing position, which is inaccurate, often appears to be one which is difficult to refute.

One person who probably should be classified as a Straw Man is Albert Einstein. But his conflicting and somewhat misleading statements regarding his belief or lack of belief in God appear to have been made less out of malevolence, and more out of a desire to not offend, or a desire to be polite.

Einstein's statements regarding God include: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." And, "In view of such harmony in the cosmos which I, with my limited human mind, am able to recognize, there are yet people who say there is no God. But what really makes me angry is that they quote me for support of such views." And, "I want to know how God created this world. I am not interested in this or that phenomenon, in the spectrum of this or that element. I want to know his thoughts. The rest are details."

Such statements appear to support a belief in God,

This He promised in stating, "the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (*John 14:26*) The prime source of what Jesus has said to us is the Gospel, the four Gospels declared to be true by the Church which Jesus founded, The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church - of which the Orthodox, Roman, Coptic, Armenian, and a very few other Jurisdictions are simply members, but also the only members.

Therefore, the first step, the first thing, we must do, if we are to teach the Gospel to all nations, and Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is to love Jesus. The proof of our loving Jesus is that we keep His word. When we love Jesus we do keep His word - His word, not what we want His word to be. When we keep His word, the Father loves us and comes to us and the Father and Jesus make their abode with us. And the Holy Ghost empowers, enables, and guides us. In accordance with what the Holy Ghost determines He will be done, but always in accordance with what Jesus has instructed us, which instructions are what the Father willed Jesus to teach us.

It is as simple and as easy as it is presented. It is the doing of it where we experience struggle.

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conjunction with their works, one should be amazed, astounded, and thankful that God chose one (you) to participate in what He has done.

The Holy Ghost is the one who does the operations of which we are the visible performers. Flipped around and slightly off angle, if what we do and say results in something good, something holy, then what we did was not just in harmony with God, but was utilized by God to result in the good, the holy. Hopefully, the words or deeds were inspired by God, and our doing them as well.

We really are not able to teach the Gospel if Jesus has not just or simply been born in us, but has also been nurtured and grown in us as well. It is in Baptism that we become members of the Church Jesus founded, and participants in the Body of Christ, and have the ability to receive the Gifts of the Holy Ghost (especially if we have been Chrismated, or Confirmed). But we each are the one who for ourselves seek that Christ be nurtured in us. Which happens by and through the Holy Ghost.

Remember one of the facts of which Jesus informed us, "If any one love me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him and we will come to him and will make our abode with him." (*John 14:23*) Jesus further informed us, that the means by-which we are enabled to act on that love, to live that love which we have for Him, is the Holy Ghost; by and through the Holy Ghost.

or some form of God. But he clearly stated he was more or less a follower of Spinoza's Pantheism - its primary thesis being that God and the universe are one and the same.

Perhaps his most clear statement regarding his beliefs is, "Scientific research can reduce superstition by encouraging people to think and view things in terms of cause and effect. Certain it is that a conviction, akin to religious feeling, of the rationality and intelligibility of the world lies behind all scientific work of a higher order. ... This firm belief, a belief bound up with a deep feeling, in a superior mind that reveals itself in the world of experience, represents my conception of God. In common parlance this may be described as 'pantheistic'"

He made it clear that he believed that science and religion are not at odds, because they deal with different things. He believed science "... can only ascertain what is, but not what should be . . .," while religion "... deals only with evaluations of human thought and action." He believed science and religion depend on each other. That the scientific method helps religion reach its goals, while "... science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration toward truth and understanding . . .," which Einstein believed has its roots in religion.

Einstein often clearly stated he did not believe in God as a person, in the existence of an

anthropomorphic God, such as the God of Abrahamic religions, often describing this view as “naïve” and “childlike”. Anthropomorphic means being described or thought of as having a human form or human attributes or qualities. Einstein apparently failed to consider, that it might not be that God has humanlike attributes or qualities, but, rather, that man has some Divine or Godly attributes or qualities with which God has bestowed him.

We are able to treat with Albert Einstein in a gentle manner because Einstein treated gently with those who believe in God as expressed in Christianity, in the True Church.

Carl Sagan is a different story. Sagan is intentionally a Straw Man. His statement, that he often has said that what he referred to as the “God hypothesis” is something he would be fully willing to accept if there were compelling evidence, but that there is nothing approaching compelling evidence, is a Straw Man statement.

