



## Five Things Atheist Misbelieve

So powerful are the words of Jesus our LORD that even Atheist and unbelievers use them often. One such example is from words Jesus spoke while on the mountain and often called the Golden Rule. He said, *“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets”* (Matt. 7:12). In fact, as a very young grade schooler my teachers had me memorize this, but never told me it was from God. This is a quote from Jesus not overlooked by atheist Richard Dawkins for he used and practiced it. He argues that it is not necessary to believe in God in order to see the wisdom in the Golden Rule. I agree with him for you don’t have to believe in God to be a person with morals, but you do have to believe in Him to be saved and to live with Him in Heaven for eternity. Also, I find it interesting that atheists like Dawkins base their atheistic morality on the words of the very God they don’t believe in. That is like saying I love the words “And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.” and not believe in the existence of John F. Kennedy who wrote them. Could you love the words “I have a dream”, and deny the existence of Martin Luther King Jr? In this light, I would like to share five Bible verses that atheists / unbelievers love to misuse.

**The first is found in Ecclesiastes 1:2-3** *“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher; “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” 3 What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?”*

Often misused by unbelievers to prove that God does not exist, but only because they don’t rightly divide what Solomon actually did say. The unbeliever thinks that Solomon was saying there is no purpose to life thus no meaning to life therefore, how can there be a God? Any student of the Bible knows that, 1) Words have meaning and 2) that context is critical. Meaning: The [noun “vanity” Strong’s #1892. hebel] according to “Brown-Driver-Briggs” means “vapour, breath (Late Hebrew id., Syriac id.) figurative vanity”. Used in Psalm 39:5 and translated “vapor”, *“...Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor. Selah”*. So, what is man’s life? James said, *“For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away”* (James 4:14). In context James was talking about our desire to build and establish riches, possessions. Jesus said, *“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (Matt. 16:26). Solomon wasn’t saying there is no purpose to life, but that this world, the physical life we have and enjoy, is temporary. All the work and effort and energy we focus on the here-and-now, is meaningless because it will be gone after we die like a puff of smoke. Context: As for the context one only needs to read Solomon’s conclusion or summation of the entire book to understand where his focus really is. *“13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”* (Eccl. 12:13-14).

**The second is Luke 14:26** *“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”*

One must read verses 25 through 33 to understand the context. Jesus was speaking to the *“great multitudes”* (v.25) that began to follow Him, and the need to *“sit down first and count the cost”* (v.28), speaking about the cost of discipleship concluding with, *“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple”* (Luke 14:33). Being the LORD’s disciple demands such overwhelming devotion that it could divide families and looking like hate toward their family by comparison. But in a companion text Jesus taught, *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me...”* (Matt. 10:37). What is Jesus saying in both passages? The high cost of being His disciple can cause us to lose family, friends even spouses in some cases and faith is what divided them, not hate, not inability to communicate or get along, but the choice to follow Jesus. Indeed, we must count the cost for being baptized into Jesus comes with a cost.



*“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”*

**Third, and most like the most misused passage in the Bible is from Matthew 7:1 “Judge not, that you be not judged.”**

Jesus said don't judge period! This is the cry of many today and is clearly taken out of context by those who twist it to prove it's wrong to judge anyone for anything. I ask, if you needed a babysitter for your precious baby would you employ the neighborhood child molester? If not, you're judging! In context Jesus is teaching us to first judge ourselves, then we can see clearly to judge another. What Jesus is teaching is for you to avoid being a hypocrite you must, “*First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye*” (v.5). In other-words, if I'm using foul language, I must repent and stop before I tell someone else they have a problem with their choice of words. Truth is we all make hundreds of judgements everyday about services, people and even who we'll befriend. Jesus doesn't say we're not ever to judge anyone but says, “*Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.*” (John 7:24). So, judge yourself first, and then use righteous judgement to help others. Bottom line is what people are really saying is don't judge my personal beliefs.

**Fourth, Ecclesiastes 3:19 “For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity.”**

The unbeliever tries so hard to misuse the Bible to prove there is nothing after death, yet here Solomon wasn't writing about what happens after death, but that whatever lives and breathes in God's creation will die. He was simply playing the statistician giving impressive stats on death. That is, one out of everyone will die! Solomon wrote, “*All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust*” (3:20). He also wrote, “*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it*” (12:7). “*The spirit will return to God who gave it*” clearly shows Solomon knew when the body dies the soul, spirit lives on. Solomon knew God and knew God required a life of obedience and sacrifice and that death doesn't mean annihilation for he wrote, “*For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil*” (Eccl. 12:14a). There will be a judgement, after!

**Finally, our fifth misused scripture is Matthew 18:9 “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”**

What the atheists seeks to prove by misusing this text is that we can't read the Bible literally. From his point of view God is “not allowed to use hyperbole” or extreme exaggeration to make a point, but everyone else is. If I've heard it once I've heard it a thousand times, “I've told you to clean your room a million times!” or “I am so hungry I could eat a horse”, or “I'm going to kill him when he gets home”. I've never cleaned my room that many times, never ate a horse, and never killed anyone, all of which simply stress a point, and everyone understands this. Jesus is emphasizing, whatever it takes, whatever it costs, rid yourself of anything that causes you to sin, for there is nothing in this life worth more than your soul's salvation. He was speaking to whatever thing was involved in that person's life, causing the sin. Sin, by its nature, separates a person from God (Isa. 59:1-2). If it separates us from God it is not worth having in leu of eternal damnation (Rom. 6:23).

Jesus also had many other sayings that atheists take out of context, but whenever they, we or anyone for that matter uses a text without context, we make it pretext—and a false one at that.

Remember, “*knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation*” (2 Pet. 1:20). Our duty is to be diligent, “steady, earnest, and energetic effort” to present ourselves approved to God, not man, as workers who do not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing, “correctly handling” the word of truth (2Tim. 2:15).

Love

David Scarpino

