

THE “POISON” OF RELIGION

Christopher Hitchens, renowned British atheist, titled his 2007 book, *God Is Not Great* (subtitled, *How Religion Poisons Everything*). Both are solid thwacks at the mazards of believers. He knows how to get our attention. Hitchens is one of a few “new wave” atheists who have recently begun preaching their ungodly gospel of unbelief to every creature. What shall we make of such efforts?

- **First**, the bold and sudden spurt of their rantings seems to reflect a panic mode. Has the rise of the “intelligent design” concept unnerved them? Did Anthony Flew’s 2004 defection from his almost lifelong atheism rattle their cages? Has desperation set in?
- **Second**, Hitchens and his colluders, unlike the “old guard” of their genre, are not content merely to be atheists; they must convert those silly believers to infidelity. They not only do not believe in God and His Son (in spite of abundant evidence); their evangelistic campaign is bent on destroying the faith of everyone possible (especially the younger set).
- **Third**, Hitchens’ title lays bare the arrogance and snarling defiance of his kind regarding the very idea of God as revealed both in His creation and in His Word. His title implies, “Even if I should concede the existence of the God of you blinkered Christians, he’s not much to write home about. He ruins everything he touches.” If we are all merely complex chemical reactions (as atheist scientists allege), why should he be so indignant at our faith? He may as well rail against a hurricane or an Irish potato.
- **Fourth**, Hitchens (as his kin) champions logic and reason. (He will get no argument on this score from knowledgeable Christians. God gave us our minds, gave us the Bible which appeals to our reasoning abilities, and told us to use our minds in our service to

Him [Mat. 22:37].) However, before one reaches the title page, Hitchens' subtitle abuses reason: It asserts an unprovable universal generalization that "religion poisons everything." Everything? If he wishes to affirm that **some** religions poison **some** things, we will give him a hearty "Amen." But he avers far more than any wise mortal would aver, and his book falls far short of proving it.

Hitchens and his sort have a long and storied ancestry. His forebears were denying God's existence at least a millennium before the Word became flesh, and David accurately identified them as corrupt fools (Psa. 14:1; cf. Rom. 1:19–25). Contrary to Hitchens, God is, and He is great; Christianity Improves Everything—A provable generalization, we are confident.

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