

THE GREAT DEBATE
OVER
GOD, THE BIBLE AND WHY HUMANS EXIST?
By *Bill Glover*

As I look around this room I see an interesting and colorful mixture of individuals that gives a fairly impressive cross section of humans across the religious world also representative of religious history on this earth. I want to take this opportunity to thank Art Mokarow for this gathering and the opportunity to address these issues. [NOTE: This is a written version of the message I gave at Art's seminar of April 2012.]

As I look out over this group I am reminded of the apostle Paul and his visit to the Areopagus (Mars Hill) in Athens, Greece as recorded in the 17th chapter of Acts, verses 18-23. As this passage says, "All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there *spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas* (in other words, *debating*). Paul addressed this group by saying "Men of Athens, I see that in every way you are very religious (or *superstitious* because the Greek word used for "religious" can also mean "superstitious"). Most likely these men never reached any meaningful conclusions but merely debated and expounded their lofty ideas that supposedly displayed their personal opinions.

I cannot help but also relate to "The Great Debate" between Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford and his opponent Thomas Huxley over evolutionists Darwin's theories on how creatures gradually evolved. As all of you know, neither Wilberforce nor Huxley won that debate and thus the controversy rages on today. In concluding his part of the debate Wilberforce brandished the Bible and implored the audience to "have faith in God" (meaning his idea of God). That is a strange conclusion since he was *unable* to prove that God does exist and neither was Huxley able to prove God does not exist - - it was a draw! Wilberforce merely believed God exists (even though he could not prove it) and thus he felt the necessity to conclude that Darwin was wrong. And, since Huxley could not prove that God does not exist then the issue became a stalemate!

I am also reminded of the well known atheist, Richard Dawkins, who wrote the book "The God Delusion." Even though he is regarded as the most famous atheist in the world he

readily admitted that he “*could not be sure God does not exist!*” In fact, he stated he would rather be referred to as an *agnostic* rather than an atheist as an agnostic realizes he cannot be sure of his views. Dawkins also stated “What I can’t understand is why you can’t see the extraordinary beauty of the idea that life started from nothing (just evolved from nothing) - - that is such a staggering, elegant, beautiful thing, *why would you want to clutter it up with something as messy as God?* In other words, that was his way of trying to account for a *harmonious creation without the existence of a Creator!*” It was also his way of getting around what God requires of humans.

It is easy to see why these learned men became so confused over the subject of “God.” Literally millions of people have been troubled by the *literal beliefs* of traditional religions - - namely the Christian religion, the Jewish religion and the Muslim religion. How many people take the time to evaluate these major religions and what they actually teach and believe? The Jews do NOT accept Jesus. But Mohammad, the founder of Islam, recognized the Jesus of the New Testament and even referred to the Old Testament (Jewish) scriptures showing his prophetic appearance as a baby born of a virgin. For those who “accept” the idea of Jesus Christ, it should be remembered that there have been *many saviors CLAIMING MIRACULOUS APPEARANCES long before the Jesus Christ of the New Testament*. Some of these preceding “saviors” were Attis, Mithras, Horus and Osiris as well as Nimrod. As one writer said, “The legends of these pagan *savior gods* were clearly in circulation before Jesus is said to have lived!” And the Jews believe in a *savior messiah* who has not presented himself either. Do not these facts show why we have so much confusion in religious circles today? What is one to believe?

Since there is NO *historical* evidence or proof that the God of the Bible ever existed, that the God of the Jews ever existed, that Allah the Muslim “god” ever existed then what are we to believe? Let us be honest with ourselves. The Jews cannot use their Bible and prove the existence of *their* God. Neither can the “Christians” use the Bible or any other scientific evidence to prove their God exists. And neither can Muslims prove the Koran is the words of *their* “god” or that Allah, *their* “god”, actually exists. Since none of the traditional religions can produce any tangible evidence that their “god” exists or that their respective books of their “god” or their religious organizations can be established as true and reliable, then should we not back off and evaluate where we stand and whether our views will withstand any test - - scientific or otherwise.