He refused to acknowledge that creation itself, the observable world and universe, is compelling evidence of there being God. And his manner of presenting the question as to whether or not there is a God was an intentional misrepresentation of both the question itself, and of the position that there is a God.

Of great importance is to realize that, the God he

should be aware.

One is the potential for, the propensity to, unreasonable presumptiveness.

It flows from the thought that since Saint Peter, who was not a trained public speaker but rather a fisherman, stood up without any preparation and convinced three thousand to accept Christ, and be Baptized, so should we be able. But Saint Peter was not without preparation. He had spent at least three years with Jesus, working with Jesus, being taught by Jesus by the words and deeds of Jesus, and on occasion working miracles himself, as when the disciples were sent out and healed the sick and cast our demons.

One must prepare to properly teach the Gospel. Even simply living the Gospel requires one know the Gospel. But one is able to both live the Gospel and learn the Gospel at the same time. Which is a good beginning, a good place to begin, a good teaching of the Gospel.

There also is the desire, often a subconscious desire, for self aggrandizement. The vapor of the thought of: look at me, look at what I am doing, pay attention to what I say and do because I’ve got the word. For many this is a stumbling block over which they trip and from which they find it difficult to regain their footing in Christ. Therefore, one should never think they are magnificent, but, should the wondrous happen in

**GO AND TEACH THE GOSPEL,  
BEING SURE YOU FIRST KNOW IT  
AND ATTEMPT TO LIVE IT**

**[6]**

The Disciples and Apostles were not the only ones to whom Jesus, at the Ascension, gave the command to teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He also gave that command to everyone from that day, through to today, and continuing at least to His Second Coming. Probably ending with His Second Coming, but leave it open just in case Jesus reveals other plans at that time. He probably will not, but .

..

We do not even have to do what the Disciples and Apostles had to do - we do not have to wait for the coming of the Holy Ghost. He came at the first Christian Pentecost thousands of years ago. And He has remained with us, with not just Christians, but also with all of humankind, ever since. But it is true Christians who have the greatest access to Him, and who experience facilitated receipt of His assistance.

There are, however, several dangers, of which each person who engages in teaching the Gospel

attacked by denying there is compelling evidence of His existence, is the True God, as indicated by his, 1996, statement to Pope: "I am not an atheist. An atheist is someone who has compelling evidence that there is no Judeo-Christian-Islamic God. I am not that wise, but neither do I consider there to be anything approaching adequate evidence for such a god. Why are you in such a hurry to make up your mind? Why not simply wait until there is compelling evidence?"

His questions, "Why are you in such a hurry to make up your mind? Why not simply wait until there is compelling evidence?" seem to be the most rational of positions to those who do not consider the consequences. The gross evil of what he proposes by those questions is, that those who follow his advice or suggestions, will not prepare themselves to be in harmony with God, and thereby increase the potential for their existing for all eternity without God.

Furthermore, what additional evidence can there possibly be short of the Second Coming of Christ? The existence of the universe, and the various systems under which it functions, are compelling evidence of the existence of God, Who is eternal, creator, and omnipotent. Sagan poses his question as though there were some doubt as to the answer, but there is no doubt; the proof is here and has always been here.

But his questions *seem* reasonable, therefore

people pay attention to him. But a thoughtful person, a truly thoughtful person, must respond stating Sagan proposition is not logical but rather is irrational.

To make obvious the illogic of Sagan's logic system is simple. Sagan famously postulated that with the countless billions of stars there must be some planets other than Earth which are capable of sustaining life, and that there therefore must be some other planets on which there is life. That is analogous to there being a bakery named Lee's Chocolate Chip Cookies. The bakery has made over fifteen billion chocolate chip cookies. The baker decides to make one cookie with a red maraschino cherry on top. Sagan sees that cookie, and decides, considering all of the billions of chocolate chip cookies, there must be other chocolate chip cookies that have a red maraschino cherry on top. (Note, he leaves out, cookies made by Lee's Chocolate Chip Cookies.) The reality is there may be other such cookies, and there might not be other such cookies. The only means of ascertaining whether or not there are other such cookies is to look at each cookie. One could ask the baker, but Sagan does not believe there is a baker. And if someone else, who does believe there is a baker, sought to ask the baker, it is uncertain as to whether or not the baker would answer the question. Perhaps the baker desires those who are curious to seek the answer themselves, and thereby appreciate the work he has done. Sagan probably would demand there be

And it is the task of the properly Baptized to attempt to accomplish this. For the properly Baptized are just as much instructed by Our Lord's final words to His disciples, as were the disciples themselves. We too have been instructed by Jesus, to go and to teach the Gospel to all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Not to teach Saint Paul, but to teach Jesus and what Jesus taught. Not to baptize in the name of the Lord, but in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

As the two Angels who appeared to the Disciples and Apostles as Jesus Ascended into Heaven implied, do not wait around idle. Get started implementing Our Lord's instructions. Since the Holy Ghost came at Pentecost, all the assistance anyone needs is available.

