

Do You Have the Bravery of an Atheist?

3/18/2018

Sunday AM

Scripture: Matthew 25:46, Matthew 10:28, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Revelation 21:8, 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Introduction

- Last week we discussed Giving, Not Just Receiving Mercy.
- We discussed that the Bible teaches that we should be merciful and forgiving in as much as we have received mercy and forgiveness.
- This morning we are asking the question, **Do You Have the Bravery of an Atheist?**
- This past week I was made aware of several atheists that made some very brave statements.
- I want to show you how brave these two atheists were and for you to see if you are that brave or not.
- **Illustration:** Quote from Stephen Hawking and a video of Ron Reagan.

Matthew 25:46

⁴⁶"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

- In this passage Jesus was teaching about the separation of the "sheep and the goats." He was illustrating to the people what the final judgement would look like.
- In v. 46 Jesus clearly indicates that there is an afterlife and the wicked will go to "eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."
- It is a clear Christian teaching that there is in fact an afterlife.
- However, this is not just a Christian teaching, every major religion teaches an afterlife.
- Stephen Hawking and Ron Reagan both made brave statements regarding the afterlife.
- They both do not believe in Heaven or Hell and both were not afraid of the afterlife either.
- Only 16% of the world's population are not affiliated with a religion, and only a fraction of them are atheists

Matthew 10:28

²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

- Stephen Hawking said, "heaven is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark." He wasn't afraid of the dark.
- Ron Reagan stated plainly that he was an "unabashed atheist" and that he "wasn't afraid to burn in hell."
- The simple question this morning is, **Do You Have the Bravery of an Atheist?**
- Both of these men are disregarding centuries of human beliefs and are aligning themselves with roughly 5% of the world's population and disregarding the other 95%.
- That is pretty brave to go against those types of numbers.
- These two men represent about 350 million other atheists on our planet, they aren't the only two.
- I submit that it is mighty brave to say you aren't afraid to burn in hell, and take that type of chance.
- What if Stephen Hawking was wrong? He just passed away on Wednesday, and whatever he believed when he died made a difference.
- What if Ron Reagan is wrong? What type of risk is he taking?

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

⁸He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

Revelation 21:8

⁸But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

- Other passages in the Bible tell us that hell will be a place where there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth" and the "first never goes out."
- I am not sure that anyone should want to take a chance and go to a place like hell.
- That is why I say that atheists are brave, it takes some kind of bravery to disregard fear of a place like hell.
- Unfortunately, the number of people that are turning away from the faith and becoming atheists is growing.
- These people are being led astray by Satan and they are placing all their hope in this earthly life.
- **So as Christians, what are we supposed to do about all this?**

1 Timothy 2:1-4

¹I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- ²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

- We need to first and foremost get the same attitude as God regarding all people. This means that we too, should want all people "to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."
- Then we should spend a great deal of time praying for people that do not believe, v. 3 says "This is good, and pleases God our Savior."
- After we get our attitude right and prayer life right, then we must GO fishing.

Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰**and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

- We must understand that the End Times are quickly approaching and times are getting harder.
- More than ever, we should have a burden for the lost, not a contempt for them.
- It is our job to teach them to over everything that Jesus commanded. How can we do that if we never open our mouths?
- Let's commit to praying for Ron Reagan and others that share his bravery.
- Not only to pray for them, but to also pray to God as to how He can use each of us to reach the lost in the spheres of influence that He has given us.

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

Heaven

Chapters 17-19:

What will it mean to see God?

What will it mean for God to dwell among us?

How will we worship God?