

# NICK GUY & THE DELUDED DELUSION AFFAIR

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**THEME:** A popular book from 2006 made the assertion that a supernatural creator almost certainly does not exist and that to believe in this “God” would have to be classified as a delusion. Is this true? Are the arguments used to make this assertion strong enough to back up the claim?

**GOD VS. LEPRECHAUNS:** A fair questions that can be asked to an atheist is: If we can't be certain that God doesn't exist, why should we be so quick to dismiss His existence? The typical answer, though it may seem fair, is hardly so.

We may be told that there are all sorts of things we can't be sure of, such as that there are no leprechauns and fairies. But no one would reasonably argue that leprechauns and fairies exist. From this answer we are led to conclude that since we can so easily dismiss a belief in leprechauns and fairies, we can just as easily dismiss a belief in God. But this conclusion is a logically flawed.

This argument creates the illusion of having completely refuted or defeated an opponent's proposition by covertly replacing it with a different proposition and then to refute or defeat that false argument instead of the original proposition.

It begins with the comparison of a belief in God as being equal to a belief in leprechauns. If one can easily recognize the unreasonableness of a belief in leprechauns, the argument leads us to conclude that one must also easily recognize the unreasonableness of a belief in God.

The two are not equal, and the dismissal of one does not necessitate the dismissal of the other.

Leprechauns are a type of fairy in Irish folklore. They are usually short, dress in red or green, are shoemakers by trade, store away all their coins in a pot hidden at the end of the rainbow, and they have a propensity for being tricky. The earliest known reference to the leprechaun appears in the medieval tale known as the Adventure of Fergus son of Léti.

God has an incredible Book, written by 40 authors, over a period of 3,000 years, and is amazing in that it contains many controversial issues but all of its authors remain in harmonic agreement. The weight for belief in God far outdistances the weight for belief in leprechauns.

It is sort of like a Red Herring argument. A Red herring is a type of logical fallacy where an irrelevant topic is introduced into an argument meant to divert the attention of the listener from the original issue, leading them to a false conclusion.

**PHYSICAL VS. METAPHYSICAL:** There is a key difference between God and Leprechauns. Leprechauns are physical, while God is metaphysical. What can be used to prove, or disprove, one is not usually applicable to prove, or disprove the other. The evidence or arguments for physical and metaphysical things are quite different.

For Leprechauns, which are physical, we should expect physical evidence and arguments for their existence similar to that which we expect to find with other physical things. If that evidence and those arguments are not found, this would constitute a valid reason to doubt their existence.

Since God is metaphysical, it is logically dishonest to portray the argument in such a way as to assume the same physical tests can be applied in testing the existence of God.

**IGNORANCE OR DISHONESTY:** When someone answers the question of the existence of God by comparing God to leprechauns he is guilty of one of two things. Either he is ignorant of the logical fallacy he is committing (in which case the weight of his opinion on the subject loses value) or he is purposely being dishonest in comparing to incomparable things (in which case his opinion is not to be trusted).

**SCIENCE VS. FAITH:** Atheists will many times portray religion and science as polar opposites, as if one holds to religious belief he cannot truly be scientific, and if one understands science he will inevitably reject religion. By “Scientific” what is usually meant is the Theory of Evolution. Evolution, we are told, is based purely upon Scientific fact, whereas Creationism, stemming from religion, is based upon faith.

Those who believe in Creationism are considered delusional, as a delusion is something that people believe in despite a total lack of evidence.

A famous Atheist once put forth the idea that Biology is the study of complicated things that have the appearance of having been designed with a purpose. The design is only an appearance, and there is no empirical evidence to prove that it *is* only an appearance. This lack of evidence doesn't seem to qualify as a delusion.

If the Universe is as old as Evolutionists claim it is, comets should not exist. Evolutionists explain their current existence by means of the Oort Cloud. The Oort Cloud, named after Dutch astronomer Jan Oort and Estonian astronomer Ernst Öpik, is an immense spherical cloud surrounding the planetary system and extending approximately 3 light years, about 20 trillion miles from the Sun. This vast distance is considered the edge of the Sun's orb of physical, gravitational, or dynamical influence. Within the cloud, comets are weakly bound to the sun, and passing stars and other forces can readily change their orbits, sending them into the inner solar system or out to interstellar space. The structure of the cloud is believed to consist of a relatively dense core that lies near the ecliptic plane and gradually replenishes the outer boundaries.