I would also like to mention a noted *theologian* named William Hamilton who recently died at age 87. He was known as “a radical Christian thinker.” He was a very active member of *The Death of God Movement* of the 1960’s. In 2007 he told *The Oregonian* newspaper (Portland, Oregon) that he had questioned the existence of God since he was a teenager when two friends - - an Episcopalian and a Catholic - - died from the explosion of a pipe bomb *they were building* while a third person - - an atheist - - escaped without a scratch! Such caused him to question why the *innocent* suffer. Take the time to evaluate what he said. Here two people claiming to be religious were *building a pipe bomb*. There is only one reason people build “pipe bombs” and that is to kill or maim other humans. How could

he regard these two pipe bomb builders as “innocent” or even “Christian?” Yet, that was the alleged proof he used to supposedly discount God. Additionally, how can a person claim to be a *theologian* when he does not even believe in a god?

Hamilton also said “We needed to **redefine** Christianity as a *possibility WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF GOD!*” Such a deduction is tantamount to trying to account for AN ORDERLY CREATION WITHOUT A CREATOR as evolutionists attempt to do! These were also the views of other “radical theologians” such as Thomas J.J. Altizer, poet William Blake and German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Freidrich Hegel. In fact, Altizer (who co-authored with Hamilton the book “Radical Theology and the Death of God” said Hamilton “was what we call a radical Christian, or, if you like, *an atheistic Christian.*” Please, can someone explain to me how a person can be an *atheistic* Christian or an *agnostic* Christian when you do not believe in God or Christ unless, of course, you regard your *religion* as nothing more than a *social club*.

Astrophysicist Stephen Hawkins recently proclaimed that “Advances in science has made a belief in God obsolete.” Is this true? Should we all then become atheists, agnostics, agnostic “Christians” or atheistic “Christians?” And should we continue to debate these old and tired arguments pro and con and hope to satisfy what should be a thirst for real truth?

MY CONFESSION

I will readily admit that, as a child, I inherited my “religious” (Christian) beliefs from the environment in which I grew up. I was raised a Baptist and attended the local Baptist church. Like most other “Christians” (regardless of denomination) I merely *assumed* that the God of the Baptist church was actually “God” and *assumed* that the Bible was His word. No one in my circle ever questions these points let alone investigate or PROVE THEM! I dare propose that most reading this article obtained their basic beliefs on religion and even other topics the same way - - by *assumption and not by conclusive demonstrable proof!*

How can any sensible person practice religious custom and devote their lives and time to an *assumed* “God” without first demanding proof of the origin and veracity of same? How can anyone claim to “worship” a God whom they question even exists? And how can anyone embrace and pattern their lives after a book when they have no tangible proof it is reliable and accurate? Most people who take the time to truly investigate their religions become totally disillusioned and become what is today called “*agnostic Christians*” - - they cannot bring themselves to totally give up their cherished religious beliefs but then find it impossible to have faith in the “God” they once worshipped and embraced.

MY PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH GOD

At this point I wish to return the Acts 17 in the New Testament to pick up an important point to illustrate the confusion that exists in the religious world today. In verse 3 Paul says “I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship (your religious exhibits), I found an altar with the inscription: *To the UNKNOWN GOD.* Now what you worship as

something *unknown* I am going to proclaim to you” - - meaning he was going to proclaim *a God that was actually unknown to humans as God*. [This is the God that I proclaim to you through the Living God Ministries.]

Evolutionists claim that since we cannot see God, cannot hear God, cannot touch, taste or smell God then we must conclude that He does not exist. My question to you is: ***CAN WE PROVE THE EXISTENCE OF GOD AND THE VALIDITY OF THE BIBLE?*** My purpose here is to show you conclusively that we each can prove that God exists and that we can rely on the Bible - - some call the Bible “the elephant in the room!”