All that is needed by humans is that humans do what Jesus instructed, and ignore any deviations whether the deviations be their own, or are induced by very accurate but erroneously understood or applied instructions from someone who is not God.

If this is done, the world will change for the better. If it is not done, then the world will not change for the better.

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of the Body of Christ, and of the Church Christ founded, through the sole means which Christ established, the Sacrament of Baptism.

The result today is that each person who thinks they have been Baptized, but who was not properly Baptized, does not have access to the Grace provided by the Sacraments; Grace which is sorely and desperately needed by each of them; Grace which everyone who is properly Baptized desperately needs that those not properly Baptized receive.

Those not properly Baptized often study the writings of Saint Paul, but ignore study or sustained study of the Gospels. Perhaps it is because they are thus able to propound their own ideas as being scriptural, without having to be concerned with what Jesus established.

The result is that, for all practical purposes, there are as many “Christian” “churches” as there are people who think they are Baptized but are not.

How likely is that such people are open to being properly Baptized, and to properly studying Christ’s teachings as presented in the Gospels? How likely is that such people will seek to study Christ as taught by His Church: from the Apostles, Evangelists, Early Fathers of the Church, to the present?

Yet this is precisely what must be done.

given consideration of there being other bakers, and whether or not any of them have made such cookies. But he has no proof of their being other bakers, and if he states that there must be other bakers, he simply is recycling the argument that there must be other chocolate chip cookies with a red maraschino cherry on top. No, Mr., or is it Dr., Sagan, it is not necessary that there be other such cookies. For an even more viable probability is that, if there are any bakeries other than Lee’s Chocolate Chip Cookies, that all of the bakeries have the same Baker.

Sagan should simply eat his cookie and drink his milk.

Sagan apparently decided to separate himself from God for all eternity, and to go to Hell for all eternity, and desires as much company as possible as he swims the fiery rivers of Hell for all eternity. . . Apparently, for only God knows of a certainty.

What we are able to know of a certainty, is that public acknowledgment of, or public questioning of, the veracity of there being the Christian God, is a statement of what and how we worship.

Further, how we worship has everything to do with how we live our lives. And, how we live our lives has everything to do with how we worship. If we do not worship, or if we worship that which is not God, then we are merely alive but are not living. Only when we worship the true God, are we both

alive and living.

And, since none of us humans is God, none of us who are alive in this world know what has happened to Einstein or to Sagan, both of whom have died. Which is a good reason to pray for them, at least occasionally. They just might be in a situation where prayer will be of assistance to them. To presume otherwise is to attempt to make one's self to be God, which seems to be what both Einstein and Sagan really were attempting to do.

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interprets what Saint Paul wrote in a manner which suits that particular reader. Whereas, Our Lord's instructions in the Gospels normally are very clear, and are of a manner which discourages wandering from or divergence from Our Lord's intentions.

There even has developed a belief that Baptism should be delayed until a person decides to be Baptized. That infants and children should not be Baptized because they are not aware of what is happening.

All this does is deprive the person of obtaining Grace through the primary means which Jesus established. And how likely is it that a person who has not participated in Grace through the primary means which Jesus established, mainly the Sacraments, how likely is it that after ten, or twenty, or forty years, such a person will chose to be Baptized, and chose to be Baptized in the manner which Jesus established, and intentionally into the Church which He established?

When the Apostles and other disciples of Christ Baptized, if the person being Baptized was the father or the head of a household, or the leader of a community, then everyone in that family, or household, or community, was also Baptized, without regard to age. Therefore, infants, children, and everyone was Baptized. And all were able to receive Grace from the Sacraments. For they obtained access to the Sacraments, and the Grace they bestow, by virtue of their becoming members

Christ,” comes from the concept so often expressed in the letters of the Evangelists, Our Lord’s disciples, and even the Apostles, where the comment would be made that someone or some group had or had not yet been baptized in the Lord, or baptized in the name of the Lord. Such comments were not intended to establish a new formula or way of baptizing. They merely were a shorthand means of stating whether or not a person or group had been Baptized, with that Baptism being understood to have been done with water flowing at least over the forehead while the one doing the Baptizing stated the words which Christ required be used, “I Baptize thee (or you) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

