What is an Atheist? What is an Agnostic?

Summary

Two of the most casually misused words in religious conversation, carefully defined — and then set against a pointed challenge to the mainstream Christian Bible's own claim to be the unaltered Word.

- Plain-language definitions distinguishing atheism (a matter of belief) from agnosticism (a matter of claimed knowledge).
- The four resulting combinations: agnostic atheist, agnostic theist, and so on.
- An extended parable-style critique of how a "fantasy" can grow from one founder's misunderstanding into a following of billions.
- The argument that the mainstream Bible (traced to the Catholic Vulgate) is a substantially altered, copyrighted work — while the true original survives only in ancient Hebrew source material.
- A closing personal statement: belief in a Creator, but rejection of the popularly-presented "Christian God," with an invitation to keep investigating.

The full article begins on the next page.

What is an Atheist? What is an Agnostic?

An atheist is anyone who doesn't happen to believe in any gods, no matter what their reasons or how they approach the question of whether any gods exist. This is a very simple concept, but widely misunderstood. There are a variety of ways to state this; for example, atheism is: the lack of belief in gods, the absence of belief in gods, disbelief in gods, not believing in gods.

The most precise definition may be: an atheist is anyone who does not affirm the proposition "at least one god exists." Although it may seem convoluted, it has a number of important elements: there is a proposition, it's not a proposition made by atheists, and being an atheist requires nothing active or even conscious on the part of the atheist — all that's required is not "affirming" a proposition made by others.

What is an Agnostic? (in relation to “Creation”, and the existence of “God”, or “gods”)

An agnostic is anyone who doesn't claim to know whether any gods exist or not, no matter what their reasons or how they approach the question of whether any gods exist.

This is also a simple concept, and as widely misunderstood as atheism is. One major problem is that atheism and agnosticism both deal with questions about the existence of gods, but whereas atheism involves what a person does or does not believe, agnosticism involves what a person does or does not know. Belief and knowledge are related but nonetheless separate issues.

There's a simple test to tell if one is an agnostic or not. Do you think you know for sure if any gods exist? If so, then you're not an agnostic. Do you think you know for sure that gods do not or even cannot exist? If so, then you're not an agnostic. Everyone who can't answer "yes" to one of those questions is a person who may or may not believe in one or more gods, but since they don't also claim to know for sure they are agnostic — an agnostic theist or an agnostic atheist.

What is an Agnostic Atheist?

An agnostic atheist has two qualities: they don't happen to believe in any gods and they don't claim to know for sure that no gods can or do exist. Not believing what some claim is true, while also not claiming to know for sure that it's false, is not only easy, it happens in lots and lots of different topics. It would be a surprise if it didn't happen when the topic is the existence of gods.

For some strange reason, though, many people have the mistaken impression that agnosticism and atheism are mutually exclusive. There's nothing about "I don't know" which excludes "I don't believe." On the contrary, not only are they compatible but they frequently appear together, because not knowing is

frequently a reason for not believing. It's often a very good idea to not accept some proposition is true, unless you have enough evidence that would qualify as knowledge.

What is an Agnostic Theist?

An agnostic theist has two qualities: they believe in the existence of at least one god and they don't claim to know for sure that this god or gods definitely exist. Believing that some claim is true while also not claiming to know for sure that it's true, is not only easy, it happens in lots and lots of different topics. Why shouldn't it also happen when the topic is the existence of gods?

Once again, many people have the mistaken impression that agnosticism and theism are mutually exclusive. They are convinced that agnosticism is some sort of "middle way" or "third way" between atheism and theism — but why? There's nothing about "I don't know" which logically excludes "I believe."

Atheist vs. Agnostic: What's the Difference?

Atheism is about belief, or specifically what you don't believe. Agnosticism is about knowledge, or specifically about what you don't know. An atheist doesn't believe in any gods. An agnostic doesn't know if any gods exist or not. These can be the exact same person, but need not be.

Every agnostic is also either an atheist or a theist because any given belief is either present or not — there is no alternative to those two options. An agnostic may be unsure whether atheism or theism is more reasonable. An agnostic may not consider their theism or atheism very important. But regardless, belief that the proposition "at least one god is true" is either present, or not, in everyone.

The Great Humanities Myth?

Suppose we think of a very charismatic individual that strongly believes and strongly affirms his belief in something he has totally and completely misunderstood – in other words, what he has created as his 'fantasy'. Suppose he had considerable difficulty attracting his first 100 followers, yet he ultimately succeeds. Suppose they followed, because like him, they simply believed his nicely told stories to be true, those stories which he had originally misunderstood – his fantasy.

Now suppose these first 100 followers collaborate to craft a presentation of their now uniform, yet false belief; their collective fantasy, in order to attract the support of others. Suppose they attracted thousands and tens of thousands, to follow them in their false belief, essentially because believing in this fantasy, was appealing – it offered amazing hope and some minimal explanations of the unknown, where none was alternatively offered.