This definitely would explain the existence of comets, but there is only one problem. The existence of the Oort Cloud is only conjecture. Evolutionists claim to not believe in supernatural explanations for origins, but they are not above placing faith in conjecture.

“A delusion is something that people believe in despite a total lack of evidence.” There is no evidence for a natural explanation for the origins of the universe, yet the Atheist would not consider his faith in such an explanation as qualifying as a delusion.

**MAGIC VS. ILLUSION:** We have no doubt all seen a magician perform. A standard trick every magician performs is to make something appear out of nowhere. Whether it's a bouquet of flowers or a rabbit from out of a hat. He waves his wand over the empty hat, says the magic words and “Abracadabra” the rabbit appears. With this feat the magician appears to violate the oldest and most inviolate law of science: *Ex nihilo, nihil fit* (out of nothing, nothing comes).

The key word here is “appears.” because we all know the magician is not really making something out of nothing. The magic isn't in the wand nor in the incantation. It is done via illusion. The rabbit was actually in existence the whole time, it only appears as if it came from nowhere.

The Atheist will accuse the Christian, who believes in a God who created all things out of nothing, of violating this law of science - out of nothing, nothing comes. Yet, the whole of Evolutionism rests in the same violation of the same law. In fact, Evolutionism violates it more blatantly.

A serious question that both Creationists and Evolutionists must deal with is how did all things come into being. The Creationist will say that God created all things by the power of His word. He spoke and all things came into existence. He created all things out of nothing, yet, God Himself was not nothing. He eternally existed before all things, and is the cause for all things having existence.

The Evolutionist, when asked how all things came into being will answer by violating the same law of science, only to a greater degree. The Creationist can point to an eternal supreme being as the source of all things, the Evolutionist has no cause, no source. For the Evolutionist all things literally came into existence from nothing. In the beginning, nothing existed, then, because nothing existed, nothing happened, and, like magic, all things came into being.

“Chance” is the key word for all of what happens and exists for the Atheist. But when it is said that all things happen “by chance,” the term *by* can be heard as a dative of means. Suddenly chance is given instrumental power. It is the means by which things come to pass. This “means” now assumes a certain power to effect change. Something that in reality is nothing now has the ability or power to do something.

If the Atheist will charge that the Christian's belief in a Creator is deluded based upon the inviolate law that out of nothing, nothing comes, he must see that his own belief in

all things coming into existence by chance is even more deluded. And, he violates his own maxim of believing not by faith, but by reason, logic and facts.

Ravi Zacharias, in addressing this issue has said that there is a pattern, there is the sub-atomic activity that is going on. So it's not nothing. But, suppose it is nothing. Meaning no thing whatsoever. What does that do to atheism? I thought atheism's entire definition was that everything that is is matter. It is a materialistic framework from start to finish. But if the starting point is nothing, Then it is not a materialistic framework, it is nothing. And, if you're starting from nothing to explain everything then why not end up in nothing including meaning.

**MORALITY AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:** Even the Ten Commandments have come under attack by the Atheists. Bill Maher once commented that many Christians talk about the ten commandments like they are morality embodied in ten lines. If children's morals are lagging, then post the ten commandments in their school room, and it'll make a difference. Our entire legal and moral codes are based upon the ten commandments, we are told.

But, he maintains that, the ten commandments, if you examine them a little, don't really live up to their billing. He summarizes the first five commandments as dictating respect and obedience to authority, especially the authority of the Church. According to Maher, there is no morality being addressed here, just commands to obey the Church and your parents, which in essence are commands to replace your own moral judgment with that of another.

He then goes on to say that it is with the last five commandments that the more "morality-based" directives are found: You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor and you shall not covet the things that belong to your neighbor.

He maintains that the first four of these do contain sound moral guides, but ones that are so general as to not be useful to base an entire moral system upon.