Briefly, to introduce what follows, let me state that the best way I have found to *prove God exists and whether the Bible contains His instructions is to CHALLENGE GOD AND THE BIBLE*. Yes, you read correctly, for I am stating as emphatically as I can that we humans *can and should challenge God and the Bible!* In fact, God specifically tells us to challenge Him whether He will respond to our requests and our needs and especially urgent emergencies. But first, let me give a little background that led me to this understanding.

My journey in clearly establishing the existence of God and the validity of the Bible began in earnest when I was only 19 years old. In September 1953 I enrolled in a Bible college in Pasadena, California. Because of my “religious” upbringing I knew several things that are said in the Bible even though I had never challenged them or challenged the “God” who supposedly claimed them as His word. The first four months of my studies were not eventful. But in late January 1954 I was walking across the campus and suddenly encountered a person that was quite strange. We came face to face and I recognized something was wrong but did not know what it was. He was repulsive just to look at and especially when our eyes met. Even though I was repulsed, I could not ignore him or walk away - - something within me told me I had to pursue this matter.

I had learned from the Bible that when we humans encounter an extremely difficult situation we can actually go to the God of the Bible for guidance and insight as to what we should do - - that this insight, discernment and guidance *will be given as (when) it is needed*. Being a novice in religious matters left me baffled as to what to do in this case. I had read in the Bible that there is a Satan the devil and that he has demonic spirits that serve him. Suddenly God’s Spirit in me prompted me to engage this *person* in conversation. Immediately it became evident that this person was possessed. But then I drew a blank. What was I to do once this realization hit me? Then the promise that knowledge, understand and discernment would be given *when it is needed* jumped into my mind and I silently but fervently prayed to God for this discernment as to what I was supposed to do.

Immediately it became evident that there was more than one spirit involved here so I asked “How many spirits am I dealing with here?” The answer came back “TWO!” So God’s Spirit led me to pursue further communication as I earnestly sought help from God through silent prayer. As I engaged these two spirit beings in conversation I remembered that the Bible teaches that there is to come a time and place when the God of the Bible will send His

loyal angelic forces to gather up Satan and his demons and cast them into what the Bible calls a “bottomless pit” - - meaning a place of no escape.

I then asked these two spirits “Do you realize what you will have to do if I tell you to leave this human body?” The answer came back “We will have to leave!” But God had revealed to me that I should not give such a directive *at that time*. So I announced to these spirit beings “God has NOT instructed me to tell you to leave this body but I am telling you to take this body off this campus and never bring it back.” This “body” immediately turned and literally ran fast off the campus onto a city street and was still running the last time I saw it.

What I had done in this instance is *challenge God* to give me what I needed to handle the situation and He totally backed me but also guided me through the entire incident. Through the years I have had other encounters with demonic spirits and each time God gave me that discernment as to what to do and backed me with His power. In one case the demonic spirit did not like what I told him and he caused the human person to grab me by the throat to try and choke me. I quickly directed: “Get your hands off me immediately!” and he dropped his hands. Then I directed him to turn and leave the building and he quietly left the premises without any incident. In another case a demonic person was walking toward our church services and I saw him coming as I was outside the building. I merely looked at him eye to eye and shook my head “NO” and he abruptly turned and walked away without incident. It is not always necessary to personally engage these being as they recognize God’s Spirit in a true follower of God and Christ and must be subject to God’s true people..

What I am relating to you in this message is that repeatedly over the years I have repeatedly *challenged God* to KEEP THE PROMISES He has made in the Bible. He has never failed to respond to the needs that I brought to His attention proving He is very concerned with His promises in the Bible and His human creation *if we submit to Him*. But you must always approach Him in total humility (Isaiah 66:2).

A DEAD BABY RESTORED TO LIFE

We humans can be caught off guard at times and find ourselves in impossible situations - - situation that defy description. One Sabbath while sitting in church listening to another minister giving the sermon I was suddenly almost yanked off my chair by a deacon (Jim Duke) who merely turned away and quickly walked toward the foyer and I followed him. When I arrived in the foyer this young 17 year old mother ran up to me and thrust the body of her three day old son into my hands crying out in abject agony “My baby, My baby, he’s dead!”