Now suppose that some few within the ranks of these tens and tens of thousands of followers, for any multitude of reasons, begin to suspect the veracity of the fantasy that underlies their otherwise common belief. Suppose they presume to re-define the beliefs they hold, based on yet more misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the original fantasy, because these refinements, were also, appealing. Suppose many

of these break off from the main group and form splinter groups of their own, each holding on to some common aspects of the original fantasy, but each also adding their own peculiar variations to their own, now newly revised, and in their respective opinions, more appealing versions of it.

Now suppose that these great many peculiar versions of this fantasy-based faith; faiths uniformly created based on such an original fantasy, now each utilizing their own unique presentation of propaganda, designed to promote their unique version of the original fantasy, proceed over time to attract millions and millions, and even billions of followers worldwide. The foregoing, is a very condensed, yet completely true account of what our societies euphemistically refer to as the history of "religion".

Regardless of the first cause or inspiration, certain individuals, proclaimed themselves the original founders of the Latin/Roman congregation of believers, in what has become widely known as the Roman Catholic faith, or religious fantasy. In the first few centuries AD, these self-proclaimed 'anointed' ones, proceeded to destroy the original human operator's manual, and replace it with their very own, highly revised version – their created fantasy, now also euphemistically referred to as the 'Holy Bible'.

They destroyed all known original hand-made copies of the original Word, replacing these with their very own words, written in their own language that they forbid anyone else to learn. They kept magnificent records of these changes; in fact to this day there exist a great many libraries full of encyclopedic records of the very changes they and their monks made to support their own needs. Their followers were so blinded by faith in their created fantasy, that none even thought to check whether the stories were based on fact, or fiction – to them it was always, and in all ways, all fact.

This blindness to the faith, held even into those many religious splinter groups, inasmuch as in spite of their many differences, they all uniformly held to changing only the details of the original fantasy, not seeking the originally misunderstood truth behind it. So now we endure hundreds of variations of religious faith, all based on an original misunderstanding – a really great big mistake.

The modern definition of "copyright", is such that any publication which proclaims to be a "copy-righted" edition, must EITHER BE AN ORIGINAL WORK, or be substantially different from the original work so as to qualify for copyright privilege. Ironically, the original Catholic Vulgate – crafted in the early 300-400AD era; that which virtually all denominational and non-denominational "Christians" acknowledge as the oldest and most reliable translated version of the "Bible", is a "Copy-righted" version – therefore by its own words, it is NOT THE ORIGINAL TEXT, AND it is substantially different than that original text, which their voluminous records openly admit, they so cleverly attempted, but failed to actually destroy.

Curiously, this original work of fiction – this crafted Vulgate Bible, acknowledged by its creators to be a Copy-righted work of fiction, substantially different than its supposed original inspiration, is still held as the primary source of material for what has become literally hundreds of subsequently re-crafted versions of the "Bible", all of which exist as acknowledged re-writes of the Vulgate, but each substantially changed sufficiently to allow legal Copy-right in every instance.

These Copy-righted works of fiction, are the very essence of most modern religious doctrine. No wonder there are ever growing numbers of Atheists and Agnostics!

More curiously, the actual "original Word" remains available, albeit in ancient Hebrew language, in whole and in various parts, in several modern Antiquities Libraries. With the help of a few remaining modern professional linguists that are able to read this ancient language, we learn that not only was the original Word changed dramatically, it was changed significantly with respect to virtually every aspect of Creation, of "Gods", Science and of the universal History that was indeed originally included.

The original Word, explains quite clearly, what the celestial and more recent human history means to us. It provides answers to all things scientific, to all things related to universal Creation, to understanding the mysteries of humanity in its current generation, to explaining the relevance of dinosaurs, to acknowledging alien and pre-historic life forms, to the Creator admitting to making mistakes and experiencing failures within the Creation, and to many other matters commonly believed to be outside of the scope of the Bible, because indeed they have been removed from the scope of the many modern religious Copy-righted versions of the Bible.

Now, what do I say about Atheists and Agnostics? Perhaps it would be prudent to fully investigate these matters, prior to deciding what it is you do not believe in, or what it is you do not fully understand.

I am an avid believer in the Universal Creator as the rationally (and even now scientifically) proven First Cause of all things over many millions and billions of "years", as set out in the original Word, but I also am an avid Atheist insofar as any belief in a Christian "God", who these self-proclaimed Christians falsely publish and proclaim as the creator of all things in 6 days – no wonder they had to make up a new version of the story!

And to the Agnostic – well, I hope you know what it is that you do not understand, and I hope you are not Agnostic regarding Creation, simply because you have been influenced by the multitudes of surrounding false religious dogma, such that you do not know what it is that you do not know, because you have not of your own doing, properly sought to know the truth, rather than just doubt the fiction. Doubting, or not believing the fiction is easy – I also do not believe in the manufactured 'christian' fiction/fantasy, regardless of which nice religious spin is presented under.

Oh, and yes, there are modern, very reliable English versions of the actual original Word available, unchanged from the original – simply "transliterated'. They are not Copy-righted, they are scarce, but usually free. Just ask.

← Return to the Articles Index