This failure to be guided by the four Gospels, and substituting the not-Gospel writings of the Evangelists for the Gospels, compounds the failure to properly Baptize, the failure to actually Baptize. The letters of Saint Paul, being of such great volume, and covering a multitude of topics, are often substituted for actual study of the Gospels, and for study of what Jesus actually taught by deed and word as stated in the Gospels, which are the most concrete source of His teachings. The damage done by this practice is compounded by a virtually infinite factor because each of Saint Paul’s letters addressed many different situations in particular cities or populations, but modern day readers do not know what those problems and situations were. And each modern day reader

**NOT ONLY DOES FAITH NOT BLIND  
ONE TO TRUTH, IT IS FAITH  
WHICH ENABLES ONE TO  
PERCEIVE TRUTH  
[3]**

When one is unable to be assured the Straw Men originate what is attributed to them, and when the premise of the Straw Men is so flawed as to be obviously stupid . . . Well . . .

Those who use the Straw Man approach to proselytizing their beliefs regarding reality, compound their errors if they do not believe in God, and more than compound their errors when they express their lack of belief in God as an aspect of their beliefs regarding reality. In expressing their non-belief in God, they expose their being in error.

The absence of belief in God - the true God of Christianity, complete with the qualities of Divine Personhood - is the absence of an essential belief. It is the absence of the ability to consider the essential fact. Those who lack this belief, or, who express disbelief in God, or that they do not know if there is or is not a God, are inclined to fill the void caused by their lack of belief. They may attribute that which is traditionally attributed to

God to something else, such as the universe. But in actual practice, they fill the void with themselves.

Their lack of belief is of necessity accompanied by lack of Faith, which compounds their errors, and, further, makes it difficult for them to accept the potential they may be in error - in anything. They have difficulty even contemplating they are ever in error, much less accepting they have made a mistake. This, of course, makes it difficult for them to correct their errors.

#### **A good example of this is Stephen Hawking.**

How is one able to delicately discuss Stephen Hawking? By being truthful, and adhering mainly to the obvious truth, with as little as possible of that which is demeaning.

Hawking, assisted by very competent subordinates, wrote the book, A Brief History of Time. His writing simplified various scientific theories, without degrading the information or the theories, such that people of ordinary education were able to readily comprehend the subject matter.

Hawking appeared to be ambivalent regarding the existence of God, or of any concept of a creator. In actuality, he obviously rejected the concept of the Christian-Judeo God. In A Brief History of Time, he mused on the potential that the Unified Theory is so compelling that it brought about its own existence. For Hawking, God seems to have been a

being Baptized, with the one doing the Baptizing simultaneously stating, "I Baptize thee (or you) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

This Baptism would then bring the person Baptized into the Body of Christ, into Our Lord's Church, opening to each person so Baptized, all the sources of Grace established by Jesus.

Obviously, this is not the establishment of a philosophy, or of a school of philosophy.

During the past few hundred years, there has been established a formula for baptizing using the words, "I baptize you (or thee) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," or something similar. Those who use this formula have substituted their, or some other human's, words, for the words which Jesus expressly stated must be used. Therefore, those baptized with the use of these words are not Baptized. This form of ceremony is incapable of bringing people into the Body of Christ, into Our Lord's Church. The sources which Christ established whereby members of His Church obtain Grace therefore remain closed to such people. And there are a lot of such people.

This may seem to be a minor matter. It is not. It dramatically illustrates the importance of following the instructions so expressly and clearly stated and demonstrated by Jesus. For use of the words, "baptize thee in the name of the Lord Jesus

relationships which make life better.

It is true that there is a divine philosophy, but not a philosophy in the sense as that which is developed by humans. The divine philosophy is beyond human ability to state succinctly or with other than comparatively childish expressions - when compared with the Divine's ability to express. But the divine philosophy, as pertains to humans, is stated in terms which humans have the ability to comprehend, in the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. It is what Christ did and taught, what He established, and what He instructed.

In His last moments on Earth, at and during His Ascension, Jesus instructed His disciples to return to Jerusalem and await the coming of the Holy Ghost (often also named the Holy Spirit). That the Holy Ghost would enable them to carryout His instructions and teachings, and would provide them with power and abilities as the Holy Ghost deemed meet and proper, as and when and for the duration which the Holy Ghost would decide.