The church had helped her get out of a very abusive relationship by moving her from Oklahoma to California. Another young girl was staying with her as she recovered from childbirth. When they checked on the baby they found him dead. They did not have transportation so the other girl canvassed the neighborhood for a person with a car to drive them to our church services - - the only place she knew of where she believed she could get

help. They did not know how long the baby had been dead before they found him but at least an hour had passed before they found someone to drive them to our church services and arrive there.

A situation like this literally takes your breath away - - especially if you are a parent yourself. It is truly amazing how many thoughts and fears can rush through you mind in mere seconds. I vividly recall the first major thought which was “Why give it to me?” But, thankfully, God’s Spirit kicked in and reminded me that I was a minister of God and that this mother had come to me for the help she needed and that I had the responsibility to go to God for that help.

Sitting there was also a deaconess by the name of Annie Man (many people reading this will recognize her name). [*Special notation:* In this message I will be giving names since many reading this will recognize those names and can know that what I am saying can be verified]. I said “Mrs. Mann, come with us” as I took this woman (a Mrs. Grayson) and her baby down stairs to a first aide room where we anointed sick people. I was fervently praying to God for wisdom, guidance and discernment so as to know what to do in this case - - something totally beyond any power, knowledge or understanding that I had within myself - - the power of life and death!

As I knelt down by the small bed with the dead baby on it I remembered the Biblical example of Elijah the prophet (1 Kings 17 in The Old Testament) where God heard Elijah’s earnest prayer when a child had died leaving a widow woman childless.

Again, I *challenged* God by reminding Him of what 1 Kings 17 says about His restoring the life of that child through Elijah. I then stated “God in heaven you claim in the Bible that you do not lie and that you will take care of our every need and that if we ask anything in your name in believing faith you will do it.” I have always heavily relied on what John 14:12-14 says, which are dogmatic promises from the God of the Bible. This passage reads: “I tell you the truth, ANYONE who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so the son may bring glory to the father. You may ask for anything in my name and I will do it!”

I called on these binding promises and reminded God that *His word and His integrity are at stake here* and that I *expected* Him to intervene and restore life to this child according to the promise made in James 5:14. I then anointed this baby and immediately he let out a very loud cry as he began to breathe for the first time in well over an hour that we knew of. Unquestionably, that was the greatest and sweetest sound I have ever heard.

One interesting aspect of this case was a comment this lady who had transported the baby to our services. As I took the mother, the dead baby and Mrs., Mann downstairs, the last words I head this woman say were: “Why did we bring this baby here - - why didn’t we take him to the hospital where he could get some real help.” That comment was interesting since the

only help the hospital could have provided would have been a death certificate - - and that is not the kind of help we wanted! We asked for life to be restored **and it was!**

A COMPLICATED CHILDBIRTH

I will now repeat other names that many will recognize. One is a minister by the name of Debar Apartian. One morning about 2:30 Dibar called me as he had received a call from Robert and Arlene (Bunnell) Petry. They were having their first baby at home and serious complications had developed and Debar chose not to get involved. I went immediately to their home and what I found there was shocking. They were having a “home delivery” and had set up the delivery table in their dinette area. There was a doctor and nurse present. What shocked me was the fact that the right leg of the baby was out of Arlene’s body just past the knee but the left leg was doubled back into her body making this birth impossible. She had been in this position for over three and one half hours and, as a result, the baby’s leg was swollen about four times its normal size and was blackish blue due to the fact that circulation had been cut off for that long period of time.

