

It's fairly obvious that since evil abounds in our culture today, many do not hate evil. So it's no wonder there are many who are doing *everything* they can to remove any and all evidence of God from around them. Their efforts however don't really remove God. In the Old Testament — blatant wickedness and evil only succeeded in making Him angry.

"¹¹They did wicked things that provoked the Lord to anger. ¹²They worshiped idols, though the Lord had said, 'You shall not do this.' ¹³The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: 'Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.' ¹⁴But they would not listen... ¹⁵...They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless... ¹⁸So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence.... ²⁰Therefore the Lord rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence." (II Kings 17:11-15, 18 and 20 NIV)

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, is the largest association of atheists and agnostics in the United States. FFRF has been working since 1978 to keep State and Church separate. They have unsuccessfully filed lawsuits prior to the last several Presidential Inaugurations to remove the phrase "so help me God" from the inaugural oath of office. As in previous years, this past December, Dan Barker, the head of that atheist group filed a lawsuit against prayer at Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration. The 34-page legal complaint sought to prevent Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, Jr., from adding the phrase "so help me God" to the presidential oath of office. Peter Sprigg, vice president for policy at the Family Research Council, said: "The atheists, while they have every right to practice their atheism, they do not have an absolute right not to be exposed to viewpoints they don't agree with..."

Those who *claim* God doesn't exist sure do seem to display a lot of fear at the mere *exposure* to a viewpoint with which they don't agree. One could conclude from this, that such reluctance to experience *any reminder* that might indicate they're wrong, would imply they're not *really* secure with that world view. You might even say they seem to "run from their own shadow" even when no one is pursuing them.

"The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion." (Proverbs 28:1 NIV)

Christians *must* be bold as a lion when contending for the faith (Jude 1:3).

* If you did not receive that DVD and would like to have a copy, you may contact us by any of the ways listed below and we will be happy to send one to you.

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Dennis and Sherri Owens — Cincinnati, Ohio
diligence@gorfsystems.com — <http://diligence.gorfsystems.com/>*



DILIGENCE

"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure." — Hebrews 6:11

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Fear God And Keep His Commandments

These words — Fear God And Keep His Commandments — are very familiar to most of us. They are of course taken from — Ecclesiastes 12:13.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (KJV)

The New American Standard Bible translates the last part of this verse just a bit differently. It reads —

"The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person." (NASB)

"Fear God..."? "...whole duty of man"? "...this applies to every person"? One would certainly never know that fearing God and keeping His commandments applies to every person by observing what's going on in our nation today. There are numerous organized — as well as individual — efforts afoot nowadays to completely *remove* any and all references to God in public places. We could fill this entire issue with nothing more than a list of the incidences that have happened just recently involving complaints lodged against people, organizations or places for supposedly violating "the separation of Church and State laws" because of displaying some symbol or words representing God or Christianity.

Some of you received a DVD entitled *The Silencing of God — The Dismantling of America's Christian Heritage* in lieu of the regular October 1st, 2008 issue of *Diligence*.* If you watched that DVD in its entirety, you are aware that using "separation of Church and State" as a valid argument for removing all mentions and displays of anything even resembling God or Christianity is nothing more than an *excuse*. It is absolutely not a valid argument. Our Founding Fathers never intended for that to be the case.

So why then is that so often used as the *reason* for removing any sign of God from the eyes and ears of all Americans? That's a question that might be worth a bit of speculation.

We all know that there are those who have had great success in removing prayer from public schools. There are also those who have launched campaigns to remove the words "...under God..." from *The Pledge of Allegiance* and to remove "In God We Trust" from our currency. Most of us remember the case of Chief Justice Roy Moore losing his struggle to keep the granite monument displaying the 10

Commandments in the Alabama State Judicial building. We've also seen individuals lose their jobs because of doing nothing more than wearing a cross-shaped piece of jewelry to work or school. Teachers have faced dismissal because of just having a Bible *on* their desk. There have been numerous individuals arrested because of publicly speaking out against homosexuality. This list could go on and on.

What is it that evokes such ire — from those who don't believe in God anyway — at the very sight of anything representing God or even the very mention of God's name? If they don't believe in God anyway, what is it that causes them to be *so offended* if others choose to display some symbol of God — or mention His name in public? What's it to them? Why do they *care* if others *do* believe in God? Why does *any* reference to God — visual or spoken — bother them so?