The very last instruction which Jesus gave His disciples, was to go and to teach His Gospel (the Gospel) to all nations, and to Baptize everyone, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Jesus was very specific in these instructions, requiring the use of the specific words, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." That is, with water flowing at least over the forehead of the person

metaphor, starting, "If we discover a complete theory, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason – for then we should know the mind of God." He suggested the existence of God was not necessary to explain the origin of the universe, but that the existence of God was also compatible with an open universe.

In musing regarding the potential that the Unified Theory brought itself into existence, he actually was considering the potential that a theoretical law of physics could be self creating and other creating. But the laws of physics are parameters within which things function. It is believing that gravity could create a tree. That the speed of light could create a tree. That protons, or neutrons, or electrons, or quarks, could create a tree. Which is foolish.

Change the phrase from Unified Theory, to Unifying Principle and the correct path has been approached but not yet entered upon. Change it further, to Unifying Principal, and perhaps one step has been taken on the correct path. Perhaps, perhaps not.

After he became well known he began to suffer from a rare early-onset slow-progressing form of motor neurone disease (similar to or a form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis "ALS" or Lou Gehrig's disease). He became wheelchair bound, and eventually unable to speak, and utilized a speech generating device which he controlled

through a hand-held mechanism. The hand-held device was eventually replaced by a cheek muscle controlled switch.

Because of his condition, and his delicate appearance in his wheelchair, his followers and the public did not take kindly to any criticism of Hawking.

But also because of his condition, only those in constant contact with Hawking could know who programmed his computer controlled speech synthesizer . . . Whether or not he actually did the composing himself, or only some of it, or none of it. In effect, *Did Hawking think what his voice synthesizer "said"?*

Hawking is supposed to have stated that if the Higgs boson was found he would have to admit the existence of god. Around this time some began to refer to the Higgs boson as the God particle. (Incidentally, it was discovered and proven to exist.) But given Hawking's concept of god, this is of no significance. For the problem being addressed by Higgs boson is related to the fact that some particles have mass and some do not, which is illogical unless there exists something which would produce the effect of mass, and which was in existence commensurate with the Big Bang of the Big Bang Theory. It was the Higgs boson.

For Hawking, God is an equivalent aspect of the universe, of an open universe which is one which

## HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD FOR THE BETTER

[5]

Anyone who is not aware of the reality that brutality, maiming, murder, and violence in general, have increased to the status of being everyday occurrences, everywhere, in all cultures, societies, and countries, must live in isolation. Perhaps it is the isolation of youth - such as that of children, or the result of some infirmity, or even lack of access to information regarding current events. If it is self imposed, intentional, isolation, then it is not unlike the isolation of those who intentionally ignore, warp, or corrupt the instructions which Jesus gave at His Ascension. Instructions which are the exclusive, the only, means by-which it is possible that brutality, maiming, murder, and violence in general, may no longer be prevalent, everyday occurrences. The only, as it were, cure, for brutality, maiming, murder, and violence in general.

A very prevalent attitude towards Christ, which has been established over several decades, ignores His divinity, and perceives Him simply as a man, a holy man, but just an human. A man with a philosophy which seems to be a collection of practices and standards which if followed in a general manner, will produce a system of

simple prayer, for those like the professor, and those like the Marine who acted rashly in his justified moral indignation.

Realize this is a call to pray for Faith, and for an increase in Faith, in everyone, including yourself.

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continues to expand probably because there is insufficient gravitational force to slow down the expansion, or a closed one - you can figure out what that means yourself. He does not use the term equivalent aspect, it is used here to emphasize the practice of dismissing anything which does not support one's theory, and existence of the Judeo-Christian God does nothing to support Hawking's theories. So what is an equivalent aspect? It is an insignificant, inconsequential, aspect . . . which is Hawking's view of god and any concept of god.

At least, it appears from his early writings that this was Hawking's opinion, his belief, which is in harmony with his statements made after he became unable to communicate normally.

However, one is able to readily discredit Hawking's ambivalence towards God, and belief there is not a God in the Christian-Judeo sense.

He is unable to postulate the origin of that which went bang in the big bang. Nor is he able to describe what that which went bang was like, and he obviously guesses as to what happened when it went bang.

He stated the Higgs boson did not exist, and was disappointed when its existence was proved.