This was another case where you realize just how helpless you are. Humanly, there was absolutely nothing I could do. But I had experienced the Almighty God too many times to lose faith. As I knelt by the delivery table for the anointing I noted that the doctor and the nurse were standing over by the refrigerator with arms folded across their chests with expressions that read “What are about to experience here - -witchcraft or something?” Thus, I felt the need to address God about this doctor and this nurse in the anointing prayer. I began the anointing prayer with “Father in heaven, you know that present here are a doctor and a nurse who are schooled in the medical profession and they are going to think it rather strange that I will be taking a small amount of olive oil and anoint Arlene on the forehead when she is having birth complications. Such actions make absolutely no medical sense and I readily admit to you, Almighty God, that there is NO therapeutic value in this oil - - the only reason we do this is because that is what you command us to do when we have such problems as this!”

As I got to the actual point of anointing Arlene I opened my eyes to pick up my small bottle of anointing oil (I always closed my eyes tightly when in prayer because I want to shut out all outside interferences as I am going directly before the very throne of the Almighty God and want no outside distractions.) But when I opened my eyes I was surprised. This skeptical doctor and nurse were prostrate on the floor on their faces. (Upon evaluating this later I realized that even though they were skeptical at first they realized that **at that moment** we were actually **before the throne of God**.)

When I finished with the anointing I stood up and told Robert and Arlene not to worry as everything would be fine since we had placed the birth in God’s hands. Then I said I would step out to my car and wait and that they should come tell me when the baby came. Within 15 minutes Robert came out grinning widely and announced they had a healthy baby girl

and adding that “As you walked out the front door that little leg began disappearing back into Arlene’s body and then out came the baby without further complications.

God did not immediately cause the swelling in the leg to go down or the blood under the baby’s skin to disappear as it had to be absorbed into the body. Many people in the headquarters church heard and saw evidence of this miracle from God and witnessed the swollen and black leg.

Time and space limit the number of cases I can report in this forum. Let me cite one more to show that on occasion it may be years before you learn of specific miracles. In 1995 my wife and I decided to attend church services in a sister congregation in Salem, Oregon (we live in Eugene, Oregon). We sat in on the services and afterward mingled with the people. At one point I found myself very close to the minister - - whom I had never personally met. He was talking to a couple and I introduced myself to another couple standing nearby. The minister heard me say my name and immediately turned and stepped over to where I was and asked “Did I hear you say your name is Bill Glover?” He then said “I have heard of you all my life. My name is Sean Finnigan and 32 years ago you were a visiting minister in our San Bernardino church and my mother was a member of that congregation. She was about 8 months pregnant with me and severe complications had developed that threatened both her life and mine. She asked you to anoint her for this condition. You anointed her and advised her that everything would be alright - - and obviously that was true for here I am today healthy and happy some 32 years later!” [**NOTE:** Many of you may know Sean or can find him or the others mentioned herein to verify the veracity of what has been reported here.]

I feel I must relate another incident that troubled me greatly as it unfolded. A very close friend and colleague developed blood problems and was taking several medical procedures to reduce infection and prevent other serious complications. He became totally bedfast and was in and out of the hospital repeatedly. Two other ministers and I visited him both in the hospital and at home. We went there in total faith that God would heal him of these diseases. We had hoped to experience faith *in Him* that would result in his healing. In a serious discussion with him I asked if these medical procedures were improving his health and he answered “NO!” Then I asked him if he believed that God would *use* these medical procedures to heal him and again he answered “NO!” We three ministers had hoped with our whole being that he would choose to truly trust God but he could not do that. We still prayed for him hoping that God would restore his health. Sadly, he died and this was most troubling for me. We had to learn what Jesus learned when he went back to his home town and found that the people did not have faith making it impossible for Him to do many miracles there (carefully study Matthew 13:58). It is NOT that Jesus was powerless to perform miracles but God acts ACCORDING TO THE FAITH OF THE INDIVIDUAL (Matthew 9:29).