Well, let's consider these questions from a logical point of view by momentarily putting ourselves in the position of an atheist who claims to have absolutely no belief in God whatsoever. It seems only reasonable to believe that if I — as an atheist — am certain beyond any doubt that there is no God, I would do no more than chuckle at those who seem to lean on some “imaginary” character. As an atheist, I would believe that this God is nothing more than a figment of the imagination of those who believe in Him. If I'm certain beyond any doubt, that God is merely something created in the minds of individuals who — in my opinion as an atheist — need something to lean on in times of trouble, what would be the problem with allowing such individuals to have their “fantasy.” What would bother me so about “weak” individuals needing to believe in something greater than themselves? Let them have their symbols and their displays — if it makes them feel better. If I were an atheist, I would perhaps even take pride in the fact that I believed myself to be a stronger individual who needs not garner strength from some “imaginary” character created in the minds of those pitiful individuals who are weaker than myself in order to help them simply cope with life.

Ah, but therein, lies the problem. As an atheist, what if that phrase “certain beyond any doubt” isn't really accurate? What if that God they lean on *is* real? What if He really *does* exist? What if there is this little nagging feeling that — as an atheist, maybe I *could* be wrong. What if this nagging feeling I have was placed in me by an Almighty Creator who created me with a fear of Him that applies to every person — and that's why I can't totally shake that feeling?

If I just keep loudly proclaiming that there is no God — but can't shake the feeling that there just may be — it's only a tiny doubt — that there *could* be — then — I might have a real problem every time you remind me of that doubt. I would probably do everything in my power to make you get it out of my face! I do just fine when I don't have to think about my little tiny doubt. But — *every time* — I see a monument or a cross or a Bible or a nativity scene, it reminds me of that fear that I just might be wrong. So I'm going to do everything I can to keep you from *reminding* me of that doubt! Life is *much* easier that way.

I don't have to face that *unexplainable* fear of a God that I am quite certain doesn't even exist. I don't *want* to continually be reminded with a display of evidence that I *could* be wrong. You see, I have an “out of sight, out of mind” mentality about this whole God thing. Therefore, I *demand* that *you* remove the *evidence* that makes me afraid I may be wrong about this. If I'm an atheist, my fear that there just might be a God is at the core of my efforts to remove any evidence of Him from my hearing and sight. If I never see evidence, I won't have to experience the fear that nags at my inner being. What *other* reason could there be for my vehement reactions when you Christians put reminders of God before me? Why else would it matter so much to me? Why else would I carry on with such fierce efforts to stop you Christians from doing anything that reminds me of a God I don't even believe exists? He *doesn't* exist, *does* He???

In the previous issue (March 15, 2009) we discussed world views. We mentioned how the world view of a Christian is based on the Bible. So when Christians display any symbol representing their belief in God — whether in public, private or on their own person — they are displaying their world view for all to see. They are saying that their world view is filtered through a belief in God. The world view of an atheist however, would obviously not include any display that indicates there is a God. So if I — again, as an atheist — have a world view that is completely void of God, why does it bother me so much for you to have a world view that includes God? Well, if — by putting your world view on public display causes me so much distress — I must be rather insecure with my world view. I simply can't deal with the constant insecurity it causes me when you keep placing your world view in front of me. Take it away! I don't want my world view *challenged* because it may not hold up under intense scrutiny. Again, out of sight, out of mind! There's absolutely no problem with my world view *if* I never have to face the possibility that I might be wrong. Maybe I actually *do fear* the God that I so loudly proclaim doesn't exist! Maybe this “*fear God*” does “*apply to every person*” — like their Bible says.

The real problem faced by atheists, agnostics, etc. is that removing *evidence* of God's existence, doesn't remove God. He's still there and it is the whole duty of man to fear Him and keep His commandments.

“*Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.*” (Psalm 33:8 KJV)

“*You, Yourself, are to be feared; and who may stand in Your presence when once You are angry?*” (Psalm 76:7 NKJV)

“*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*” (Heb. 10:31 KJV)

“*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee;...*” (Rev. 15:4 KJV)

What does it mean to “fear” the Lord? Proverbs 8:13 gives a clear definition.

“*To fear the Lord is to hate evil; ...*” (Proverbs 8:13 NIV)