Far from being open minded, and to being open to considering what scientific discoveries may prove or at least mean or indicate, Hawking only

considered scientific discoveries and facts in a light which supported there being no God, and at most, a god which is an aspect of some unifying theory of the universe. Under his belief system, everything which has developed since the big bang, developed by happenstance, by chance, by trial and error, by some form of evolution. Mathematically - and remember, mathematics is the language of science - mathematically, the universe could not have attained the stability it has attained in the mere fifteen billion years of its existence, through this process. The statistics, and the recognized systems of probability, simply do not support the universe being in its current condition unless it is following a Divine design and directed order.

He believed the Unified Theory is so compelling that it brought about its own existence. Which means that at one time it did not exist.

In this, and in many other matters, Hawking ignored one of the prime laws of physics, and science in general: that of cause and effect. Very simply, if something happens, it has an effect. And if there is an effect, it had a cause. Hawking would have the universe just happen. He could not postulate it always was, for he and others traced its beginning to the big bang of fifteen billion years ago, give or take a few years.

Some have narrowed its beginning down to 13.8 billion years ago. No problem. We really are not

is reserved to God. Of greater importance is, a Christian always desires the sinner repent, accept God, and enter into eternal union with God.

It encourages the Christian to desire to usurp a power, and to exercise a power, and an authority, exclusively within God's province; totally and exclusively belonging to God. It encourages the Christian to Judge, instead of to assess.

It sidetracks the Christian's duty to, as best as the Christian is able, influence the miscreant to accept the Christian God as being the reality, even if the means available to the Christian is exclusively by prayer. And it replaces that duty with a sinful satisfaction that the professor has been cold-cocked.

And the sneaky bad guys win.

It makes one consider the possibility that such stories originate from the atheist and other people who act in a nasty manner in such stories. And, perhaps, that they originate in the pool, the flood, of evil influence with which the world has been inundated.

Therefore, as the inclination to snort in satisfaction at the thought of the professor being knock on his posterior enters into one's mind, stop the inclination. Replace it with sorrow that anyone would do as the professor did, believe as the professor believed, and pray - even just a short

hit him full force in the face, and sent him flying from his platform.

The professor struggled up, obviously shaken and yelled, “What’s the matter with you? Why did you do that?”

The Marine replied, “God was busy, so He sent me.”

Setting the parameters within which one makes a demand God operate is a classic form of Straw Man argument. Many people realize the form is not valid, but lack the mental and verbal skills and agility necessary to effectively counter it and those using it. It often is used by those in positions of authority over whom and on whom it is being used, further frustrating its victims.

This may make the simple and direct intervention of, in this instance, the Marine, very appealing to the victims of this basically dishonest form of “argument”; a form which also is an abuse of authority and power by the one using it.

The moral problem is that this form of story encourages moral people to take delight in the professor receiving his comeuppance.

But Christians never desire the professor receive his comeuppance, receiving the punishment he deserves. A Christian never presumes to know what punishment a person deserves, realizing that

concerned here with Big Bang nucleosynthesis, or primordial nucleosynthesis, or the production of nuclei other than H-1 shortly after the big bang. (See, we really do know what we are writing about.)

What we are concerned with is that which a brilliant person has postulated, that which he has proposed, especially that which he has proposed to be truth, and with discerning what of that which he has proposed is viable, what is not viable, that which may be true, and that which simply is false. Hawking discarded and dismissed any serious consideration of there being a God, not only bringing all of his theories into question, but also making his scientific method of questionable value.

Sympathy for a person’s physical condition, and a well planned presentation of facts by that person, are insufficient to serve as proof of his theories, especially when he ignores any factors not in harmony with his personal beliefs. Hawking intertwined in his theories, his personal belief there is no God, providing some support for his theories, but providing absolutely no support for his belief there is no God, for there can be no support for the belief there is no God.

There is only proof that God, in the Judeo-Christian sense, does exist; and no proof that He does not exist.

**Neil deGrasse Tyson, and those of his school, are another matter.**

Tyson's there is no God approach would be considered childish were it not insidious.