The death of this beloved brother truly troubled me and I was greatly affected by this loss. I sought answers from God as to why. As I poured out my emotions about this death I suddenly felt the urge to vomit and rushed to the bathroom (it was 2:00 a.m.) What I vomited was NOT food but actually blood coming up in clots the size of a coffee cup. This

went on for 6 hours and I had plenty of time to evaluate the situation and my own attitude. At one point I briefly considered whether I should go to the emergency room to see what was going on in my body. But I immediately cast that thought out of my mind. I had witnessed too much at the hand of God to lose faith in His ability and willingness to intervene. I know that my life was literally in God's hands and that I could trust Him with that life UNTIL HE HAD FINISHED WITH ME. After six full hours bent over the commode and vomiting up blood I cried out to God with the following: "Father, my life is totally in your hands. If it will glorify you by letting me die hunkered over this toilet then I can and will gladly accept that fate. But, I cannot see how you can get any glory in such a death!" As God is my witness, I can honestly say that I was ready to die hunkered over that commode. But suddenly the bleeding stopped. The next day my stool showed blood (digested) for a day and a half showing that something internal was there. The lesson God taught me by that experience is that *each adult* must exercise personal faith in God to receive the healing needed (see Hebrews 11:1 & 6 as well as James 1:2-8).

I want it understood that these have been my personal experiences. *Each person* must decide to what degree he or she *can* trust God with their lives. I have never tried to "regulate" the faith of others as it is a personal matter - - so is salvation. No one can have the faith necessary for healing for another and neither can one have the faith necessary for salvation for another.

I have given many sermons and written articles on this subject and offered to work with anyone who chose to pursue more faith from God as well as a personal and intimate relationship with God. *To date, no one has asked for such a dialogue so as to learn more about that personal and intimate relationship with God. I have gotten the opinion that people are like the children of Israel who told Moses "You go up and have that personal contact with God but we will stay down here where we feel safe." God is as close to us as WE CHOOSE AND ARE WILLING TO BE CLOSE TO HIM!*

CAUTIONARY POINTS

I would be replete in my responsibilities toward any and all of you if I did not point out these cautionary points. The first point is in regard to me personally. I have never taken any credit for any intervention from God. All the credit and glory go to God. I readily admit that I am the least likely candidate for God using. I regularly read God's description of the type person He calls and uses as found in 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. I also pay specific attention to Isaiah 66:2 where we find that God listens to those with a humble and contrite heart and who tremble at His word. How can you tremble at His sword if you do not believe it is true and if you have never *put it or God to the test as outlined here?*

Also, Hebrews 11:6 says that anyone who comes to Him for his needs must first believe that He exists and that He rewards those who *diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6 and also verse 1)*. How can anyone trust God for needs if he *doubts* God's integrity and His willingness to keep His promises (see Psalm 103:2)?

Then there is the admonition found in James 1:5-8. Here we find that anyone who seeks His intervention must ask in *believing faith* and not doubt for, if one doubts, he will receive nothing from God. Study these verses carefully to learn why our prayers are often unanswered.

I must also caution all of you that some just do not have sufficient faith to trust God and they should NOT be criticized. What I have shared with you here are only a few of my personal experiences in hopes it will encourage and inspire you. If any lack faith ASK GOD WHO GIVES GENEROUSLY!

It is imperative that I explain a most vital point. My ministry did NOT come from Herbert Armstrong or the WCG - - but from God Himself. Initially I thought it did s I was associated there. Eventually I was forced to see the difference between a “ministry” from Herbert Armstrong and the WCG and a true ministry from God. It almost cost me my life learning this difference - - and learning such was extremely painful and almost impossible to accept. But learning the difference was a definite Mount Carmel Experience for me (see 1 Kings 18:21). Each of us face Mont Carmel moments every day of our lives - - each day we choose to either follow and obey God or our own human nature and views.

What can I say in conclusion? How badly do you want the answers to these questions? I can assure you - - guarantee you - - that the Almighty God does exist and that you too can have personal direct and intimate access to Him. But you must divest yourself of your own self pity or self righteousness or vanity and totally surrender to God (Isaiah 66:2).Contact me if you want more information!