What Maher fails to appreciate is that the first four Commandments do not establish the authority of the Church, but the authority of God, and that this is where true wisdom and morality lies. Acknowledging God's authority and superiority and our responsibility and duty to worship and fear Him.

The remaining Commandments are general, but they are explained and worked out in more detail throughout the rest of Scripture. These are general principles that need to be applied and worked out in our lives.

The Ten Commandments are not meant to be merely a moral code, but to reveal the character of God.

**THE WORD WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS:** The preeminence, permanence and

pertinence of the Bible is proven by men, even those who deny God's existence.

Maher, in his attack on the Ten Commandments, has said: I would argue not, based upon the fact that these four things would be so obvious to any member of almost any society of any time period that they would go without saying. In other words, the ten commandments are wholly unnecessary to establish these moral rules. I mean, think about it: before Moses came down the mountain, did people think these things were moral? Upon seeing Moses come down, did everyone peer at the tablets and exclaim, "Oh, thou shalt not steal! Dang, all these years I thought that stealing was moral!" So how do these commandments set down a moral code by "establishing" rules that are already apparent and obvious?

Maher's observation is a good one, and in making it, he finds himself in agreement with Scripture. He is basically saying that the Ten Commandments are unnecessary as they are really just common sense. But, one must wonder, how is it that these Commandments are common to all men? Why do all know instinctively that these things are wrong?

Romans 2:14,15 states: "For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them."

The Bible tells us that God has put His law into the heart of every man. Men do not need the Ten Commandments to know that lying and stealing are wrong. They know it because God has written it on their hearts.

**ONE PURPOSE OF THE LAW OF GOD:** One of the purposes of the Law of God is to reveal to us how far short of its commands we fall. This was further revealed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew Chapters 5-7. Here Jesus shows us that sin originates in our hearts. It is not just our actions that condemn us, but our motives as well. All of this shows us that we fall short, and that we need a changed heart.

It is not uncommon for someone to put their confidence in gaining God's approval by doing the best they can. But, can anyone honestly say they have always done the best they can? Of course not. So even by that lower standard we all fall short. God is holy and we are all guilty before Him because we all fall short of His righteous standard.

And God is just, and justice demands payment for sin.

**THE BRUTALITY OF SIN:** This idea of justice also brings up a condemning charge against Christianity by Atheists. They mock God by expressing contempt that God, this paragon of wisdom, knowledge and power, couldn't think of a better way to forgive us our sins than to come down to Earth in this alter ego as His own son and have Himself hideously tortured and executed so that He could forgive Himself.

But, they miss the point that the brutality of the Cross reflects the brutality of sin. R.C. Sproul has expressed it in terms like these: The moment that Jesus was put on the cross, He had the sin of the world imputed to Him. The hatred of the murderer, the degradation of the prostitute, the callousness of the kidnapper, the vileness of the slanderer, the obscenity of all those sins were at one moment focused on one man. Once Christ embraced that, He became the incarnation of sin.

In a sense, Jesus, while He was on the cross, was the most filthy and grotesque person in the history of the world. In and of Himself, He was a lamb without blemish—sinless, perfect, and majestic. But by imputation, all of the ugliness of human violence was concentrated on His person. The pain He experienced was so deep that it caused Him to cry out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Once sin was concentrated on Jesus, God cursed Him. When the curse of the law was poured out on Jesus, He experienced pain that had never been suffered by anyone else, ever in the history of mankind. Every time we participate in the sacrament of Communion, we remember the dreadful cost of our salvation. With thankful hearts, we consider what Jesus willingly and lovingly submitted Himself to so that we could be set free from the bondage and the curse of sin.

Galatians 3:13 tells us that: “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.” By imputation, our sin was put on Him. By imputation, His righteousness is put on us. As He was treated by the Father as if our sin was His, so, we are treated by the Father as if Jesus’ righteousness is ours.

**RESOURCES:** David Bentley Hart’s “The Atheist Delusions.” William Lane Craig, Ravi Zacharias, R.C. Sproul (various writings and videos)