Tyson postulated (apparently in an interview with someone named Chelsea, on Netflix, Published on May 14, 2017; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXAokvvnv7Mc>) (and apparently in an interview with CBS Sunday Morning, published April 30, 2017) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0nXG02tpDw>) that those who believe in God agree that amongst other things God is supposed to be all powerful and all good. He then stated he has observed disasters which afflict the planet (e.g.: earthquakes, volcanoes, disease, congenital birth defects, . . .). That life on Earth is made miserable by natural causes. Because of this, his position is that if there is a God, He either is not all powerful, or not all good. That he does not find there is evidence of anyone being all good and all powerful simultaneously. That therefore if there is a God, that God either is not all powerful, or not all good. That he can't be both. He further stated that as we probe the universe, if we come face to face "with the bearded man" he has no problem. He further insisted that there is no evidence of him, of God, of a creator. He also said that is why religions are called systems of faith, because there is no evidence for what religions propound, especially no evidence for the existence of God. That that is why it is called "faith", otherwise it would be

## **ATHEISTIC USE OF HUMOR TO UNDERMINE CHRISTIAN VALUES AND PRACTICES**

**[4]**

**The humorous story, one of which is sometimes entitled "GOD WAS BUSY, SO HE SENT ME" (probably based on an urban legend) and similar "humorous" anecdotes are designed to induce a very not Christian response in Christians. It often uses the "Straw Man" form of "argument", e.g.:**

An atheist professor was teaching a college class and he told the class that he was going to prove that there is no God.

He said, "God, if you are real, then I want you to knock me off this platform. I'll give you 15 minutes!"

Ten minutes went by.

The professor kept taunting God, saying, "Here I am, God. I'm still waiting."

He got down to the last couple of minutes and a Marine just released from active duty, and newly registered in the class, walked up to the professor,

Ascension - Pentecost, Saint Stephen being the first, but Saint John the Forerunner (Baptist) being last and first. Just as did Christ.

The Straw Men are thieves who come into the flock to steal, kill, and destroy. To steal souls from God, to kill souls with the spiritual poison they pour out, to destroy the Faith which gives those souls - sheep - life, eternal life.

Faith, true Faith, not just belief, which even the thieves have though they deny it, Faith places the Faithful in the hand of God, from which the thief can not snatch that Faithful person. Do not climb out of the hand of God and scatter to where the thieves lead. Hold tight to God, to Truth, and demolish the thieves with Truth, with Faith. Always remembering and realizing that Faith, if it truly is Faith, will always be accompanied by Hope, and Love, Divine Love, Charity.

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called “evidence”.

Tyson also stated that to enact legislation based on faith, which will effect others who do not share that faith, is the beginning of the establishment of a theocracy. That we have evidence of the disaster that causes. And that America’s founding fathers founded (the United States of America) specifically to prevent that from happening (to prevent religion having any effect on governance of the country).

Picking the low hanging fruit first, the Bill of Rights in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, states in pertinent part: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;”

This does not preclude religious beliefs being the foundation for law. It is quite proper for the religious prohibition against unwarranted killing to be the basis for laws against murder. Likewise for admonitions against stealing being the basis for laws criminalizing theft. Some will argue that the laws against murder are based in the desire the majority of people have, to not be murdered; and against theft, to not have their property stolen. But nothing precludes both religious beliefs and personal desires from both being part of the foundation.

What the First Amendment does, in part, is to prohibit the government from establishing a

religion, from regulating the establishment of a religion, from how members of a religion exercise their religion, and similar prohibitions. It prohibits the **government** from doing things regarding or which effect religions. **But it does not prohibit any religion from effecting the government. In fact, it prohibits any action which would impinge or adversely effect any religion's ability to effect the government.**

Also, America's founding fathers did not found America because they wished to prevent religion from having an effect on America. They founded America because the British government, England, the country of which they were citizens, were treating them as though they were not citizens. They rebelled against this treatment, and founded a new country, America, designing it in a manner which they believed would best insulate America's citizens from a tyrannous government.

Did Tyson lie about religion, America's founding laws, and founding fathers? Who knows; but he did not tell the truth.

And who is it that does not tell the truth . . . intentionally so? The Devil, who is the Father of All Lies.

When Tyson states that if there is a God, He is not simultaneously all good and all powerful, because so many nasty things which originate in nature happen to people, Tyson is establishing the

It is Tyson and those of like mind who are the ones who are being irrational, who are ignoring the **evidence.**

It must be extremely difficult to believe that God does not exist. Especially since it appears that every creature actually knows that God does exist, that God is real. Those who express disbelief in God therefore are in all probability expressing a lack of belief in that which they know does exist. For no matter how ardent are those who state they do not believe in God, or that they are atheist, or agnostic, their attitude, body language, emotional expressions, and everything except their intentional expressions, reveal their knowledge that God is real.

How terrible, sorrowful, horrible, empty must be those who reject God and His existence, and must be their lives. It breaks the hearts of those who do believe, who are of Faith. The Faith filled are unable to ignore the error of the atheists and agnostics not because they wish to argue, or because they wish to prove they are right and the others wrong; but for the purpose of filling the emptiness of the atheists and agnostics, replacing the emptiness in them with God.

No Straw Man has ever laid down his or her life for those whom they attempt to influence. But Christians so do and have been so doing every day since immediately following the Resurrection -

the Supreme Sacrifice and Offering, that He came into this world. Many of the leaders and rulers of the Jews, especially their religious scholars, at least suspected this was one of the purposes of the Messiah, one of the references being clearly stated with the raising of the serpent on a cross by Moses, saving from illness and death all those who looked upon it. Yet they preferred their own pomposity instead of truth.

Ridicule here is overcome by this simple reality. Faith is not blind. Examine Christianity. It is impossible for Christianity to have spread, especially as rapidly and so expansively both geographically and through social strata, if Christianity were not true, was not real, if the resurrection did not happen. If the Resurrection had not happened, Christianity would have disappeared. This is real *evidence*.

As to whether or not God exists: as before stated, the empirical **evidence** is irrefutable. Also, the complexities of what science has discovered requires a directing intellect of measure beyond anything known - anything and known being the key words and concepts. And, as before stated, consider cause and effect, how did what went bang get here to go bang and what made it go bang. These and all which was mentioned above, require a God, eternal, omnipotent, being a Divine Person (or, as we know because He has told us, one God Who is the Holy Trinity, being three Divine Persons but one God).

parameters of his argument in a manner which stacks the deck in his favor and against any opposition. This is the classic Straw Man system, a classic Straw Man tactic.

First, Tyson is dictating what is good, and so doing from not just the restricted knowledge, wisdom, and ability to comprehend which belongs to humans, but in a manner further restricted to what he desires and what he considers to be good. Apparently, paramount amongst those desires and considerations is that there be no God.

Every definition of the qualities possessed by God includes wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, in measure and quality far beyond that capable of creatures. This enables God to utilize nasty things which happen, to the advantage of those to whom they happen, and to the advantage of others. In some situations it even assists those not effected (and even those effected) to rise to the occasion, to engage in great works, to do good things which they otherwise would not have done. Thus they are able to engage in godly work with and in harmony with God.

Since Tyson apparently does not believe in existence or life after this life (what would be the point if there is no God), he fails to appreciate, and is unable to appreciate, the potential for benefits to those effected and those not effected, which may and do arise out of the nasty things which originate in nature. Especially the benefits which occur or

which are applied after the death of the body, and in the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul and spirit. Benefits which assist in attaining glorification in eternal union with God. The lack of such benefits having the potential to direct the person's eternity to being one eternally severed from God, eternally damned. Since more nasty things arise as a result of human activities, in comparison with those which arise in nature, humankind provides a continuing stream of nasty things out of which God is able to and does make good, make the holy, happen.

God throughout all of the existence of humankind after the fall of Adam and Eve, has informed humankind that nasty things will happen. Jesus Christ, God, has informed humankind that His followers will have crosses which they must take up in following Him - that nasty things will happen and His followers will be enabled to utilize the happening of those nasty things in a manner which with God's help will produce or lead to holiness.

In the all powerful department, Tyson is in actuality proposing that, if there is a God, since in allowing nasty things to happen to people, God does not exercise his power in accordance with how Tyson thinks God should exercise God's powers, God must not be all powerful. He obviously refuses to consider the possibility God's desires, intentions, and purposes, and the means by-which God intends to attain what God wishes

to attain, differ from his, Tyson's.

Caveat: Be cautious if it ever appears that God's desires and Tyson's desires are fully harmonious.

When Tyson insists there is no evidence of there being a God, of a creator, he intentionally adds what he and his followers consider to be a snide, demeaning statement, to-wit: religions are called systems of faith, because there is no evidence for what religions propound, especially no evidence for the existence of God, which is why the word used in conjunction with religion is "faith", otherwise the word used would be "evidence".

Ridicule is one of the strongest tools in evil's arsenal. It has been used against Christians since the beginning of Christianity - note the Jews and their rulers saying as Christ hung dying on the Cross, (*Luke 23:35.*) "And the people stood beholding. And the rulers with them derided him, saying: He saved others: let him save himself, if he be Christ, the elect of God." And (*Matthew 27:42.*) "He saved others: himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross: and we will believe him."

Amazingly, they acknowledged Jesus saved others. Did they not perceive their own duplicity, their own dishonesty?

Christ, though He could have come down from the Cross, would not, for it was for this purpose, to be